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## EU and Latin America: Interregional Partners in Crime?

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## Abstract

The European Union (EU) has adopted a very generous interregional approach towards Latin America over the past decades. In fact, EU foreign policy towards Latin America is almost exclusively focused on purely region-to-region interaction and active support to the various (sub-)regional integration efforts. Latin America is seen as the part of the world where the EU's interregional agenda should bear the most fruit, since it shares the same values as the EU (democracy, human rights, nuclear non-proliferation and multilateralism) and has a strong willingness to counter-balance its close ties with the US. However, even though the EU adopted the same interregional strategy across different policy areas, the level of interregional interaction (and success) vary significantly. This paper argues that in the area of non-traditional security governance the EU's interregional approach to Latin America has been successful in achieving its own-set goals, but that it has not had a considerable impact on the situation on the ground.

**Keywords:** European Union, foreign policy analysis, Latin America, interregionalism, non-traditional security governance, illicit drugs trafficking, transnational organised crime.

## Introduction

Interregionalism can be defined as a region-to-region conduct of foreign relations, which is different from the more classical diplomatic interstate relations and global governance. It is a foreign policy approach that the EU increasingly uses to interact with other regions around the world. It is often said that interregionalism serves three major (interlinked) goals. First of all, by pursuing interregional dialogues and interaction, the EU promotes and actively contributes to the development of other regional integration schemes in other continents. Secondly, in doing so it also contributes to the EU's goal to become an internally as well as externally recognised international actor. By serving as a 'blueprint' for other regions, the EU can in this way legitimise itself and asserts its power on the international level, which also strengthens its identity as a meaningful political actor at home. Thirdly, interregionalism also serves as a method to promote and defend the EU's interests abroad; interregionalism is particularly useful for "achieving gains the EU has been unable to reap through more traditional multilateral and bilateral channels"<sup>i</sup>.

Since the very first interregional dialogues in the late 1960s and early 1970s the EU has directed its attention towards three continents: Africa, Asia and Latin America. However, as Söderbaum et al. correctly point out, "interregionalism is particularly strong in the EU's external policies towards Latin America, where the EU has interregional partnerships with the most relevant sub-regions, such as the Andean Community, UNASUR, Central America and Mercosur"<sup>ii</sup>. From a European perspective, Latin America is seen as the part of the world where the EU's interregional agenda should bear the most fruit, since it shares the same values as the EU (democracy, human rights, nuclear non-proliferation and multilateralism) and has a strong willingness to counter-balance its close ties with the US. For these reasons, the EU has adopted an expansive interregional approach towards Latin America. In fact, EU foreign policy towards Latin America is almost exclusively focused on region-to-region interaction and active support to the (sub-) regional integration systems of Central America (SICA), UNASUR, Mercosur and the Andean community (CAN)<sup>iii</sup>. Yet, even though the EU prefers to take an interregional approach to its relations with Latin America and its sub-regions across various policy areas, the success of such an approach varies significantly. By success, we mean the realisation of pre-set goals for a specific policy area (which in this case, are set to be achieved through an interregional approach). These goals can be found in various official documents, such as the regional strategy plans, but also their mid-term reviews and (joint) declarations.

One of those pre-set goals was that the EU wanted to sign trade and association agreements with three Latin American sub-regional entities: CAN, Mercosur and SICA<sup>iv</sup>. However, it has only successfully concluded negotiations with one: SICA. By contrast, negotiations with the Andean region failed, causing the EU to resort to bilateral association agreements with several Andean states (notably Peru, Colombia and Ecuador), and the negotiations with Mercosur have just been re-launched after a deadlock of six years.

Another interesting case of EU-driven interregionalism is EU-Latin America cooperation in the area of non-traditional security governance or, more specifically, interregional cooperation in the fight against illicit drug production, drug trafficking and related organised crime<sup>v</sup>. Since

the 1990s, cooperation between Europe and Latin America to combat illegal drugs and organised crime has been based on the principle of shared responsibility for the reduction of both supply and demand. In all their joint declarations on the issue (EU-CELAC<sup>vi</sup>, EU-Mercosur, EU-CAN, EU-Central America), both regions have shown that they consider illegal drugs to be both a social and security problem that requires a comprehensive policy response. However, two decades of cooperation between the EU and the various Latin American sub-regions have had only a limited impact in terms of reducing drug consumption and production and have not led to better control of the criminal networks involved in the trafficking. How can we explain these varying levels of success? What factors determine success and failure in the EU's interregional approach towards other regions around the world in particular policy areas? Given this lack of decisive progress, fresh policy debate is emerging in both Latin America and Europe on possible alternatives to the traditional interregional models for tackling drugs, drug trafficking and related organised crime.

However, this topic is often neglected in the academic literature on EU foreign policy (analysis), EU-driven interregionalism and EU-Latin America relations<sup>vii</sup>. In fact, this particular case study of EU foreign policy has not been afforded sufficient attention by scholars or policy experts in the past, making a critical assessment of the EU's success in this regard even more pressing. This paper aims to fill this substantial academic (and policy-making) gap by providing a thorough overview of (1) the EU's drivers behind this particular foreign policy action (2) the applied policy instruments and (3) the impact of this specific case of EU-Latin American interregional relations. In order to do so, we will combine the analytical frameworks for studying EU foreign policy performance developed by Blavoukos and Keukeleire<sup>viii</sup>. By critically analysing and comparing the EU's output, outcome and impact in this specific foreign policy area, thereby differentiating between the declaratory and operational aspects of EU foreign policy, we expect to determine whether or not the EU has been successful in realising its pre-set goals through the applied interregional approach. First<sup>ix</sup>, the output perspective is related to the intra-EU process of policy-formation, focusing on the deliverables of internal political and institutional dynamics that delimit the EU's international engagement (= declaratory policy). Second, the outcome perspective shifts attention to the implementation of the output and the deriving behavioural adjustment of the EU. It refers to the EU's international activation along the output lines and captures how the EU takes this output to the international level (= operational policy). Third, the impact perspective assesses performance on the basis of the effect of the EU international outcomes, i.e. the result of the EU's activities, both in terms of 'goal attainment' of the EU's own pre-set goals, as well as the perceived impact of the EU interregional approach by the other partner in the cooperation scheme (in this case Latin America). Hence, if the analysis of the output, outcome and impact of the EU's interregional action on combatting illicit drugs and transnational crime towards Latin America matches the described pre-set goals and objectives, and the other partner in the interregional dialogue believes the EU has had a significant impact on the ground, we can (fairly) state that the EU-driven interregional action in this particular case of EU foreign policy was successful (or not).

In addition to the academic added value of this research for the study of interregionalism, this paper will also contribute to the study of EU foreign policy analysis and the study of regionalism and regional governance/cooperation in the area of non-traditional security

governance. It hopes also to provide useful insights for policy purposes in order to allow for a potential (re-)definition of effective EU external action in this (increasingly) troublesome area of (regional) governance in Latin America. The paper proceeds as follows. The first section provides a comprehensive account of EU-driven interregionalism. After outlining its main functions and drivers, a snapshot of EU-driven interregionalism towards Latin America is provided. The section closes with an overview of the analytical framework provided for the critical assessment of section two. The second section zooms in at the particular EU foreign policy area central to this work: combatting illicit drugs and transnational crime in Latin America. After providing a thorough overview of what the topic entails and how its different facets are interrelated, the section critically assesses the EU's role and interest in supporting Latin America in facing this continental challenge. The section ends with a balanced conclusion on the EU's impact and successfulness in this particular case of interregionalism.

## EU-driven Interregionalism: a comprehensive account

### Interregionalism as one of four foreign policy tools of the EU<sup>x</sup>

In the early phases of the European integration process, the European Community was more concerned with its internal development and functioning than with its place on the international level. The European Commission, and more broadly the European Community (EC), was not much of an independent actor in international politics, as international relations and representation were very much dominated by the EC member states. The limited external relations it did have were restricted to former European colonies and almost exclusively oriented towards trade and development<sup>xi</sup>. Nevertheless, since the Copenhagen declaration in 1973 and the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the EU has asserted itself more and more on the world stage as an independent regional, and indeed global, actor and has developed a plethora of external action initiatives, programmes and projects. Today, the EU even has its own High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and its own diplomatic service called the 'European External Action Service' (EEAS). The EU has established a worldwide network of 139 delegations/representations<sup>xii</sup> and signed numerous cooperation and association agreements with different countries and regions in the world<sup>xiii</sup>. As such, the EU is increasingly perceived as a global power, with a voice that can be heard on the international level, in line with demands from European citizens for a greater level of (pro-)activeness in global affairs.<sup>xiv</sup> But how was this made possible? And how is the EU going to assert itself even more on the global level? According to Hettne and Söderbaum, the EU has four different tools to pursue its external relations; it can do so through 1. enlargement, which encompasses the candidate countries and potential candidates in the Balkans 2. Stabilisation (and "Europeanisation") in the so-called European Neighbourhood<sup>xv</sup>, encompassing post-soviet countries and northern Africa, 3. bilateralism with great powers such as the US and Russia, and 4. through interregionalism with other regional organisations or groups around the world<sup>xvi</sup>.

Interregionalism is thus a foreign policy tool that the EU uses to build up its external relations with different regional organisations across the globe<sup>xvii</sup>. This can be the case with other well-defined and established regional organisations such as ASEAN and Mercosur, but in some cases the EU's counterpart 'region' is 'constructed' (e.g. the ACP countries) in order to facilitate a wider dialogue with the EU<sup>xviii</sup>. Within International Relations theory, interregionalism is largely attributed to the EU, as it is this regional organisation that is the major driving force behind the region-to-region relations taking place in the world<sup>xix</sup>. Aggarwal and Fogarty put it as follows: "interregionalism is primarily a strategy aimed at achieving gains the EU has been unable to reap through more traditional multilateral and bilateral channels"<sup>xx</sup>.

The phenomenon of interregionalism can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s when the EU entered into so-called "hub-and-spokes" networks<sup>xxi</sup> or "bi-regional dialogues", such as the EU-Arab dialogue in 1974, the cooperation with the Mediterranean region in 1977, and the Lomé convention, which was signed with the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries in 1975<sup>xxii</sup>. But as the regional organisations participating in these cooperation schemes were not as 'developed' as the European Community at the time, relations were very limited in scope and asymmetric in nature. As these interregional organisations developed and became more integrated over time, the way was paved for a deeper and more symmetrical interregionalism<sup>xxiii</sup>. Especially since the 1990s, there has been a considerable proliferation of interregional relations, which has led Aggarwal and Fogarty to the conclusion that "understanding the driving forces behind interregionalism is likely to become a crucial theoretical and policy concern"<sup>xxiv</sup>. Other scholars have noted that the 21<sup>st</sup> century would be the "century of the regions" and that the global order would become increasingly dominated by regions and as such "regionalised"<sup>xxv</sup>. How was this then translated into an academic research agenda?

