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The European Union and Latin America

Normative encounters

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Studies

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AFD	French Agency for Development
ALALC	Latin American Free Trade Association
ALBA – TCP	Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CACM	Central American Common Market
CAN	Andean Community
CAP	Common Agriculture Policy
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CCAD	Central American Commission for Environment and Development
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CEPREDENAC	Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America
COMIECO	Council of Ministers of Economy and Trade of Central America
CPC	Joint Parliamentary Committee, Mercosur
CRRH	Regional Committee for Water Resources
DAC	Development Assistance Committee, OECD
DANIDA	Denmark's Development Cooperation
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
DG DEVCO	Directorate – General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission

DG TRADE	Directorate General for Trade, European Commission
DG RELEX	Directorate General for the External Relations, European Commission
EC	European Commission
ECAT	Central American Customs and Tax School
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EEAS	European External Action Service
EES	European Employment Strategy
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
Eurolat	Euro – Latin American Parliamentary Assembly
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FIIAPP	International and Ibero – American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies
FOCALAE	Forum for Cooperation in Latin America and East Asia
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GIZ	German International Cooperation
GRUCA	Group of Central American Ambassadors
GSP	Generalised Scheme of Preferences
HQ	Headquarters
JRC	Joint Research Centre, European Commission
KFW	(German) Reconstruction Credit Institute
LAC	Latin American and Caribbean
MCCA	Central American Common Market
MEBF	Mercosur – European Business Forum

MEP	Member of the European Parliament
Mercosur	Southern Common Market
MICs	Middle income countries
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non – governmental organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAIRCA	Support Programme to the Central American Integration
Parlacen	Central American Parliament
Parlandino	Andean Parliament
Parlasur	Southern Common Market Parliament
Parlatino	Latin American Parliament
PREVDA	Regional Program for the Reduction of Vulnerability and Environmental Degradation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEGIB	Ibero – American General Secretariat
SICA	Central America Integration System
SIECA	Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration
SMEs	Small and medium enterprises
SSC	South – South Cooperation
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations
WP – EEF	Working Party on Aid Effectiveness
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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DECLARATION

I confirm that the submitted work contains neither material from any prior theses nor any material that has already been published. The thesis is my own work submitted for the degree of PhD in Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick. I have not submitted this thesis for consideration elsewhere.

SUMMARY

The current doctoral research looks at how norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter interact, highlighting the limitations of previous research in recognising the agency of the norm interpreter and the complex interactions between the two actors. *Normative encounters* is coined as a central concept for understanding how the EU as norm entrepreneur creates normative dialogues with its interlocutors, in this case Latin American regional organisations. Two dynamics are proposed to show how normative encounters happen or are prevented from doing so. On one side, an analysis is made of cases in which the norm entrepreneur attempts to diffuse its norms to the norm interpreter that localises the norms which are then incorporated (or not) in concrete policies through policy entrepreneurship. On the other side, an equally important dynamic starts with the norm interpreter that creates new norms through norm subsidiarity, diffuses this new normative content and creates a need for the initial norm entrepreneur to adapt its normative approach and to make it visible to the norm interpreter through concrete policies.

By using concepts from both International Relations and public policy studies, the thesis questions and updates the way of looking at the European Union as a normative actor. It also explores the link between norms and policies by analysing the European Union cooperation for development strategies and programmes, as well as the negotiation of Association Agreements with three regional groups in Latin America: Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community. Thus, the study opens a space of analysis in which norm entrepreneurship is part of both the EU desire to diffuse its norms and of its need to adapt to a new international context. In this way, norm entrepreneurship becomes also a reaction to norm subsidiarity and makes it imperative for the European Union to use new norms if it is to keep its normative identity. We are witnessing a shift from a world in which the EU diffuses norms to other actors and regions, to a world in which the EU norms are perceived, interpreted and sometimes challenged, sometimes rejected and replaced by new ones.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION – EUROPEAN UNION EXTERNAL ACTION – NORMATIVE ENCOUNTERS. THE CASE OF LATIN AMERICA

‘A fragile world calls for a more confident and responsible European Union, it calls for an outward and forward looking European foreign and security policy. Our citizens understand that we need to collectively take responsibility for our role in the world. This is no time for uncertainty: our Union needs a strategy. We need a shared vision, and common action’ (Mogherini, 2016, 5).