### **Academic research on interregionalism is still in its early stages**

As Gaens notes: "scholars are currently engaged in a heated debate on the definitions and theoretical implications of the interaction of regions, and on the actual importance and potential future impact of interregionalism within the international order"<sup>xxvi</sup>. In spite of the fact that recent studies have analysed interregionalism in its own right as a new phenomenon with the potential to add a new layer to global governance debate, academic perspectives on interregionalism show wide variations<sup>xxvii</sup>. Even the concept of interregionalism itself is still unclear and shifting, since the research field is still at its early stages of its development<sup>xxviii</sup>. What follows are brief examples of scholarly attempts to define the complex concept of interregionalism. In an attempt to define interregionalism as 'simply' as possible, Roloff defines it as "a process of widening and deepening political, economic, and societal interactions between international regions"<sup>xxix</sup>. Hänggi goes a step further by differentiating three different forms of interregionalism: transregionalism, hybrid interregionalism and pure interregionalism<sup>xxx</sup>. The first encompasses a relationship between regional and state actors focusing on high-level strategic thinking (for example EU-USA). The second, and predominant type, refers to a relationship between two regional groups in two different world regions where only one partner is a regional integration system (e.g. a customs union) while in the third type, pure interregionalism, both regions are regional integration systems.

According to Hardacre, the reality of the EU's interregional approach is much more complicated, which is why he advocates to the term "complex interregionalism" instead<sup>xxxix</sup>. From his point of view, this notion could serve as a more complete framework to assess "the relationship between the pursuit of 'pure interregionalism' and the conduct of existing bilateral and multilateral relations"<sup>xxxix</sup> as it "proposes a multi-dimensional model of interregionalism, in which the coexistence of multi-level diplomacy and institutional structures with mixed motivations and strategies on the parts of the actors involved forms the key element"<sup>xxxix</sup>. This type of interregionalism has lately also been dubbed as "overlapping" interregionalism<sup>xxxix</sup>.

In addition, Gardini and Malamud suggest that "stealth interregionalism" might become the fourth type of interregionalism. The paramount case to argue for such a distinct form of interregionalism is currency integration between several African states and the Eurozone. As it happens, the West- and Central African CFA franc (the official currency in 14 countries), the Comorian franc, the Cape Verdean escudo and the São Tomé and Príncipe Dobra are all pegged to the Euro through bilateral agreements, making a total of seventeen independent African states whose monetary policy is fully dependent on the Eurozone's. This constitutes one third of the African continent. Similar movements are also increasingly taking place in other parts of the world, such as the Caribbean<sup>xxxix</sup>.

In sum<sup>xxxix</sup>, interregionalism can be defined as the region-to-region conduct of foreign relations, which is different from the more classical diplomatic interstate relations and global governance. The EU has embraced interregional dialogue as a foreign policy tool in order to develop and deepen its external relations with other parts of the world and assert itself at the global level. However, the EU has three other foreign policy tools at its disposal to do so, so why exactly does it choose the interregional approach above the others to pursue its goals?

#### *EU's choice for interregional relations: a natural answer to manage global interdependence*

Former European Commissioner for External Relations Patten argues that "as a regional organisation, it makes sense to deal with others on a regional basis. Interregionalism, therefore, is seen as providing a natural answer to managing global interdependence"<sup>xxxix</sup>. Interregionalism has an important impact on regional integration and the worldwide development of regionalism. As interregional dialogue and cooperation requires both (or more) regions to have a coherent and well-functioning regional organisation/system, it may contribute to the development of the latter. This is exactly what the EU strives for, as it firmly believes (out of experience) that regional integration/regionalism can enhance peace, prevent conflict and promote cross-border problem solving and the better use and management of natural resources"<sup>xxxix</sup>. Even though it is true that the European model of integration cannot (always) serve as a 'blueprint' for other regional integration processes around the world, it is still the EU's firm belief that the broader concept of regionalism/regional integration can lead to stability, peace and security in a region<sup>xxxix</sup>. To put it simply: "the logic of interregional cooperation derives from the successful European model," as Regelsberger and De Flers have pointed out<sup>xl</sup>.



However, like there are academic variations in defining interregionalism, and a variety of opinions regarding the driving forces that leads the EU to its use<sup>xli</sup>. In general, from a realist point of view, its balancing role is stressed as it is seen as a “policy strategy that actors employ in their external relations as a pragmatic and flexible means to advance their position, either by countering the moves of other actors or by supplementing their capabilities by joining them”<sup>xlii</sup>. The institutionalist school of thought approaches interregionalism by looking at the issue of institution-building and its role in providing a stable framework for dialogue and cooperation on policy matters on a wide range of issues<sup>xliii</sup>. The social constructivists emphasise the interaction between interregionalism and collective identity building in the expectation that it will contribute to the growth of regional (self) identities and thus foster deeper regional integration<sup>xliv</sup>.

In his book “The European Union and interregionalism: Patterns of engagement”, Doidge proposes an overall analytical framework that combines the insights of the three previously mentioned schools in order to understand the reasons why an interregional dialogue was called into life. By building further upon previously work done by Hänggi et al. and Rüländ, he argues that interregional relations serve one or several of the following five functions: (1) balancing, (2) institution-building, (3) rationalising, (4) agenda-setting and (5) collective identity building. Regarding the first function (1), which is very much in line with the realist point of view, he argues that interregionalism can best be considered as a means of states to create and maintain an equilibrium amongst themselves by defending their own position in the international environment or by constraining the actions of others. The second and third functions are both extracted from the institutionalist school and stress the importance of institutions and agreements that can oversee the implementation of decisions or deal with a particular policy matter (2). The rationalising function (3) stresses the importance of rules, norms, and common decisions that facilitate communication and cooperation between states as they create fora for debate, they are able to alleviate difficulties of multilateral negotiations, and thereby could serve as a “clearing house” for multilateral debates by rationalising the global discourse<sup>xlv</sup>. In the same trend, Söderbaum and van Langenhove argue that it serves the promotion of Liberal Intergovernmentalism<sup>xlvi</sup>. According to these scholars, the promotion of liberal internationalism (1) is a fundamental reason why the EU pushes for more and deeper interregional relations. As the European Union promotes the ‘human aspects of international relations’, it believes (again, from its own experience) that through the promotion of regionalism and regional integration, and thus region-to-region dialogues, liberal internationalism can best be promoted. Issues that matter for the EU, for which it is labelled as a ‘liberal internationalist’<sup>xlvii</sup>, range from such themes as international solidarity, human rights, global poverty eradication, a sustainable and participatory development, and (inclusive) democracy, to the ‘human’ benefits of economic interdependence<sup>xlviii</sup>. This in the same trend as the so-called ‘civilian power’ argument that argues that the EU promotes ‘universal values’ such as social pluralism, the rule of law, democracy, and the market economy, instead of conducting a militaristic foreign policy<sup>xlix</sup>.

Next to this, Doidge argues that interregionalism can also serve as a mechanism to first create consensus on a lower level of the global governance structure before introducing these common positions to the agendas of multilateral fora in a concerted manner (4). Finally, interregionalism can serve the process of identity formation: as ‘a self’ engages with an

identifiable 'other', it allows the regional identity to be formed through differentiation from the other and/or through the interaction and the mutual exchange with the partner(s). Allahverdiyev adds in this respect that "by promoting interregionalism, the EU enhances its own international recognition and acceptance"<sup>li</sup> and that "interregionalism thus serves as a powerful tool to frame the European identity at the international level"<sup>li</sup>.

### **A snapshot of EU-driven interregionalism towards Latin America**

Latin America<sup>lii</sup> is seen as the part of the world where the EU's interregional agenda should bear the most fruit, since it shares the same values as the EU (democracy, human rights<sup>liii</sup>, nuclear non-proliferation and multilateralism) and has a strong willingness to counter-balance its close ties with the US. For these reasons, the EU adopted a very extensive interregional approach towards Latin America. In fact, EU foreign policy towards Latin America is almost exclusively focused on purely region-to-region interaction and active support to the (sub-)regional integration systems of Central America (SICA), South America (Mercosur) and the Andean countries (CAN). The first important EU policy document outlining the interest and strategy to develop a sustainable relationship with Latin America already dates back to 1963 when the European Economic Community (EEC) published its "Memo of Intent towards Latin America"<sup>liv</sup>. In this document, the EEC stated that its objective was to reach a close relationship and cooperation with Latin America and dispel the fears regarding the negative impact of the creation of the EEC internal market on Latin America. In fact, the EU-Latin American interregional relationship was until the beginning of the 1990s dominated by economics and trade. With the process of democratic transition in the region during the 1980s and 1990s and the EU's rapidly emerging common foreign and security policy, the partnership broadened to also include political, social and developmental cooperation. Simultaneously, various Latin American regional integration projects (Rio Group, Andean Community, CACM in Central America, Mercosur etc.) were (re-)launched and led to a process of sub-regionalisation of the EU-Latin America relationship. This started with the creation of the San José dialogue between the European Community (EC) and Central America in 1984, in support of the Regional Peace Process, and was intensified from 1987 onwards with an institutionalised dialogue between the EC and the Rio Group. In the subsequent decade the first agreements between the EC and these Latin American (sub-)regional integration systems were formalised, first with the Andean Group in 1993 and then with the CACM in 1995<sup>lv</sup>. These are first examples of traditional "pure" interregionalist approaches from the EU (or EC at the time).

With the second regionalist wave and the "open regionalism" initiatives in Latin America at the beginning of the new millennium, the EU's support for regional integration processes became one of the most important pillars of the bi-regional relationship. This included a preference for bargaining collectively with existing bodies and the development of far-reaching sub-regional cooperation strategies with those blocs. In this way, various regional strategy papers (EU-Mercosur, EU-CAN, EU-Central America etc.) were created, and development cooperation funding became structured in a purely bi-regional manner. Yet, seeing the plethora of regional integration strategies on the Latin American side, such 'sub-regionalisation' of the partnership became increasingly complex: next to Mercosur, CAN and Central America, other regional groupings popped up such groups as UNASUR, USAN,

ALADI, ALBA, CELAC etc.<sup>lvi</sup>. In addition, various Latin American countries became members of different groupings at the same time (see figure two), further complicating the situation for the EU. As such, the EU started to create various, institutionalised sub-regional political dialogue mechanisms but also created looser, overarching EU-Latin America summits at heads of state/government level, to which all 33 Latin American countries are invited. Adopting such an approach, the EU opted for both pure interregionalism (relations between two established regional integration systems) as well as transregionalism: bringing together a formal regional integration system (the EU) and a quite loose group of states from one region.

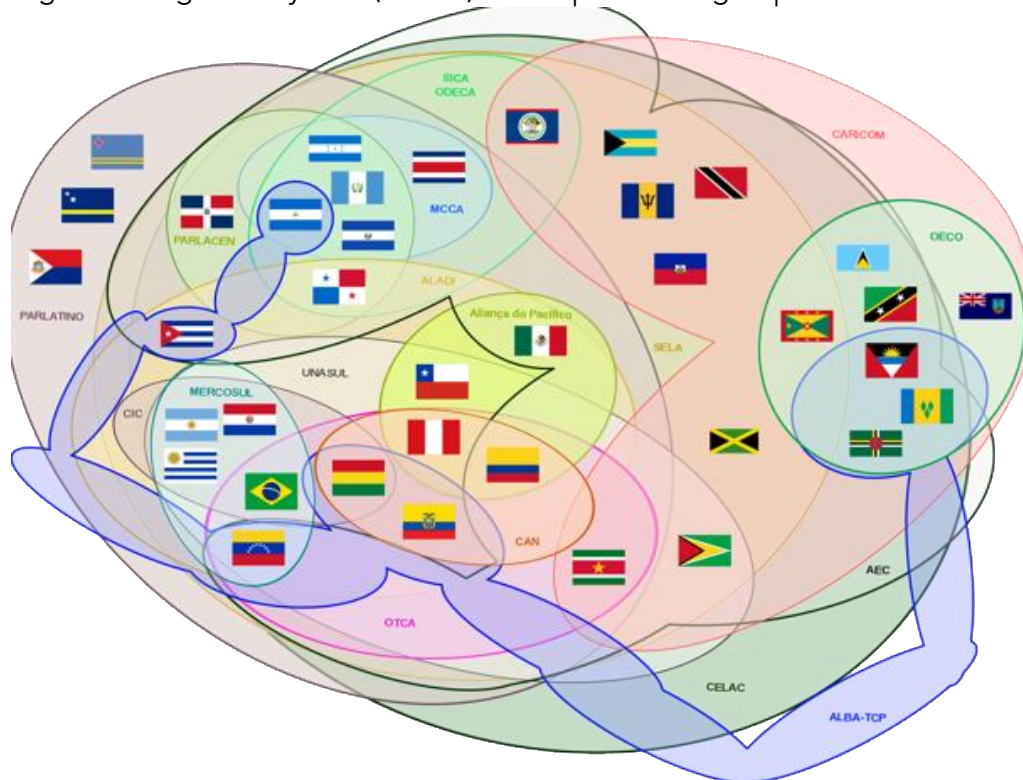


Figure one: Regional Integration efforts in Latin America

In 1999, the first EU-Latin America presidential interregional summit was organised and ended in an ambitious declaration consisting of not less than 69 points for further collaboration and 55 points for further action in a wide variety of political, economic, financial, scientific, social and cultural areas<sup>lvii</sup>. Ever since that date, such high-level interregional summits have been held every two years, becoming the backbone of contemporary EU-Latin American relations. In the last two summits (2013, Santiago de Chile and 2015, Brussels) academic summits, judicial summits, business summits and civil society summits were also organised, bringing together different segments of both regions' polities. In addition to presidential summitry, various ministerial meetings are also held on a wide variety of sub-topics, including security and drugs trafficking, social inequality, multilateralism (e.g. versus the US-led invasion of Iraq), the fight against poverty, climate change, etc. The above led to increased EU-interregional foreign policy action by means of both declaratory as well as operational policy, as the following three tables summarise.

**EU interregional declaratory policy towards Latin America - an overview**

Mid-Term Review of the Regional Strategy Paper and Regional Indicative Programme 2011-2013 for Latin America
Regional Strategy Paper 2007-2013
Regional Strategy Paper 2002-2006
Memorandum of Understanding between the European Commission and the Inter-American Development Bank 19/11/07
Memorandum of Understanding between the European Commission and ECLAC 07/11/06
The Strategic Partnership between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean: A Joint Commitment 15/04/2008
Regional Strategy paper and National Indicative Programme
Multianual Indicative Regional Programme for Latin America 2014-2020
EU Strategy on Citizen Security in Central America and the Caribbean
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - EU-Latin America: The EU allocates € 925 million to regional cooperation with Latin America over the period 2014-2020
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - EU-Latin America: Elements for an EU strategy on public security in Central America and the Caribbean
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - EU-Latin America: Global players in Partnership COM(2009) 0495 - 30/09/09
Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Towards an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership COM(2008) 0447 - 25/09/08
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - Towards an EU-Brazil Strategic Partnership COM(2007) 0281 - 30/05/07
Commission Communication to the Council and to the European Parliament on a "Stronger Partnership between the EU and Latin America" COM (2005) 636 - 08/12/2005

Table one: EU interregional declaratory policy towards Latin America – an overview. Author’s own creation based on EU official documents

**EU interregional operational policy towards Latin America - an overview**

EU-Latin American (presidential) Summits: 7 from between 1999 to 2016
Association Agreements: 3 signed in 2016 (Central America, Mexico and Chile) various bilateral FTA’s signed (Colombia, Peru)
Strategic partnerships: 3 established with Brazil, Mexico and Chile
Programmes and funds: 925 million EUR for 2014-2020
CFSP Missions: more than 130 electoral missions from 2000-2016 (e.g. Peru in 2016)

Table two: EU interregional operational policy towards Latin America – an overview. Author’s own creation based on EU official documents and Rodriguez (2015)<sup>viii</sup>

EU interregional operational policy towards Latin America	
EU Foreign Policy general instruments that also apply to Latin-America	EU Foreign Policy instruments exclusively targeted to Latin-America
1.ECHO (humanitarian aid) e.g. earthquake in Haiti, floods in Bolivia, earthquake in Paraguay etc.	A.2007-2013:
2.GSP: reduced tariffs for export to the EU + also plays a role in combatting drugs	1. Social cohesion (EUROSOCIAL, URB-AL, AL-Invest)
3.EIDHR (human rights) and EU Observation Missions, more than 20 to LAT AM	2. Sustainable development (EURO-SOLAR, RALCEA, EURO-CLIMA, FLEGT)
4.EIB: loans for investments	3. HE & Research (ALFA, ALBAN, E+ mundus)
5.Mission for Growth	B.2014-2020 (€ 2,5 billion) :
	1. Social cohesion, development (EUROSOCIAL)
	2. Economic cooperation (AL-INVEST – co funded by three sub regions)
	3. Sustainable development (EURO-SOLAR, RALCEA, EURO-CLIMA, FLEGT)
	4. HE & research (ALFA III)
	5. Security & Migration, drugs policies (COPOLAD)
	6. Migration and development policies (structured dialogue)
	7. Promotion of investment & information (Latin-American Investment Facility, LIS II etc.)

Table three: EU interregional operational policy towards Latin America – an overview of the most funds and programmes. Author’s own creation based on EU official documents and Rodriguez (2015)

On 19 November 2013, the 2014-2020 Multi-annual indicative programme for regional cooperation between the European Union and Latin America under the EU Development Cooperation Instrument was presented to the Ambassadors of the Latin American countries in Brussels. The programme focuses on a series of priority areas for cooperation between both regions: the security-development nexus (including combatting the illicit production and trafficking of drugs and related organised crime); good governance; accountability and social equity; inclusive and sustainable growth for human development; environmental sustainability and climate change; and higher education<sup>lix</sup>. The EU has allocated € 925 million to interregional cooperation with Latin America for the period 2014-2020, and has adopted a pragmatic approach as regards the specific regional groupings to which it reaches out for cooperation. Whereas in the past, “pure” interregional cooperation dominated the EU’s approach towards Latin America (e.g. EU-SICA, EU-MERCOSUR, EU-CAN, etc.), the EU now sets the policy areas central in its interregional cooperation and pursues different programmes with different regional groupings (e.g. now also increasingly UNASUR) and at different ‘levels’ (e.g. CELAC as the overarching framework for all Latin American and Caribbean countries, CARICOM to deal with Caribbean countries, and SICA to deal with Central American countries only).

From the above brief overview, it can thus be concluded that the EU has adopted a very extensive interregional approach towards Latin America, but that it is changing from a “pure” interregional to a more “hybrid” interregional approach in which it is pursuing relations and activities with an increasingly diverse set of regional groupings at various levels (hemispheric or sub-regional). Before critically analysing the specific case of EU-driven interregionalism in the area of non-traditional security governance, the following chapter first outlines how one can define ‘successfulness’ in EU international action as precisely as possible.

### Measuring the EU’s interregional impact through the lenses of Foreign Policy Performance Analysis

In order to account for the differentiated level of success of EU-driven interregionalism in Latin America in the field of non-traditional security governance, a combination of the analytical frameworks of Foreign Policy Analysis as suggested by Blavoukos and Keukeleire is proposed here<sup>x</sup>. In order to have a solid understanding of the EU’s foreign policy performance, Blavoukos suggests differentiating three distinct performance perspectives: output, outcome, and impact. This is in line with Keukeleire’s approach of contrasting the EU’s declaratory (= output) and operational (= outcome) foreign policy actions (see Table four). Analytically, they constitute three distinctive steps in a causal chain of events, yet are closely interlinked with each other<sup>xi</sup>.

<b>THREE LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS</b>		
<b>OUTPUT: DECLARATORY POLICY</b>	<b>OUTCOME: OPERATIONAL POLICY</b>	<b>IMPACT: PERCEIVED IMPACT</b>
<b>VARIABLES</b>		
Deliverables of internal policy-making, including common declarations, statements, decisions on political and economic actions, etc.	1. International engagement by means of diplomatic, economic, developmental and/or military action 2. Contribution to the building up or reforming of international organisations/policy orders	Results achieved as a consequence of the EU’s international activation
<b>QUALITY INDICATORS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inclusiveness</li> <li>▪ Meaningfulness</li> <li>▪ Relevance to the EU stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Clarity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coherence</li> <li>▪ Use of available instruments</li> <li>▪ Supply of international leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Effectiveness</li> <li>▪ Efficiency</li> </ul>

Table four: three levels of EU Foreign Policy performance analysis: author’s own creation based on Keukeleire and Blavoukos

The output perspective, or EU declaratory policy, is basically related to the intra-EU process of policy-formation, focusing on the deliverables of internal political and institutional dynamics that inform and shape the EU’s international engagement. This output may range from mere discourse, like common declarations and rhetorical statements, to decisions on political and economic actions. It could be a formal comprehensive policy document outlining EU positions in a specific field or in international affairs more broadly, like for example the European

Security Strategy. Or it could be narrower, like a statement or a Council decision on an intended course of action in a regional crisis. In any case, it constitutes the starting point of the outcome and impact analysis and offers a benchmark for their assessment<sup>lxii</sup>. In order to measure the quality of the outputs generated through internal policy-making processes, Blavoukos suggests looking carefully at the declaratory policies' inclusiveness; meaningfulness; relevance to the EU stakeholders; and clarity of the produced outputs.

The outcome perspective or operational policy, shifts attention to the implementation of the output and the resulting behaviour or action of the EU. It refers to the EU's international activation along the output lines and captures how the EU takes this output to the international level<sup>lxiii</sup>. It may take the form of active international engagement (diplomatic, economic, developmental, military, etc.) in pursuit of a given objective, by means of CFSP actions (e.g. electoral missions abroad), or development cooperation projects and funds. Additionally, it may comprise initiatives of creating new or adjusting existing international policy orders, in congruence with the EU norms, principles and interests, by contributing to the building up or reforming of international or regional (integration) organisations<sup>lxiv</sup>. The emphasis of the outcome perspective is thus on the EU's deployed operational efforts and actions and whether they carry out the agreed outputs (but it does not consider their impact)<sup>lxv</sup>.