1. The European Union and its external action – in need of a new approach?

European Union (EU) external relations have been widely debated and contested by both scholars and practitioners. One common element in this debate is the vision centred on the EU norms and its ways to understand and change the international reality through its normative vision. Building on this perspective, the current doctoral thesis questions and updates the way of looking at the European Union as a normative actor.

Surprisingly, even if external relations mean the interaction with other actors, countries and international organisations, much less attention is given in this context to the way in which EU external policies and norms are seen and received by third actors. And even less focus is placed on the way in which other actors may contribute and challenge the European Union normative approaches and policies. This is valid for both scholar work and policy makers’ discourse and practice. The quote used at the beginning of this chapter exemplifies this limitation: the High Representative Federica Mogherini talks about an ‘outward and

forward' foreign policy (Mogherini, 2016, 5), putting aside the link between an outward – inward policy, the link between how the EU thinks that cooperation and dialogue should be planned and how these same issues are seen by its partners. However, in the same document, the *EU Global Strategy*, Mogherini talks about 'not striv[ing] to export [the EU] model, but rather seek reciprocal inspiration from different regional experiences' (Mogherini, 2016, 32). The idea is central to the thesis and, through the analysis undertaken in the empirical chapters, this recent addition to the EU discourse will be contrasted with concrete policy initiatives.

The current doctoral research proposes an analysis of EU external relations as an interaction in which feedback loops are coined as *normative encounters* between norm entrepreneurs and norm interpreters. The research describes the interaction between actors as regions and the way in which they build a normative framework as a normative loop to which both norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter contribute and within which they can switch roles (these terms will be better explained in Chapter 2, where the theoretical framework is detailed). The overarching objective is to conceptualise the role of the norm entrepreneur and of the norm interpreter, by looking at the link between norms and policies and at the way in which policies articulate norms, a link that, even if exploited by previous research (as examples: Vickers, 1973, Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998), has still a lot to offer in terms of understanding international politics. The main contribution of the research is bridging between the norms and public policy literature to provide a more dynamic and less Eurocentric account of how norms are diffused and interpreted. This will mean looking into how norm entrepreneurs and norm interpreters interact and how this is translated in concrete policies.

I argue that norms translated or embedded in policies reflect contributions coming from both sides: the norm entrepreneur and the norm interpreter. On the contrary, in other cases the interaction between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter provokes a decoupling between norms and policies. The key element resides in the *normative encounters* making the link between these actors a crucial element. The analysis will connect concepts coming from the norm literature such as norm localisation and norm subsidiarity (Acharya, 2004, Acharya, 2011) and the three streams (Kingdon, 1995), explaining how policies come to be adopted considering the issue that needs to be addressed (problem stream), the solution (policy stream) and the political environment in which the policy solution is to be proposed (politics stream). It means understanding how the content of norms, but also external factors (related to the three streams, as detailed in Chapter 2) condition, limiting or favouring policies articulating particular norms.

The link between these strands of literature will be highlighted at both the level of actors and structures. At the level of actors, the idea of an interpreter is a main contribution and a link between these literatures, since the interpreters are present at both the level of norm diffusion and when setting the policy agenda. It is a role that has been highly overlooked by public policy literature and understood as a limited one – direction process by the norm diffusion literature. This needs to be corrected and unpacked by expanding the nuances of the entrepreneurship process and accommodating the role of interpreters. At the level of structures, the ideas / norms that flow from the entrepreneur to the interpreter and are changed or challenged by interpreters, to be then incorporated in policy initiatives, ensure the second link between norm diffusion and the three streams.