In order to assess the quality of the proposed operational policy, Blavoukos suggests to look at the following three indicators: coherence, proper use of available instruments, and supply of international leadership. Coherence can be understood as coherence between EU and national policies (vertical dimension); coherence between different policy domains and areas (horizontal dimension); and coherence among EU institutions (institutional dimension)<sup>lxvi</sup>. The other two criteria mostly refer to how the EU seeks to realise the output, whether it makes full use of the available resources and instruments and adopts a leadership profile. Foreign policy instruments range from legal provisions and economic tools that derive from the Treaties to political dialogues, sophisticated schemes of political engagement, and traditional diplomatic practices<sup>lxvii</sup>.

Finally, the perceived impact perspective assesses performance on the basis of the effect of the EU's international outcomes, i.e. the result of EU activities either in attaining the EU's pre-set goals and/or achieving an impact on the ground for the recipient of the EU's approach. The impact perspective focuses analysis on the real change enacted for the recipient of the EU's external action, and is in line with Keukeleire's "Outside-in" approach<sup>lxviii</sup>. Methodologically speaking, the challenge in this perspective is to establish causality between the EU's actions and the changed environment in order to credit the EU with developments and establish conclusively any claims about the EU performance record, away from a mere goal attainment perspective<sup>lxix</sup>. Blavoukos suggests effectiveness and efficiency as the two main quality indicators to evaluate the impact perspective of the EU's international performance. Effectiveness captures primarily the degree of goal attainment for the EU, whoever defines the goal, and whatever its content might be<sup>lxx</sup>. Efficiency captures the ratio of used resources to their actual impact, implying that given the scarcity of EU resources, their marginal utility should also be taken into consideration when evaluating the impact performance of the EU<sup>lxxi</sup>. Before embarking on the case study regarding EU-Latin America

interregional cooperation in the field of combatting illicit drugs production, drugs trafficking and organised crime, it is important to restate the significance of the temporal focus of any EU foreign policy performance analysis. In addition, practice teaches that all three levels of analysis identified are more often than not integral parts of continuous international interactions that evolve in stages and thus are inexorably linked and often mutually reinforcing<sup>lxxii</sup>.

## EU-Latin American interregional cooperation in the field of non-traditional Security Governance

### Illicit drugs, drugs trafficking and organised crime in Latin America

'This is not a small enemy against which we struggle. It is a monster. (...) We know that there are few dimensions of human security that are not affected in some way by the illicit drug market. Let us continue then, armed with new knowledge and light, to fight, in both word and deed, for those whose very existence is threatened by this trade'.

Antonio Maria Costa<sup>lxxiii</sup>

Illicit drugs production and drugs trafficking is one of the main factors behind high levels of criminal violence and organised crime in Latin America. It is a particular problem in Central America, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Brazil. Latin America is the second most violent region in the world, with an average homicide rate of 25 per 100 000 people (a rate four times higher than in Europe)<sup>lxxiv</sup>. In Central America, the death toll from escalating violence caused by drug trafficking has now even exceeded that of the civil wars. With a homicide rate of more than 60 murders per 100 000 people, El Salvador and Honduras, followed by Guatemala, were the countries most affected by drugs related criminal violence in 2015. In Venezuela, high impunity rates, corruption, and a politicised, inefficient, and uncoordinated police force led in 2015 to a regional record of almost 18 000 homicides (58 per 100 000), related to drug trafficking, kidnapping and other related crimes<sup>lxxv</sup>. In the drugs war in Mexico, rival cartels challenge the police forces and the state, undermining democracy, human rights, justice, and development. There are currently seven main Mexican cartels (the Sinaloa, Gulf, Los Zetas, Tijuana, Juárez, South Pacific, ex Beltrán Leyva, and the Michoacán Family cartels) and a number of smaller ones fighting for control of a market whose net revenue was USD 137 billion in 2009<sup>lxxvi</sup>. Fighting between the main cartels and the widespread deployment of security forces under the government of President Felipe Calderón have led to a dramatic escalation of violence in some Mexican states, which, according to the Mexican attorney general's office, cost 47 515 lives between December 2006 and September 2011<sup>lxxvii</sup>. The Sinaloa cartel, which is thought to control 45 % of Mexican drug trafficking, is currently the largest group, followed by Los Zetas. Using violence on an unprecedented scale, both cartels battle for control of the drugs market and other criminal activities (people and organ trafficking, etc.). Brazil and Colombia have high crime rates related to drugs and, in the Colombian case, to the armed conflict with the guerrilla (notably FARC).

Organised crime groups, and drug cartels in particular, base themselves in areas and countries where there is less of a state presence and where institutions are less stable and/or democratic. Drug traffickers have the capacity to infiltrate all state institutions, including the police, judiciary, and prison system, particularly in countries where the transition to democracy is incomplete and which are vulnerable to corruption and intimidation<sup>lxxviii</sup>. This means that criminal networks operate primarily in countries that have weak state institutions with a long-held authoritarian and clientelistic tradition, and therefore pose a serious threat to democracy, public security, and development. In fact, various studies have shown that it has hampered or even sabotaged the political, economic and social progress of Latin American countries over the last 10 years<sup>lxxix</sup>. Next to weak state institutions, deep-rooted inequalities in some Latin American countries, low levels of education, and a large black economy are other factors which encourage the establishment of criminal drug-trafficking networks<sup>lxxx</sup>.

In terms of drug production, Mexico, Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru account for almost all cocaine production in the world, with up to 1 000 tons produced every year<sup>lxxxi</sup>. In 2010, the three countries together made up the world's main coca leaf growing area. Most of the coca leaf was grown in Peru and Colombia. Peru also saw the amount of its land used for drug cultivation practically double over the last 10 years, as did Bolivia. In this Andean country, the increase is partly due to the different policy approach of Evo Morales' government, which believes coca to be a sacred plant for the country's indigenous people and which has put an end to the 'prohibitionist model' and cooperation with the US that dominated the anti-drugs strategies (and funding) of previous governments<sup>lxxxii</sup>. The Uruguayan government has even gone as far as to decriminalise cannabis, regulating its production and commercialisation.

Since the 1990s, Latin America and the EU have sought to tackle the drugs problem on the basis of the principle of shared responsibility for reducing both supply and demand. Yet, the nature of the debate on drug trafficking and the role of both regions has changed. The distinction between producer, consumer, and transit countries is less marked than before. Nowadays, both Latin America and Europe are regions where illegal drugs are consumed, produced, and transited, and organised crime is present in both, albeit on different scales. Although the Andean region is still the main cocaine-producing region, many synthetic drugs and even some cocaine is increasingly produced in Europe. A higher level of development in South America has also led to a rise in the number of users of cocaine and its derivatives - there are estimated to be approximately 900 000 users in Brazil and 600 000 in Argentina<sup>lxxxiii</sup>. Across Europe as a whole, there has been a significant increase in the production and consumption of synthetic drugs, to the extent that more than 100 newly produced psychoactive substances were recorded in Europe over the last decade. Illegal drug production in Europe is focussed on cannabis and 'new drugs', such as amphetamines and ecstasy, which are mainly produced in the Netherlands and Belgium<sup>lxxxiv</sup>.

According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Spain is the main entry point of cocaine and cannabis into Europe. Yet, whereas improved border controls in Latin America and better police cooperation between both regions led to a 50 % drop in the number of drug seizures in Spain and Europe between 2006-2012, today's illicit trafficking is becoming more 'fluid', 'complex', and increasingly makes use of new entry points via western Africa and Morocco, leading to a new rise in the amount of drugs entering



Europe from Latin America<sup>lxxxv</sup>. Drugs are big business, estimated to make up about one-fifth of global crime proceeds. In Europe, the cocaine business has been estimated to have a total value of not less than € 5.7 billion in 2015<sup>lxxxvi</sup>. The ramifications of the illicit drug market on the EU are wide-ranging and go beyond the harms caused by drug use. They include involvement in other types of criminal activities and in terrorism, impacts on legitimate businesses and the wider economy, strain on and corruption of government institutions, and impacts on wider society<sup>lxxxvii</sup>. The following graph provides an overview of the different ways in which the EU is affected by Latin America’s illicit drugs (trafficking) market.

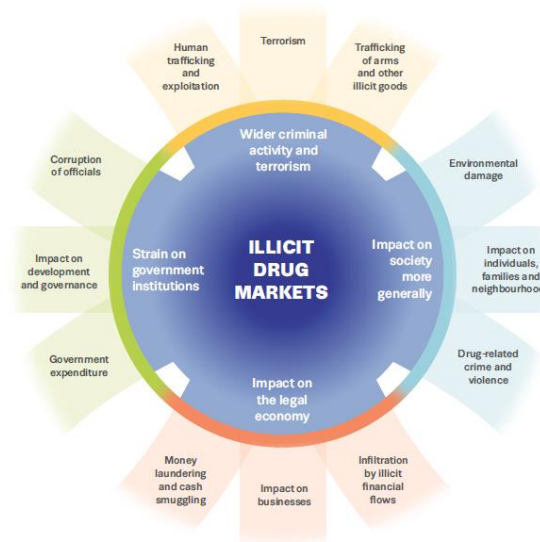


Figure two: ramifications of the Latin American illicit drugs market on the EU<sup>lxxxviii</sup>

In fact, every facet of the drug problem – production, trafficking and consumption – influences development prospects for all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Drugs negatively impact on key societal issues such as health, life expectancy, education, employment, human rights, and poverty reduction.<sup>lxxxix</sup> Beyond the toll on health and family structures, the drug problem also brings high social and economic costs that affect the economy, the environment, political processes, and even the social fabric that is essential for well-functioning democracies.<sup>xc</sup>

It is clear from the above brief description that the EU and Latin America share a major concern in the form of illicit drugs production, drugs trafficking and related organised crime. How then, has this influenced the EU-Latin America interregional relationship?

## The EU’s role in Latin America’s fragile Security-Development nexus

In order to critically analyse the EU’s interregional approach in cooperating with and supporting Latin America in its drug trafficking challenge, we differentiate between the EU’s declaratory policy (output), operational policy (outcome), and impact.

## Declaratory policy and drivers for an EU interregional approach

The EU's declaratory policy, or policy output, can be further demarcated as declaratory policy related to the external aspects of the EU's European Area of Freedom, Justice and Security (JHA external relations) on the one hand, and declaratory policy specifically targeted at Latin America's struggle related to drugs, drugs trafficking and related organised crime, on the other. In fact, the EU sees combatting illicit drugs, drugs trafficking and related organised crime very much as a multi-faceted challenge, with both internal and external dimensions. In the initial phase of building a European Area of Freedom, Justice and Security, the European Council stated explicitly that it is 'deeply committed' to reinforcing and developing European efforts against organised crime related to drug trafficking, including in the external dimension. According to the European Commission "illicit drugs are a major threat to the health and safety of individuals and societies in the EU".<sup>xcii</sup> In order to face this threat, the European Council has specified two general aims: 1) complementing national EU Member States' actions in preventing and reducing drug use to contribute to attaining high levels of health protection and well-being; and 2) taking action against drug production, cross-border trafficking, and the diversion of precursors.<sup>xciii</sup> The Hague Programme (2004) and the Stockholm Programme (2010), the two related multiannual work programmes, confirmed this commitment<sup>xciii</sup>. Characteristic for the EU's approach is the adoption of "harm reduction" as a common principle for drafting EU drugs programmes and cooperation. With the harm reduction approach, the EU aims to take a balanced, integrated approach to the drug problem combining demand reduction and supply reduction measures. As such, by also focusing on the demand side and root causes of illicit drugs production and drugs trafficking (i.e. often socio-economic issues in developing countries), it goes beyond the traditional "War on drugs" approach, which focuses exclusively on halting the supply of illicit drugs.