The concept of *normative encounters* involves several contributions to the different literatures that are brought together. Understanding the way in which the EU can switch roles with the norm interpreter of its norms (as will be shown below, Latin America regional organisations) is a contribution to both the literature on norm diffusion and the literature on the EU as normative power and entrepreneur. Such clarification is a reflection towards understanding if the EU is not exclusively a norm entrepreneur as it has been presented in the literature (Cerutti and Lucarelli, 2008, Diez, 2013, Jetschke and Lenz, 2013, Lenz, 2013, Lucarelli and Manners, 2006, Manners, 2002, Manners, 2013, Merlingen, 2007), but also a norm interpreter. In this sense, a further aim of this doctoral research is to analyse if as a possible norm interpreter, the EU is adapting its norms to a different international reality in which actors that used to be the target of its norm diffusion attempts are becoming norm entrepreneurs on their own (in areas of international cooperation as for example, promoting the South – South cooperation).

Another contribution that the research makes is towards the three streams literature, in which the normative framework conditions or leverages actions in the politics and problem stream, and this is made visible in the policy stream. It means that the current framework takes into account the interactions at a normative level and can come as an explanation for otherwise hardly understandable policy outputs. Differentiating the interpreter within the politics stream is another important contribution and a way to balance the influence coming from both sides also at the level of policies and not only at normative level.

Taking as a case study the EU relationship with different regional organisations in Latin America, the thesis aims to answer the following central research question: *How is norm*

diffusion conditioned by the politics, problem and policy streams in seeing norms being incorporated in concrete policy proposals? In this sense the empirical chapters will test the following propositions:

- a) If the norm interpreter becomes norm entrepreneur (we are witnessing norm subsidiarity), then the initial norm entrepreneur will frame new norms, better adapted to the new normative context, and make this visible in the policy stream.**

This means that the roles of norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter can be switched at different points in time.

- b) If the norm entrepreneur secures in the politics stream the right interlocutors, then this will allow norm diffusion to the norm interpreter and will lead to norm adoption and adaptation.**

Conversely, when the norm interpreters form a coalition whose normative vision is in normative friction with that of the norm entrepreneur, the norm entrepreneur is in a weaker position and its norms will be rejected or resisted.

- c) If the right principles and practise are applied in the policy stream, then normative friction is avoided in the problem stream thus preventing (and making less likely) cases of norm resistance and rejection.**

Switching for example from vertical to horizontal cooperation (as a renewed principle) and making use of joint programming (as a renewed practice) ensures ownership of the proposed solutions on the interpreter side and helps preventing cases of norm resistance and norm rejection.

The propositions contribute to the final objective – understanding and conceptualising the roles of *norm entrepreneur* and *norm interpreter*. They look at both the content of the norms and the three streams, problematizing the switching roles and how this needs to be addressed by actors such as the EU who used to be seen as norm entrepreneurs, but under a more careful analysis need to address norm subsidiarity from their norm interpreters and create an adapted normative content reflected in renewed policies.

Concerning the EU as an international actor, it can be seen as benefiting from the diversity of experiences and the wide range of networks that Member States have established with other countries and regions around the world (based on their interests, but also depending on their historical heritage and cultural affinity). However, the EU is also facing challenges related to the way of building a different international presence from its Member States that brings together their assets and makes Europe a stronger international actor, ensuring that third countries and regions recognise the EU as legitimate and relevant in international affairs. EU Member States diversity is seen as a ‘tremendous asset’ (Mogherini, 2016, 46) for the EU. Nevertheless, this perspective is missing the fact that the EU is also the result of the political and economic networks that Member States have developed with third actors.

While military power is still a national competence, even if the EU is trying to develop some incipient forms of hard power presence, the predominant dimension around which the EU external policies have been analysed relates to norms. Without denying the importance that military may play in the EU foreign policy if Member States decide to delegate more power to the EU level, this doctoral study gives greater importance to norms,

as being dominant and easier to identify in EU external actions, and in the next section we will get back to and further develop the implications.

Aiming to capture these ideas and analyse the way in which the EU acts on the international scene, scholars have used the lens of different theoretical concepts, including those of the EU as *civilian power* (Kohnstamm et al., 1973, Rogers, 2009, Telò, 2005), *normative power* (Diez, 2013, Lenz, 2013, Lucarelli and Manners, 2006, Manners, 2002, Manners, 2006, Manners, 2013, Merlingen, 2007, Onar and Nicolaidis, 2013, Parker and Rosamond, 2013, Tocci and Hamilton, 2008, Whitman, 2011), *soft power* or *smart power* (Nye, 2004), using strategic (Smith, 2016) or structural diplomacy (Keukeleire et al., 2016) in promoting its foreign policy objectives. Whereas trying to keep a balance between the influence of structure and agents, these concepts favour the influence of structures, limiting the role of agency to that of the EU as initiator of dialogue and main actor promoting its norms and managing to get through agreements and create institutions based on these norms. EU counterparts are predominantly missing from this literature that becomes Eurocentric, meaning that the role of third actors in challenging, adapting or rejecting EU norms and policies is largely overlooked.

The current chapter recognises the importance of the concepts previously developed in the literature and analyses their relevance. However, the framework proposed here aims at rebalancing the way in which research has been conducted based on predominantly introspective analyses and less on how this has been seen, received and changed by third actors, countries and regions with which the European Union has tried to develop different forms of cooperation and dialogue, promoting its norms.

The research will look at the EU as a norm entrepreneur, and its 'added value' will be to highlight at the same time the role played by its counterparts, a part that has received much less attention than the current international state of affairs would require. This shortcoming in the way in which the EU normative behaviour has been analysed by scholars needs to be addressed and a balance needs to be found between the role of the entrepreneur and that of the target of its norm diffusion. The approach adopted here goes in line with recent initiatives to analyse the EU normative role such as Allison's analysis on 'EU, ASEAN and interregionalism', looking at the way in which norms on regional integration and interregionalism have been diffused by the EU to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and at the way in which the ASEAN region has adapted and adopted some norms, while challenging and rejecting others (Allison, 2015). It also follows similar ideas to those of Krasnodębska when highlighting the role of Eastern Europe in shaping Western institutions (Krasnodębska, 2014).

Other efforts aiming for similar balanced approaches need to be acknowledged. The research of Diez and Pace (2011) is an important contribution towards exploiting the need for a less Eurocentric approach when analysing the EU relations with third actors. Looking at the cases of Palestine / Israel and Cyprus, they conclude that the contribution of the EU interlocutors is more important than traditionally assumed by both scholars and policy makers, conditioning norm diffusion and the success of EU policies. Building on these visions, the current research proposes looking at how this is reflected in renewed EU norms and how the EU becomes a norm interpreter in addition to norm entrepreneur.

Applying similar ideas and further developing them in the context of a different geographical space (Latin America), the thesis proposes an analysis of *normative encounters*

(a term that will be explained in Chapter 2) between the EU and its counterparts. In this sense, the current approach is also close to Grugel's vision on the EU – Latin America cooperation when highlighting that the EU aims to create a real partnership 'based around notions of equity and cooperation that ignores or transcends the underlying power inequalities' (Grugel, 2004, 608). The thesis has as goal to go even further and bets for an even more horizontal concept such as *normative encounters* between the two regions.

2. The EU and its external relations – what type of actor?

First, it is important to go back to the different concepts through which the EU has been analysed as an international actor and to understand how previous research has looked at EU's external behaviour and identity. A first observation to be made is that some of these concepts were valid explanations at the moment when they were created, showing the EU's role and behaviour on the international scene. However, the way in which international politics and power relations have evolved is challenging the explanatory basis of these concepts and their ability to construct a more inclusive framework to understand the EU as an external actor.

The second observation concerns the fact that most of the concepts to be developed in this section refer to the EU as a power (for example, civilian, normative, soft or smart), and some further reflections are needed since the concept of power does not easily sit with the balanced approach proposed in this research. The dimension related to power is one that can be seen as out – dated, at least partially. As showed by Allison's research (2015), this is because actors like ASEAN, Latin America or other emergent countries and regions are no longer as dependent on the EU or other actors' aid as they used to be. We may want to

define power as an extended concept including not only material constraints, but normative or ideational parts, and in this sense, we may conclude that the idea of the power exerted by the EU in other parts of the world may still be useful. However, from the current research perspective, thinking about norm entrepreneurship as a more equal process questions even this manner of defining power and deploying it as a useful tool. It does not mean that power cannot be seen as an important way of analysing current international relations. Nevertheless, when power becomes less relevant is when trying to answer the question related to who has the power since both the entrepreneur and the interpreter are contributing to the creation of norms? Power becomes so diffuse that it is difficult to recognise who 'has it'. It is something that is being shared and from this point of view it is not a characteristic of the EU.