These overall policy frameworks also identified thematic and geographic priorities for the external dimension of internal security, which the EU has deemed "crucial". In 2005, the EU issued a Strategy for the External Dimension of Justice and Home Affairs, in which it recognised that it "cannot deal with these issues in the EU alone" and that it should therefore make Justice and Home Affairs a "central priority" of its external relations<sup>xciv</sup>. Internationally, the EU promotes a multi-layered approach against organised crime and is very committed to working through multilateral, regional and bilateral channels in achieving its pre-set goals of reducing both international supply and demand of (illicit) drugs and a "reduction of the health and social risks and harms caused by drugs"<sup>xcv</sup>. This is reflected in various EU documents, such as the 2005 Strategy for the External Dimension of Justice and Home Affairs, the 2005 Communication from the Commission on Developing a Strategic Concept on Tackling Organised Crime, and the 2010 Stockholm Programme<sup>xcvi</sup>. As mentioned on various occasions in official meeting minutes and declarations of the EU's JHA ministers, interregional cooperation with other regions around the world is at the core of the EU's external action strategic approach to fighting illicit drugs<sup>xcvii</sup>. In these documents, two interregional partnerships are particularly referred to: the EU-Africa partnership and the EU-Latin America partnership. The importance of the dialogue with Latin American and Caribbean countries (EU-LAC) is also emphasised in various other general external action policy documents and strategies, such as the 2010 European Pact to Combat International Drug Trafficking – Disrupting Cocaine and Heroin Route<sup>xcviii</sup>. There are several relevant EU documents that focus

on specific dimensions of the EU's external action related to combatting drugs, illicit drugs trafficking and organised crime. These include, for instance, the EU Drugs Strategy (2013–20), the 2012 EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012–16); and the EU Action Plan to Combat IPR infringements (2009–12) amongst others. Key principles that are referred to in most documents are shared responsibility, alternative development, emphasis on multilateralism, balanced approach, respect for human rights, concern for the diversion of precursors, and a strong focus on 'non-traditional' supply reduction measures<sup>xcix</sup>. All this shows that the EU is well aware of the socio-economic and politically destabilising effects that this challenge can have on its partnering region. In addition to these general 'external action' strategies in which Latin America is mentioned as a key external partner, international cooperation policy priorities are also identified by the Council of the EU through its so-called "policy cycle for organised and serious international crime", which draws partly on these sub-strategies, as well as by Europol's threat assessments<sup>c</sup>. Priorities for 2014–17 include disrupting the facilitation of illegal immigration; disrupting human trafficking; halting counterfeit goods; combating drug production and trafficking; and fighting cyber-crimes<sup>ci</sup>. Also here, Latin America, its various sub-regions (notably Central America and the Andean Community), and sometimes even countries (e.g. Mexico, Colombia) are mentioned on numerous occasions as key international partners to collaborate with<sup>cii</sup>.

Next to these general strategies and policy documents in which Latin America features as a key partner in the EU's international fight against illicit drugs trafficking and organised crime, the EU has also developed various declaratory policies solely focused on Latin America. In fact, combatting illicit drugs (trafficking) and organised crime has been an important component of EU-Latin America interregional relations since the very beginning of the partnership, and has formed the basis of a comprehensive set of anti-drugs political, operational, and technical exchanges and cooperation mechanisms (fully detailed in the next section). Looking at the EU-Latin America policy documents, the EU often stresses the importance of its 'harm reduction' or 'alternative development' approach (where the EU has been a pioneer), law enforcement, public health, and the link with other regions and need to cooperate with them as well (e.g. the Cocaine Route Programme actively seeks for triangular cooperation between the EU, Africa and Latin America)<sup>ciii</sup>. The following table provides a comprehensive overview of the most important EU declaratory policy in the area of EU-Latin America interregional cooperation on combatting illicit drugs and organised crime:

<b>EU declaratory policy in combatting drugs and organised crime in Latin America - an overview</b>
Declarations made at all 7 summits of Heads of State or Government of Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union
Madrid Declaration and Madrid Action Plan (2010-2012)
Latin America and Caribbean-European Union Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs (2004)
Port of Spain Declaration and Action Plan (2007)
Quito Declaration and Action plan Meeting (2009)
EU-Latin America partnership: Madrid Declaration (2010)
European Union Drugs Action Plan (2009-2012)
2010-2016 Annual Reports on the state of the drugs problem in Europe by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)
Declaration of the High Level Seminar on 'The fight against drug trafficking and organised crime in the EU and LAC' held in Mexico City from 21 to 23 February 2012
Working document on fighting drug trafficking and organised crime in the European Union and Latin America presented by Senator Sonia Escudero (Parlatino)
Working document on fighting drug trafficking and organised crime in the European Union and Latin America presented by Bogusław Sonik MEP
EuroLat Declaration (2013) Fighting drug trafficking and organised crime in the European Union and Latin America
Council of the European Union: The EU Approach on Alternative Development (2006)
EU-Latin America comprehensive action plan on drugs: Panama Plan (1999)

**Table five: EU declaratory policy in combatting drugs and organised crime in Latin America – an overview. Author's own creation based on EU official documents**

From the table it is clear that the EU has adopted a wide variety of declaratory policy acts in the area of EU-Latin American cooperation to combat drugs, drugs trafficking and organised crime. Yet, what exactly does the EU declare to focus in this regard? The Panama Action Plan (1999) and the Port of Spain Declaration (2007) provide good accounts of the EU's chosen priority areas. The Panama Action Plan and the accompanying Lisbon Priorities, adopted in 1999 and 2000 under the framework of the Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs, established five priority areas for cooperation: demand reduction, judicial, police and customs cooperation, maritime cooperation, measures to tackle money laundering, and more robust legislation and institutional capacity-building<sup>civ</sup>. In the Port of Spain Declaration, adopted in May 2007, both regions set out a series of specific measures aimed specifically at capacity-building and the exchange of information on drugs policies<sup>cv</sup>. They agreed, inter alia, to create a mutual technical assistance programme on capacity-building (police, customs, judicial action, prevention and treatment activities), called for the establishment of drug observatories and strengthened maritime cooperation and the control of precursor chemicals and money laundering. The Cooperation Programme between Latin America and the European Union on Drugs Policies (COPOLAD) emerged as a result of the declaration. At the EU-CELAC summit in Quito, 2013, both regions agreed that "fighting drug trafficking and consumption requires international cooperation and an integrated, multidisciplinary and balanced approach combining drug demand reduction and drug supply reduction measures".<sup>cvi</sup> To summarise, both regions stress the emphasis to both work on:

- Demand reduction: exchange of information on drug policies, prevention and treatment activities;
- supply reduction: joint actions to identify and dismantle (transnational) organised crime<sup>cvi</sup>.

What follows is a critical assessment whether or not the EU has translated this into a coherent set of operational policy and acts upon its promises and statements.

### **Beyond the rhetoric: the EU's toolbox for interregional cooperation in combatting illicit drugs production, trafficking and consumption**

The abovementioned shared principles, strategies and action plans have been translated into a series of specific projects and legal instruments. Whereas by far most EU drugs foreign policy action is situated within the area of development cooperation and financed through specific funds and programmes created and managed by DG DEVCO<sup>cvi</sup>, the EU has also created fora for political dialogue and exchange of information and best practices in order to face the considerable challenges posed by illicit drugs trafficking and organised crime. The following section first provides an overview these political dialogues and exchange of information first.

As early as 1995, the EU launched a specialised high-level political dialogue on drugs with the countries of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN). Then, in 1998, the Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs was established between the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean, and meetings have been held annually on 17 subsequent occasions<sup>cxix</sup>. This annual High Level Meeting (HLM) has been preceded and followed by technical committee meetings as well as biregional dialogues with the Andean community and Central America. Currently under review, the dialogue has helped to ensure greater consistency between the positions adopted by EU-Latin American countries to combat drugs, to set priorities in this area, and to launch cooperation programmes and bilateral agreements on the control of precursor chemicals and money laundering<sup>cx</sup>. Furthermore, drug-related cooperation has been an important part of the work of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EUROLAT) and, previously, of the joint conferences of the European and Latin American Parliaments<sup>cxii</sup>. The issue has also been discussed by other interregional (sub-) bodies, such as the Rio Group and at EU-LAC Summits, the EU-Mexico sectorial dialogue on public security and law enforcement, and the EU-Brazil newly (2013) established dialogue on drugs.

In addition to these high-level political dialogues, the EU's various institutions and agencies operate as important hubs of (sensitive) information and analysis to combat international drugs trafficking and organised crime, and in that capacity also increasingly cooperate with their Latin American peers to exchange relevant information and share best practices.

Europol, the European police agency, plays an important role in this respect, notably by producing the annual Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA), on the basis of information gathered and transmitted by (European) law enforcement agencies. This report informs European policy-makers and serves as analytical background for the EU's Internal Policy Cycle on Organised Crime<sup>cxiii</sup>. As this report is also shared with Latin American law enforcement agencies, they can pro-actively make use of intelligence and information gathered by their European peers in order to counter Latin American illicit drugs (trafficking) and related organised crime. However, as Brady points out, Europol and other EU agencies "have won the acceptance of the European law enforcement community, not its universal admiration"<sup>cxiii</sup>. Europol has yet to become indispensable in cross-border investigations, as today's interregional cooperation between Europol and its Latin American peers does not go beyond the mere exchange of information. Eurojust is also increasingly active in international organised crime investigations, as is the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), Frontex, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), and the Commission's Anti-Trafficking Coordinator<sup>cxiv</sup>. However, the challenge with such a proliferation of actors is to ensure coordination and cooperation both internally as well as externally. For instance, the scope of activities of OLAF and Eurojust largely overlap, but there is little cooperation – and sometimes even competition<sup>cxv</sup>. A concrete example of cooperation between these EU agencies and their Latin American peers is creation of the bi-regional MAOC, or Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre, which is an EU-funded agency in charge of monitoring and coordinating anti-drug trafficking operations in the Atlantic Ocean<sup>cxvi</sup>. In addition, the so-called Threat Notice on Mexican Organised Crime Groups, is another best practice in which Europol exchanges information<sup>cxvii</sup> with agencies from Mexico and Brazil<sup>cxvii</sup>.