The perspective advanced in the current thesis can be seen as closer to the way in which Vivien Schmidt and Martin Carstensen conceive power. For Schmidt, actors (re)construct those structures with which they interact and which may constrain or determine them (Schmidt, 2008). The policy actors make efforts at all levels, at the bottom and at the top of the power hierarchy to make their ideas appealing to the general public and ensure the support and the success of their proposals (Schmidt, 2011). This 'contrasts with the singular focus on top – down interaction generally characterising the compulsory, structural and institutional understandings of power' (Carstensen and Schmidt, 2016, 322). For Schmidt and Carstensen, the power rests in the ideas that actors promote, in the way in which they ensure the hegemony of their views and resist the inclusion of alternative ideas or build institutions that impose which views should be considered as more influential. However, the part that is missing and questions the concept of power is the way in which

actors that are the target of this ideational diffusion can respond or challenge the ideas and can try to build new ones as a way of resistance or to adapt the existing ones to better address their own views and convictions. The current thesis can be seen as contributing towards addressing this last limitation and looking at concepts such as *norm subsidiarity* as a possible answer.

An additional point concerns the relation between structural and ideational power, with structural power understood as depending on ideational power. Ideational power becomes crucial through the idea of *normative encounters* that places norms at the centre of the interaction between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter. This idea is further developed when considering cases in which the EU is potentially becoming a norm interpreter switching roles with those that used to be the target of its norm diffusion efforts. And this 'cycle' is completed through the policy implications and limitations of these *encounters*.

The discussion around the concept of *power* and its relevance and limitations in analysing the EU international presence is valid for all the concepts that are presented in this section as ways that have been previously used in the attempt to capture the nature of the EU as international actor. In this sense, a first concept looking at the EU in a foreign policy context is that of civilian power. In the 1970s, Duchêne introduced the concept of the European Union as civilian power, with no need to use military means since integration can be a guarantee that its Member States will never go to war with each other (Kohnstamm et al., 1973). The civilian power was for Duchêne the way in which an actor is using means related to politics and economy, with the military dimension being omitted. While it is true that in the 1970s the dimensions of the European Political Cooperation were a concept very

much in its infancy, along with the military side that was far from being a European reality, and while this is still true to a large extent, the crisis management dimension with involvement from the European Commission, the EU Council Secretariat and Member States can challenge the idea of a complete absence of such military involvement of the EU in different parts of the world. In addition, the new European Consensus on Development (2017) and the link between development and security questions even more such idea. This could lead us to conclude that the EU has a civilian dimension in its external action, but this characteristic is no longer exclusive, involving a coordination mechanism in cases where the experience of the EU is seen as being able to bring a contribution to peace.

Along the critics, the idea of Europe as a civilian power has been questioned by scholars such as Sjursen (2006), Smith (2000) and Stavridis (2001a, 2001b). For Stavridis, the main constraint concerns the fact that a civilian power needs to be civilian both in means and in ends. While the EU can be seen as civilian in terms of means, not the same can be argued concerning the ends, and the author gives the example of Cyprus and Turkey (2001b, 98), where we see a mix of these tools. For Smith (2000) the debate is much more complex than has been previously assumed in the literature. The EU sits at the intersection between civilian power values that are non – military, and state – building ambitions that would see the development of military capabilities as a culmination of the European project. Sjursen (2006) helps to connect these ideas to a different perspective on the EU as an international actor: the European Union as a normative power, whose behaviour aims to define conceptions and behaviours on the international scene and to promote its norms.

We can conclude that whereas the civilian power framework was a useful tool four decades ago, it no longer explains the EU reality in its full complexity. However, we can keep

the idea of a behaviour based more on non – military instruments and less on hard power due to the importance given to such approach by main EU institutions (we can take as an example the interest of the European Commission in cultural diplomacy¹). In addition, the military dimension is just a developing proposal for strengthening European integration, and it is still facing important opposition from the Member States.

As previously mentioned, the normative power is a second concept. Building on concepts of civilian power from Duchêne and power of ideas from Galtung (Galtung, 1973), Manners argues that the European Union is building its international identity based on norms. Both the importance given to treaties and its historical background provide the EU with the tools to use norms as basis for its relations with third actors. For Manners, the normative behaviour of the EU on the international scene develops its power of attraction (Manners, 2002). Using the words of Romano Prodi, Manners says that the EU ‘must aim to become a global civil power at the service of sustainable global development’ (Prodi, 2000, 3 in Manners, 2002, 236). While this concept is similar to civilian power, it highlights the idea of an actor whose influence is based on the attraction of norms, such as democracy, the rule of law and the respect for fundamental rights as presented in the Treaty on European Union (European Union, 2007). The EU remains at the same time a non – military actor, idea that can be questioned to a certain extent considering the last evolutions.

For the current research, the normative dimension of the EU as international actor is an important one. The promotion of norms is considered a key part of the EU foreign policy, but this research acknowledges the fact that some further clarifications are needed when looking at the EU as norm entrepreneur. A balanced view is needed in analysing the role

¹ More information at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/announcements/news/20160401_1_en.htm, last accessed on 12th December 2016.

played by the actors of this process, highlighting the agency of the norm interpreter and the effect of such agency on the entrepreneur.

The perspective adopted in this doctoral study adds the argument that not only will these actors adapt and sometimes reject norms coming from outside, but that the norm entrepreneur also takes in feedback and can adapt its norms (the first proposition). This depends on the actor that was initially the norm interpreter of its norm and that is becoming to a certain extent an entrepreneur in itself. Adding this dimension and problematizing it, makes it even harder to keep the idea of the 'power' relation between the entrepreneur and the interpreter.

Among other visions that are significantly different from Manners' theoretical framework, Onar and Nicolaïdis argue that Europe should rethink its agency in the non – European world using a decentring agenda in order to acknowledge the influence of colonialism in the EU discourse and adapt its normative power to the coming century (Onar and Nicolaïdis, 2013). For Merlingen 'the EU's self – styled mission for humanity inscribes the very agency of those it seeks to empower in relations characterised by epistemic violence' (Merlingen, 2007, 435). These are important mentions because of their way to open the path for including also the norm interpreter and the idea that the colonial discourse may prevent the EU from achieving its full normative potential.

Adding nuances to this vision on the EU as normative power, the idea of the European Union as market power and as ethical power brings additional challenges to the concept. First, the idea of Europe as a trade or market power builds on 'the EU's capacity to capitalise intentionally on its market power to achieve foreign policy goals' (Jurje & Lavenex, 2013, 325). It means that it is able to externalise its 'economic and social market – related policies

and regulatory measures' (Damro, 2012, 682) due to its market size and ability to use this as an argument in the negotiations with third actors. For Meunier and Nicolaïdis (2006), the efforts made to understand the EU as a normative power need to acknowledge the EU 'power through trade, using access to its huge market as a bargaining chip to obtain changes in the domestic policies of its trading partners, from labour standards to human rights, and more generally to shape new patterns of global governance' (p. 907). However, the authors conclude by showing contradictions embedded in this idea of EU power through trade. Two are particularly relevant in the context of the current research: the EU as both a Western actor and a mediating one, trying to bring to the table the voice of developing actors, and the EU as a promoter of equal partnership, but at the same time making the trade openness conditional on a political agenda (an example can be the GSP schema that will be further debated in the next chapters).