(Development) cooperation engagement

In addition to the EU's operational action by means of high-level political dialogue and exchange of sensitive information, the EU has adopted a wide variety of development cooperation projects and programmes in order to financially support Latin America in combatting Illicit drugs, drugs trafficking and organised crime. The Cooperation Programme on Drugs Policies (COPOLAD) has dominated the EU's developmental cooperation in this area of the bi-regional partnership with Latin America. COPOLAD's main aim is to "improve the coherence, balance and impact of drugs policies, through the exchange of mutual experiences, bi-regional coordination and the promotion of multisectoral, comprehensive and coordinated responses"<sup>cxviii</sup>. COPOLAD was established in 2009 and is structured around four components, namely capacity-building to reduce both (1) supply and (2) demand, (3) the consolidation of national drugs observatories, and (4) the bi-regional dialogue mechanism. It had an initial budget of around €6 million, which was increased to almost €10 million following agreement at the 6th EU-LAC Summit, held in Madrid on 18 May 2010<sup>cxix</sup>.

Scholars tend to agree that COPOLAD has borne concrete results and promoted a real impact in terms of inclusive socio-economic development and the security-development nexus<sup>cxx</sup>. According to Latin American national drugs agencies, COPOLAD has helped to change the way drugs policies are perceived, shift paradigms, and emphasise the need for a balanced approach between drug demand and supply reduction. Yet, if we look at the other development projects that the EU adopted in this regard, we observe that most of the projects are designed to reduce the drugs supply (102 of a total of 135, compared with only 22 projects focussed on reducing demand)<sup>cxxi</sup>. In addition, the resources allocated by the EU to tackling drug trafficking in Latin America are also relatively limited - approximately EUR 276 million for projects of varying lengths:

EU operational policy in combatting illicit drugs, drugs trafficking and organised crime - an overview of relevant projects (2016)		
Recipient	Millions of euros	Description
UNODC	1.2	Cooperation against cocaine trafficking from Latin America to West Africa
Latin America	10	COPOLAD II: defining anti-drugs cooperation strategies
	2.5	PRELAC: preventing the diversion of precursors in Latin America
	35	Cocaine Route
	3.7	AMERIPOL-EU: strengthening the exchange of information and intelligence
	2.2	CORMS: Cocaine route monitoring support
Andean Community	6.5	PREDEM: supporting the Andean anti-drugs plan
	2.55	DROSICAN: project to tackle synthetic drugs in the region
Central America (SICA)	5.5	Border Security
	21.5	Support to the Central America Security Strategy
CARIFORUM	12.6	Crime and Security Cooperation Programme
Nicaragua	10	Prevention and Control of Organized Crime and Drugs
Panama	28	Support to Security Cooperation in Panama
Bolivia	7	APEMIN II: sustainable development in coca-growing areas
	13	FONADAL: social infrastructure and local authorities in coca-growing areas
	26	Support for the Coca Integrated Development Plan
	10	Support for the Control of Coca Production in Bolivian Society
	9	PISCO: institutional strengthening to combat drug trafficking
Colombia	92	Peace laboratory in Magdalena Medio (I, II and III): alternative development, peace and stability
	26	regional development for peace and stability: follow-up of the peace laboratories
	8.4	Regional development for peace and stability
Peru	10	Alternative development and State modernisation
Venezuela	3.3	DROGASTOP: reduction if drug supply and demand
	3.3	Drug stop: support for the national plan to combat drugs
<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>	

Another important project, under the framework of the Instrument for Stability, is the programme on the prevention of the diversion of drug precursors in the Latin American and Caribbean region (PRELAC), which is implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)<sup>cxix</sup>. The EU has also committed EUR 20 million under the Instrument for Stability to a project which sought to boost judicial cooperation in tackling the criminal networks operating along the cocaine route (2009-2012). Another initiative, PREDEM (Programme for combating illegal drugs in the Andean Community), is designed to strengthen the anti-drugs policies of the Andean countries.

Of the in total 102 EU-Latin America interregional development projects in the area of combatting illicit drugs and organised crime, 30 are focussed on alternative development (the area where most resources are used, with all the projects located in Peru, Colombia and Bolivia), 4 concern the diversion of precursors, and 68 focus on other supply reduction measures. This short overview shows how much focus the EU puts on supply reduction measures, instead of the root causes that lead many Latin American farmers to start producing cocaine crops for a living (e.g. considerable levels of socio-economic inequality, etc.).

Since the 1990s, another important method supported by the EU for reducing the drugs supply in Latin America has been granting special trade preferences to a wide variety of agricultural products coming from Andean and Central American countries under the scheme known as the Drugs GSP (Generalised System of Preferences), or 'GSP+' since 2005. As such, the EU tries to convince farmers to replace coca crops with other agricultural products<sup>cxix</sup>. These preferences have considerably boosted exports as recent studies have shown: barring some exceptions, 90 % of agricultural products from the countries in question have had access to the European market under preferential conditions, thanks to the Drugs GSP. However, now that the EU has signed free trade agreements with Colombia, Peru, and Central America, the economic incentives for replacing coca crops with other agricultural products might disappear again<sup>cxv</sup>.

#### *Support for new international order and Latin American regional integration systems*

Another important feature of the EU’s operational policy in the fight against Latin America’s illicit drugs and organised crime is its support for a (new) international order based on its “soft-policy” and alternative development adagio. By shaping global politics and setting the agenda of important international organisations in a way that is in line with the EU’s approach on the issue, Brussels hopes to enable change and improve the global drugs situation as well. The UN is central to the EU’s global action against organised crime and the EU has been a fierce advocate for a strong UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its three subsequent protocols<sup>cxvi</sup>. Another telling case of the EU’s activeness on the international stage is its quest to include clauses on alternative development in the UNGASS special session on the World Drugs Problem in 2016<sup>cxvii</sup>. Beyond the UN, the EU also cooperates with various international organisations on fighting illicit drugs and organised crime, notably UNODC, by partnering in projects all around the world and financing its budget (the EU is the fifth-largest contributor to the UNODC budget)<sup>cxviii</sup>.

In addition, the EU arguably also supports the various Latin American regional integration systems and cooperation schemes to forge true Latin American cross-border/regional solutions to the shared problem of illicit drugs and organised crime<sup>cxxxix</sup>. The EU does this by means of funding and technical assistance to most of Latin America's (sub-)regional integration systems, including SICA (Central America), CAN (Andean Community), Mercosur, and UNASUR (South America). However, whereas funding towards the secretariats of CAN and Mercosur has not been renewed for the period 2014-2020, and as various Latin American regional integration civil servants/experts (notably from UNASUR) indicated that they have little to no support or relationship with the EU in this regard, this declaratory policy can be seriously questioned<sup>cxxx</sup>. From an EU perspective, the issue of weak institutionalisation and the limited power/competences of the EU's sub-regional counterpart is the main reason why there is less and less appetite for so-called "pure-interregionalism" and support to the various Latin American regional integration systems active in the field of non-traditional security governance<sup>cxxxi</sup>.

## Measuring the EU's interregional performance: is the glass half full or half empty?

As a major market for the consumption of cocaine, Europe shares responsibility for the current situation in Latin America, where the illicit drug trade undermines the rule of law and threatens to hollow out democracy in a number of countries. In order to face this challenge, the EU has created and managed development projects and organised joint initiatives, high level dialogues and information/best practices exchange mechanisms for drugs-related information. In this section, the real impact that the EU's declaratory and operational foreign policy might have achieved is analysed, both for Latin America's situation as well as in terms of EU own-set 'goal achievement'. In order to do so, and in line with Blavoukos analytical framework, the EU's (a) effectiveness and (b) efficiency in combatting Latin American illicit drugs and organised crime are considered in turn.

### Effectiveness

After careful review of the available (individual project-based) impact assessments of the EU's interregional approach, the overall assessment looks rather bleak<sup>cxxxii</sup>. Increases in casualties, reported violence linked to drugs trafficking and organised crime, and consumption and drug trafficking in both regions show that, in general, cooperation between the two regions has not made lasting progress towards eradicating the problem. In addition, other (social/health related) indicators, which are central from a Latin American's perspective, have not shown significant improvement since the advent of EU-Latin American interregional cooperation. It seems that the EU and Latin America (still) have different perceptions of the drugs problem and how to deal with it; this was clearly visible in the run-up to the UNGASS 2016 session, where the EU and Latin America's initial position papers/strategies were notably different<sup>cxxxiii</sup>. While in an important number of Latin American countries drug trafficking is a national security concern, for EU members the drug problem is more seen as linked to public health and public security requiring a different approach to the traditional 'global war on drugs'. In addition,



the absence of a “single” Latin American voice and a common strategy also further complicates an effective EU interregional approach, as does the pre-eminent the focus on combatting the supply of cocaine production in the Andean countries<sup>cxxxiv</sup>.

According to the Global Commission on Drug Policy, an international body comprised of individuals who have held important posts in national governments and international organisations and reputed intellectuals, 'the war on drugs has failed' and enforcement policies have had a balloon effect by diverting the problem, from one country (Colombia) to another (Mexico)<sup>cxxxv</sup>. Although there has been some harm reduction, the Commission takes the view that the EU's coordinated policies and its alternative approach have failed to alter the patterns of drugs supply and demand. Furthermore, criminal networks have begun operating and extending their influence in areas beyond Latin America, especially within Western Africa.

Various impact assessments on a project level have also shown mixed results for the EU's interregional developmental approach, given that coca and cocaine production in Bolivia and Peru has only increased over the last five years<sup>cxxxvi</sup>. Some critical reports therefore conclude that the European projects have not had a notable impact in terms of crop eradication or the development of the affected areas<sup>cxxxvii</sup>. One of the problems that has prevented the alternative development policy from having a more profound impact is the lack of infrastructure and marketing channels for traditional products (in comparison with coca and cocaine)<sup>cxxxviii</sup>. In addition, local Latin American actors such as the Friedrich Ebert Foundation argue that the development projects still tend to prefer EU short-term economic benefits over (long term) sustainable development in Latin America, reducing again the incentives to replace coca crops with traditional agricultural products<sup>cxxxix</sup>.

The lack of a clear positive impact of the EU-Latin American interregional cooperation in the area of illicit drugs, drugs production and related organised crime have led various policy makers and scholars (both European and Latin American) to the conclusion that it is time to experiment with alternative strategies for dealing with drugs and organised crime. Experience in the EU has shown that its 'harm reduction' policy approach provides an alternative to the punitive hard-line model which has not only dominated until now in the US, but which has also been reflected in various Latin American governmental approaches (most notably Mexico and Colombia). This conclusion can be found, for instance, in the Joint Declaration from the XIII Meeting (25-28 November 2011) of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee, which states that 'traditional drug enforcement policies have not achieved notable success, and that thoroughgoing assessment therefore needs to be brought to bear on those models'<sup>cxl</sup>. The 'European model' of harm reduction, which is based on prevention, the strengthening of institutions and alternative development as well as decriminalisation of drug consumption and regulation of certain drugs might be the right alternative policy response for Latin America's fight against illicit drugs and organised crime. Given that the EU offers an alternative to the prohibitionist model and that Latin America is one of the regions of the world most affected by drug-related violence, both regions should be able to lead the way in a new debate and use their political dialogue on drugs to adopt joint positions at an interregional, as well as international level.