Criticising the perspective based mainly on structural power, Nyaga Munyi (2015) looks at the EU negotiations (mainly in the ACP context) as being conditioned by the degree of norm convergence between trade officials negotiating on behalf of ACP countries and those coming from the EU. In the same vein, looking at the negotiations of EPA in the ACP context, Heron and Murray-Evans (2017) conclude that the EU leverage due to its internal market needs to be acknowledged, but we need to take into account the '*grey area* between asymmetrical power relations and bargaining outcomes' (emphasis added) (p. 358). These latter approaches are close to the way in which this type of EU power will be understood in the current thesis: while acknowledging it, the importance of norms and their convergence is understood as a condition and influencing factor for reaching or not an agreement. Interests are seen as framed by the institutional context and actor's preferences, rather

than naturally given. This reinforces the explanation previously given on the relation between structural and ideational power, making institutions a zone of political contestation and not a one size fits all constraining factor (Heron and Murray-Evans, 2017, 346).

Concerning Europe as ethical power, the current research will use some of its dimensions (as defined by Aggestam, 2008) in updating the way of looking at the EU normative power. Refocusing the research on *what the EU does* rather than on *what the EU is* will show much better the contradictions and limitations of this normative behaviour. Two additional ideas that are relevant for this thesis are the fact that when talking about the EU external presence we should acknowledge both the international politics (the EU as another actor within the international system), and the internal politics – the role of Member States should not be ignored. However, the critique to this framework is that once again it proves to be Eurocentric, largely ignoring how this EU behaviour is conditioned by its norm interpreters, and how new norms may be needed if the EU is to be seen as a relevant international actor. In this sense, the idea that ‘the ethical action in foreign policy is considered through the lens of how other actors perceive the EU’ (Aggestam, 2008, 9) is an argument for a balanced approach. Yet, the second part of this argument: ‘the EU in turn is able to learn from and reflect upon this experience. Without this self – reflexivity, the EU would indeed become a power imposing its conception of the *good life* on others in the international system’ (Aggestam, 2008, 9) is still missing a dynamic, circular interaction between the EU and other actors. It is in this sense a Eurocentric vision to a large extent, not completely acknowledging the challenges that this self – reflexivity involves on the EU side.

A last concept, smart power is very much related to the idea of normative and soft power. Introduced by Joseph Nye in the USA context, it is a framework based on the

assumption that there were limitations in the previous approaches in which promoting norms or soft power was seen as sufficient for keeping a relevant status on the international scene (Nye, 2004). It means that in addition to the attraction power that is an important foreign policy strategy for both the USA and the EU, a military or hard power dimension is difficult, if not impossible to avoid. While this is not completely applicable to the EU, its incipient forms of military cooperation are a long – term objective if enough support from the Member States will be available. The idea that the military dimension is an important part of EU foreign policy can become a more relevant one for the nature of the EU external relations, however at this point in time it is only one which is starting to have some concrete limited manifestations (through, for example, the creation of a Defence Fund, with mostly research functions). While not denying it, this research project does not consider that such dimension is used enough by the EU in its external policies to be considered a sufficiently relevant one to date.

More recent concepts look at the EU on the international scene as using predominantly strategic diplomacy and / or structural diplomacy (Keukeleire et al., 2016, Smith, 2016). Whereas these concepts help to understand the way in which the EU is behaving in international affairs, they show more the type of strategies and instruments the European Union is using and less the type of actor that the EU is. The two concepts can be analysed together. However, there are some important distinctions between them.

Strategic diplomacy is a response to the increasing importance of emergent actors. Countries like China, Brazil, Russia, South Africa, India (BRICS) or Mexico, Indonesia, Chile are having an increasing importance and economic visibility on the international scene. In this sense, strategic diplomacy can be defined as being ‘concerned with the generation and

pursuit of a strategic vision, and with the provision of principles and guidelines to shape the positioning of the EU both in the global arena more generally and in relation to key strategic partners' (Smith, 2016, 115). This concept casts light on numerous actions of the EU in its foreign policy, such as the decision to establish a strategic partnership with Brazil, while continuing to negotiate an interregional agreement with the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) (jeopardising its region – to – region strategy). However, it is a concept focused on the EU and it does not concern the way in which this strategic diplomacy has been seen and received by the actors that were target of such strategic partnerships.