Nevertheless, not all scholars/policy makers are negative about the plethora of EU-Latin America initiatives and projects developed over the last 20 years to counter illicit drugs, drugs trafficking and organised crime. Instead, it is often stressed that, from a goal attainment perspective, the EU has been rather successful as it achieved the aims it formulated when designing the specific projects<sup>cxli</sup>. Yet, the crafted objectives are often criticised for being formulated in such an abstract or narrow manner that it would be very difficult *not* to achieve them.<sup>cxlii</sup> COPOLAD's main objective is for example to "contribute to improving the coherence, balance and impact of policies related to drugs in Latin America, while the specific objectives are to strengthen capacities and encourage the different stages of the process of elaborating these policies in Latin American countries by improving the dialogue and reinforcing the cooperation of the national agencies and other actors responsible for global and sector drugs policies in Latin American and EU countries." Despite the internal EU guidelines to write objectives in a SMART way, this overall objective is not Specific, Measurable or Time-related. What is meant with "contribute to improve coherence"? What does the EU mean with intervening at "different stages of the process of elaborating these policies"? When is "improving the dialogue" successfully achieved?

Various (mid-term) individual project assessments have shown that the EU has consistently achieved its pre-set goals. An independent Mid-Term Evaluation of COPOLAD I, commissioned by the European Commission in 2013 concluded that the programme has been highly valued by all the beneficiaries and stakeholders, which confirms the relevance of the chosen intervention areas and the smooth implementation. In addition, "it is of considerable importance at bi-regional, regional and sub-regional level and its continuation in the near future should be guaranteed in order to ensure the consolidation of achievements. The programme has contributed to significantly improving and activating the biregional Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs. It has established new procedures for a more practical and operative drugs policy dialogue at bi-regional, regional and sub-regional level."<sup>cxliii</sup>

Other project impact assessments argue that mutual trust has been established during almost two decades of dialogue and thanks to a better flow of information between EU-Latin American police forces, Latin America has managed to intercept much more cocaine before it reaches the European market<sup>cxliv</sup>. There is also coordinated police and judicial action against drug trafficking in the EU and intensive dialogue about the issue has helped to increase information and governmental cooperation in the field too<sup>cxlv</sup>. The EU has thus had some positive impact in ameliorating the precarious drugs situation of Latin America and (at least) from a goal attainment perspective, the EU's interregional approach has proved to be rather successful. However, what can we say about the level of efficiency of the EU's interregional approach?

### **Efficiency**

Turning our attention to efficiency in order to assess the EU's successfulness in its interregional Latin American approach in combatting illicit drugs trafficking and organised crime, the picture is likewise mixed. In fact, the EU is confronted with a series of internal coordination challenges. First, there is a great number of agencies and institutions dealing with this policy

area that do not necessarily always work in synergy. Second, these agencies and institutions must prove the added-value of EU coordination in an area largely dominated by EU member states (and more specifically national law enforcement agencies). Finally, EU policies against organised crime must be coordinated at the global level, which implies not only cooperation with key strategic partners such as Latin America, but also adjusting the external dimension of internal policies with other foreign policy tools and agendas. In this regard, the development-trade nexus has been complex and at times even troublesome<sup>cxlvi</sup>.

Various practical difficulties related to one of the most important interregional instruments, the high level political dialogues or summitry, are also limiting the EU's effectiveness. The first problem affecting interregionalism in its summit form is the clarity of their aims and purposes. This refers to the expectations and the benefits it generates. What concrete outcomes are legitimate and realistic to expect from a political dialogue at the highest possible level? Whose expectations count most? Can we speak of one voice from Latin America and the EU and can they converge on a shared vision and action plan? It seems that significant doubts and uncertainties about the process exist<sup>cxlvii</sup>. This is valid both for the direct participants and the stakeholders more broadly understood<sup>cxlviii</sup>. Yet, interregional summits are more than anything else about dialogue and creating the right atmosphere and podium for interregional interaction to happen, be it on the side of the official debate and possibly even on themes that depart from the official agenda. Therefore, it would be more useful to widen our understanding of "successfulness" and "efficiency" by not only looking at the plenary sessions and what is stated on the official agenda and declaration, but also at other activities, events and informal meetings held on the side-line.

Another efficiency problem that affects interregional summits is time. The organisation of such high-profile events requires a large amount of time and dedicated teams. This is particularly true for the host country, of which a massive logistic and organisational effort is required. It is also true for participant countries, which have to contribute to the drafting of the final declaration, and discuss and agree on the agenda of the summit itself and that of their delegations. Interregional summits are also expensive exercises. The organisation, logistics, communication, transportation, and accommodation involved are a burden for taxpayers and state finance. Indeed the high cost of interregional summits is particularly evident when measured against the uncertainty or even the paucity of the results and benefits produced<sup>cxlix</sup>. If one considers that most costs are borne by the host country, and that for the duty of reciprocity these kind of events also take place in the less developed Latin American countries, one may wonder if that money could not be better spent otherwise. It is estimated for example that the 2012 Summit of the Americas held in Cartagena, Colombia, cost about 30 million USD, and that the 2008 EU-Latin America and the Caribbean Summit in Lima, Peru, cost around 35 million USD<sup>cl</sup>. In times of crisis and media scrutiny of public expenditure, these type of expenses may require rethinking.

Finally, swollen and diluted agendas also constitute a limitation to the efficiency of EU-Latin American interregional summits. A telling example is the Guadalajara Declaration of 2004 in which not less than 104 action points were listed. Yet, in the final declaration of the EU-Latin America and the Caribbean Summit of 2013 in Chile, 48 points were also included, of which more than 5 were related to the drugs problem.<sup>cli</sup> This leads to serious doubts and hesitations

about the true significance of these action plans as “interregional summit declarations and action plans can at best be regarded as optimistic assumptions”<sup>clii</sup>.

In spite of these criticisms and apparent lack of efficiency, interregional high-level political dialogues or summits are inescapable – and successful - instruments of the EU’s interregional approach towards Latin America. A number of theoretical and empirical reasons have been proposed to support this claim. From a theoretical perspective, a first explanation is offered by the very processes of regionalisation and globalisation, which by limiting the control of nation states on their own policy choices in fact encourage states to engage in regional and interregional cooperation<sup>cliii</sup>. Furthermore, rhetorical action theory suggests that rhetorical commitments produce actual effects<sup>cliv</sup>. That is to say that when a rhetorical and narrative exercise is repeated through time and widely accepted it shapes political interests, values, and legitimacy, and therefore determines policy actions and choices too. As such, the more that reference is made to the EU’s ‘soft’ approach of harm reduction policy and alternative development, the more likely it will be that Latin America will seriously consider and potentially adopt such as strategy. Another explanation is provided by the multi-bilateralism approach<sup>clv</sup>. Participants have the opportunity to meet the partners in which they are interested, and conduct bilateral talks and form ad hoc alliances on topics not necessarily related to those under official discussion. In fact, these interregional summits provide a forum for discussion and political direction for the EU-Latin America bi-regional partnership. In addition, most of the practical shortcomings and inefficiencies identified by the literature and the policy-makers can be addressed rather easily<sup>clvi</sup>. For instance, time and money, as well as human resources, can be saved by the use of “virtual summits”, and the civil society demand for more weight in international decision-making often materialises in the quest for more summits, with more space for social actors and NGOs within them (e.g. see the example of the recently added academic, business and civil society EU-Latin America summits). For all these reasons, summitry is a resilient - and fairly successful - aspect of the EU’s interregional approach towards Latin America.

In terms of the effectiveness of the implemented development cooperation projects, both sides of the Atlantic tend to agree that, despite the limited amount of funds available, the activities are run in a cost-effective manner. In particular, the level of flexibility and possibility to adapt the methodology to the realities and conditions of the participating Latin American countries have been acknowledged by Latin American scholars and policy makers.<sup>clvii</sup> The (mid-term) impact assessments have had an important role in this regard, as most of the implementation difficulties and inefficiencies as indicated during the assessment exercise can be ironed out for the project’s remaining term or its successor. The redefinition of COPOLAD II, on the basis of the impact assessment exercise of COPOLAD I, is a telling example in this regard.

Inefficiencies identified in COPOLAD I (2010-2014)	Changes adopted for COPOLAD II (2015 - 2019)
Large differences in terms of institutional capacity of participating countries leading to large differences in terms of reached impact and ownership	Programme activities are more tailored to groups of countries with similar institutional background and interests
Some approaches are too "European" and not necessarily suitable for Latin America	Greater emphasis is put on adaptability of EU approaches in a Latin American context.
Various EU Member States have not been very active, demonstrating an unequal interest in EU-Latin America interregional cooperation on drugs	Specific measures taken to stimulate full EU Member States' participation across all activities
Volatility of trained staff due to high rate of mobility in Latin American drugs agencies, national agencies and governments, etc.	Maximising flows of information and extra sustainability measures taken to boost ownership by all beneficiaries' (organisations)

Table seven: Redefining COPOLAD on the basis of inefficiencies identified in the impact assessment (based on European Commission 2014 and Chimano 2015<sup>clviii</sup>)

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Nowadays many countries from Latin America are at a turning point in their approach to drugs-related problems. Some of them are questioning the impact of the drug control policies pursued over the past decades, which were mainly focused on law enforcement and reduction of drug supply. As a consequence of these policies, many lives were lost, and social problems proliferated, linked to the fight between cartels for the control of production areas as well as to smuggling. Rather than favouring the so-called "war against drugs", many Latin Americans now call for a new approach, focusing more on drug demand reduction (i.e. prevention, treatment, risk and harm reduction, social reintegration and rehabilitation – increasingly necessary in the region due to rising drug consumption). This has increased the interest of Latin American countries in new, holistic perspectives and strategies such as the EU Drugs Strategy and the EU's COPOLAD programme. It can furthermore provide a good opportunity for the EU to reassert itself in the region and try collaboration and cooperation in a geographical region and thematic area traditionally led by the United States. Nonetheless, if the EU really wants to achieve a considerable impact in supporting Latin America in facing the drug problem and go beyond merely achieving own pre-set goals, it should considerably re-focus most of its programmes and projects so that it matches this ambition. As detailed in chapter two, the EU's declaratory and operational approach seem to be biased towards combatting the production and trafficking of (illicit) drugs (i.e. 'supply side'), instead of

tackling the issue at its roots in a holistic approach. A critical impact assessment has also shown that the EU has achieved little *real* impact on the ground and that it uses different indicators than its Latin American counterparts to measure success. The EU's own emphasis on having achieved its own pre-set goals is naïve at best, troublesome at worst. By tying in more closely to what the different Latin American counterparts exactly would like to achieve through EU cooperation mechanisms, as well as making social and health indicators more central, the EU's interregional approach could be considerably strengthened in the area of non-traditional security governance.

By providing a critical assessment of EU-Latin America interregional cooperation in the field of non-traditional security governance and more specifically the EU's interregional approach in supporting Latin America in its fight against illicit drugs, drugs trafficking and organised crime, this paper has aimed to fill a notable academic (and policy-making) gap in the field of EU-driven interregionalism, EU Foreign Policy (analysis) and regionalism/regional security governance studies. The most recently executed renowned Atlantic Future project has produced seven papers dealing with different interregional relations in the Atlantic area<sup>clix</sup>. Even though several such papers did not solely look at EU-Latin America, but also include studies on EU-North America, North-America–Latin America and Latin America–Africa, most of these studies reached a similar conclusion concerning the successfulness of interregionalism: “serious limitations of actorness” on the part of the engaging regions (Mattheis), large asymmetries or “imbalance in the degree of regionalisation”/institutionalisation (Alcaro and Reilly; Pirozzi and Godsäter), and low priority conferred to interregional relations (Ayuso, Villar, Pastor and Fuentes; Kotsopoulos and Goerg)<sup>clix</sup>. Yet these studies did not zoom in on particular policy areas and as such were not able to assess whether or not the EU's interregional strategy in a particular policy area has been successful or not. Instead, this paper has provided a critical assessment of an important theme of cooperation between Latin America and the EU: the fight against illicit drugs and organised crime.

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<sup>i</sup> V. Aggarwal, and E. Fogarty (2005) "The limits of Interregionalism: The EU and North America", *European Integration*, vol. 27/3, p.342.

<sup>ii</sup> Mercosur stands for Mercado Común del Sur and is a regional bloc which is composed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela. SICA stands for Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana and is a regional bloc which is composed of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Belize. CAN stands for Comunidad Andina and is a regional bloc which is composed of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. UNASUR stands for Unión de Naciones Suramericanas and is a regional bloc composed of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela. For more, see: F. Söderbaum, P. Stålgren and L. Van Langenhove (2005) "The EU as a global actor and the dynamics of interregionalism: a comparative analysis", *European Integration*, 27(3), p. 366. For more, see Santander (2005) "The European Partnership with Mercosur: a Relationship Based on Strategic and Neo-Liberal Principles", *European Integration*, vol. 27/3, p. 279-298.

<sup>iii</sup> SICA is the Spanish acronym for Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana, whereas CAN stands for Comunidad Andina.

<sup>iv</sup> See for example the EU-Mercosur framework agreement of 2006, which explicitly states that both regions are: 'MINDFUL of the terms of the Joint Solemn Declaration in which both Parties propose to conclude an Interregional Framework Agreement covering commercial and economic cooperation and preparing for gradual and reciprocal liberalisation of trade between the two regions as a prelude to the negotiation of an Interregional Association Agreement between them'. Council of the European Union (2006) "Interregional Framework Cooperation Agreement between the the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Southern Common Market and its Party States, of the other part", Brussels, p. 2.

<sup>v</sup> A non-traditional security threat is may be defined as a phenomenon that threatens a state's identity and undermines the quality of a state. Fore more see Fukumi, S. (2016) *Cocaine Trafficking in Latin America: EU and US Policy Responses*, Routledge, 292p.

<sup>vi</sup> CELAC stands for the Community of Latin American and Carribean states which is an intergovernemental mechanism in which 33 Latin American and Carribean countries are represented.

<sup>vii</sup> Two notable exceptions are the work done by S. Gratius and A. Chanona. For S. Gratius, see European Parliament (2012) *Europe and Latin America: combatting drugs and drugs trafficking*, AFET/EUROLAT, PE457.107, Brussels, 27p. For A. Chanona, see A. Chanona (2015) "The European Union and Latin America: Facing the Drug-Trafficking Challenge", in J. Roy (eds.) *A New Atlantic Community: The European Union, the US and Latin America*, University of Miami, pp. 159-175.

<sup>viii</sup> As proposed in Blavoukos, S., Bourantonis, D., & Portela, C. (2015). *Assessing the EU's Performance in the Field of Nuclear Non-Proliferation*. In *The EU and the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 227-241. Also see Blavoukos, S (2015) *Capturing the EU International Performance: an Analytical Framework*, *The European Union in International Affairs*, pp. 12-30.

<sup>ix</sup> The following description is largely based on Blavoukos, S., Bourantonis, D., & Portela, C. (2015). *Assessing the EU's Performance in the Field of Nuclear Non-Proliferation*. In *The EU and the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 227-241.

<sup>x</sup> This section largely builds on earlier research efforts as published in Selleslaghs, J. (2014) *Managing Global Interdependence on the Central American Isthmus: EU-Central America Interregional Relations*, UNU-CRIS Working Papers, 8, UNU Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies, Bruges, 37p.

<sup>xi</sup> For more information on the history of the EC and EU's external relations: D. Dinan (1999) *Ever closer union: an introduction to European integration*, Boulder, London.

<sup>xii</sup> All can be found at <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/> [Accessed 16 March 2017].

<sup>xiii</sup> With these agreements, the EU also tries to spread its values and beliefs on human rights and democratic governance, economic liberalisation and privatisation etc. For an overview of all agreements: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/policies/agreements?lang=en> [Accessed 16 June 2016].

<sup>xiv</sup> B. Stokes, R. Wike & J. Poushter (2016) *European Face the World Divided*, *PewResearchCenter*, online available at <http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/06/13/europeans-face-the-world-divided/> [Accessed 16 April 2017].

<sup>xv</sup> See for example Baun, M. J. & D. Marek (2013). *The new member states and the European Union: foreign policy and Europeanization*. Routledge, 256p.

<sup>xvi</sup> B. Hettne and F. Söderbaum (2005) "Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism? The EU as a Global Actor and the Role of Interregionalism", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol.10, p. 510.

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- <sup>xvii</sup> F. Söderbaum, P. Stålgren and L. Van Langenhove (2005) "The EU as a global actor and the dynamics of interregionalism: a comparative analysis", *European Integration*, 27(3), 365-380.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xix</sup> A. Hardacre and M. Smith (2009) "The EU and the diplomacy of complex interregionalism", *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 4(2), 167-188.
- <sup>xx</sup> V. Aggarwal and E. Fogarty (2005) "The limits of Interregionalism: The EU and North America", *European Integration*, vol. 27/3, 342.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Such as EU-ASEAN and EU-ACP. For more on the early forms of interregional dialogues: H. Hänggi (2003) "Regionalism through interregionalism: East Asia and ASEM" in F.K. Liu and P. Regnier, *Regionalism in East Asia: paradigm shifting?* Routledge, London, pp. 48-64.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Ibid footnote vii.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> G. Edwards and E. Regelsberger (eds) (1990) *Europe's Global links: The European Community and Interregional cooperation*, London, Pinter.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> V. Aggarwal and E. Fogarty (2004) *EU Trade strategies: Between Regionalism and Globalism*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, p. 238.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Van Langenhove, L. (2013) *Building regions: the regionalization of the world order*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd, 224p.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> B. Gaens (2012) *The Rise of Interregionalisms: "The Case of the European Union's Relations with East Asia"*, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Regionalisms*, Burlington.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Hänggi, H., Roloff, R., & Rüländ, J. (Eds.). (2006). *Interregionalism and international relations*. London, Routledge, 304p.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxix</sup> R. Roloff (2006) "Interregionalism in theoretical perspective: state of the art", in *Interregionalism and international Relations: A stepping stone to Global Governance*, Hänggi et al, New York, Routledge, p.18.
- <sup>xxx</sup> H. Hänggi (2000) *Interregionalism: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*, paper presented at the conference entitled 'Dollars, Democracy and Trade: External Influence of Economic Integration in the Americas', Los Angeles, 14p.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> A. Malamud and G. L. Gardini (2015) Debunking Interregionalism: Concepts, Types and Critique-With a Transatlantic Focus. *Atlantic Future Working Paper 38*, 23p.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> See [http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/euro/world/other\\_currencies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/world/other_currencies/index_en.htm), [Accessed 2 April 2017].
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> For more, see J. Rüländ (2002) "Interregionalism in International Relations: Conference Summary", Freiberg, [online] available at <http://www.politik.uni-freiburg.de/pdf/InterregSum.pdf> [Accessed 13 February 2017].
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> As quoted in T.M. Shaw and S. Cornelissen (2012) *The Ashgate research companion to regionalisms*. Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Burlington, p.76.
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Söderbaum et al (2005) "The EU as a Global Actor and the Dynamics of Interregionalism: a Comparative Analysis", in *European Integration*, vol. 27/3, p. 370
- <sup>xxxix</sup> B. Zepter (2008) "Reflections on regionalization in Europe: lessons for Asia?", *Asia Europe Journal*, vol. 5, p.463.
- <sup>xl</sup> N.A. De Flers and E. Regelsberger (2004) "The EU and Interregional Cooperation", in C. Hill and M. Smith (eds.), *International Relations and the European Union*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p. 341.
- <sup>xli</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xlii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xliiii</sup> M. Doidge (2011) *The European Union and interregionalism: Patterns of engagement*, Ashgate Ltd., Surrey, p.36.
- <sup>xliv</sup> J. Gilson (2005) "New Interregionalism? The EU and East Asia", *European Integration*, 27(3), 307-326.
- <sup>xliv</sup> M. Doidge (2011) *The European Union and interregionalism: Patterns of engagement*, Ashgate Ltd., Surrey, p.233.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> Söderbaum, F., & Van Langenhove, L. (2005). Introduction: the EU as a global actor and the role of interregionalism. *European Integration*, 27(3), pp. 249-262.
- <sup>xlvii</sup> M. Smith (2004) "Between two worlds? The European Union, the United States and world order", *International Politics*, 41(1), 95-117.
- <sup>xlviii</sup> Many of the official statements and proclamations released by the European Commission underline the liberal



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and idealist underpinnings of the EU.

<sup>xlix</sup> For more on this issue, have a look at I.F. Nunes (2011) "Civilian, Normative and Ethical Power Europe: Role Claims and EU Discourses", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 16(1), pp. 1-20.

Or T.A. Börzel, and T. Risse, (2009) "Venus approaching Mars? The European Union as an emerging civilian world power" *Berliner Arbeitspapiere zur Europäischen Integration*, Center of European Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, 9(11), 21p.

<sup>l</sup> V. Allahverdiyev (2008) Interregionalism as a Foreign Policy Tool of the EU: The Cases of ASEM and EU-ASEAN Partnership, *Master dissertation*, Central European University, Budapest, 59p.

<sup>li</sup> Ibid.

<sup>lii</sup> Defining the region in itself is problematic: e.g. are the Caribbean countries included or not? We stick to the traditional label of Latin America and the Caribbean to identify the region that stretches from the Rio Bravo river to the Tierra del Fuego, including the islands of the Caribbean Basin. That is all the 33 countries in the Western hemisphere excluding Canada and the US.

<sup>liii</sup> Even though the EU uses this argument quite often in its official communications, it has been contested severely overtime due to numerous human rights violations and non-democratic practices by several Latin American and Caribbean states.

<sup>liv</sup> R. Dominguez (2015) *EU Foreign Policy Towards Latin America*, Springer, New York, p.52.

<sup>lv</sup> Gardini, G. L., & Ayuso, A. (2015). EU-Latin America and Caribbean Interregional relations: complexity and change. *Atlantic Future Scientific Paper*, p.11.

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