Similarly, the idea of structural power highlights the ambition of the EU to keep and increase its relevance in international relations by promoting its structures, by initiating a 'process of dialogue and negotiation [...] seek[ing] to influence or shape sustainable political, legal, economic, social and security structures at different levels in a given geographical space' (Keukeleire et al., 2016, 200). Similar to the idea of strategic diplomacy, structural diplomacy is concerned more with the agency of the EU and less with that of other regions or countries with which the EU is trying to promote deeper forms of cooperation.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, while these different concepts have helped to analyse the EU at different moments in time and have brought to light ways in which the EU has tried to portray itself on the international scene (a mix between scholar and practitioners views), they have tended to exclude the perceptions of other actors, the ways in which this has been received by the external partners of the EU. There are however important exceptions that need to be acknowledged like Lucarelli and Manners (2006), Lucarelli and Fioramonti (2009), Casier & Debardeleben (2018), Chaban and Holland (2014). For example, through her work on BRICS and their perceptions on the EU, Lucarelli (in

Lucarelli and Fioramonti, 2009) adds important nuances on European Union inconsistencies, damaging its credibility, as well as its legitimacy and inclusive negotiation style.

The civilian, soft and smart power are useful concepts, but they cannot be fully applied to the European Union (examples of problematic dimensions of these concepts include the link between military and non – military presence). The structural and strategic diplomacy concepts explain pragmatic foreign policy actions of the EU, but do not concern the way in which other actors react to this. The normative framework seems one that can still be applied to the EU behaviour on the international scene, however adapting it. This is one of the objectives of the next chapter. Differently from some of the previously mentioned concepts, the normative framework can be unwrapped and adapted to the current international context, acknowledging the influence of both soft and hard forms of international presence, and the agency of both sides in the norm entrepreneurship process, the entrepreneur and the interpreter. This will be the core of the next chapter, as the theoretical chapter of the thesis that will build on the elements already mentioned in this chapter: an EU behaviour based mainly on norms, with incipient forms of military presence and important elements of the EU as trade power and the EU as ethical power.

In conclusion, while placing the thesis within these frameworks looking predominately at the nature of the EU as international actor and at its behaviour in relation to third countries and international organisations, the contribution of the current doctoral work is that of focusing to the same extent on the EU as norm promoter and on its norm interpreters as challengers and sometimes creators of norms. *Norm interpreters* is a concept used to identify and understand the reactions of other regions and countries to the EU initiatives. Limited attempts to rebalance the predominantly EU focused perspective have

already started with recent works (Allison, 2015, Krasnodębska, 2014). However, additional research can clarify and apply new theoretical lens in order to understand this complex reality. Not only that this research will apply an innovative combination of theoretical tools, by combining concepts from the public policy area (the entrepreneurship framework) and International Relations (socialisation, norm diffusion), but also the geographic area (Latin America) to which it will apply this theoretical framework has received less attention than needed and the reactions and norm challenges of the Latin American regional groups have been only marginally treated in the EU focused approach. The contribution is in this way a theoretical and empirical one and understanding these dynamics between theory and empirical findings stays at the core of the entire research process.

Before analysing in detail the theoretical concepts used in this research and understanding the challenges of the data collection process, the next section of the chapter aims at bringing some methodological clarifications and a justification for the regional focus of the empirical work.

3. Methodological clarifications and explanation of the case study choice

A first question that needs to be answered is why Latin America is a helpful case study for understanding how the EU acts as a norm entrepreneur and how the norm interpreter conditions its norm diffusion process, feeds back, challenges and sometimes rejects its norms.

A first argument is that the EU dialogue with Latin America is more institutionalised than that with Africa or Asia for example. Differently from Asia where the most advanced dialogue is with ASEAN, in Latin America there are different levels of institutionalised

dialogue at bilateral, subregional and regional level with practically all the relevant regional organisations and the most strategic countries (here included Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Central America, the Andean countries, Mercosur and CELAC). By institutionalised dialogue, the current research understands a dialogue that is sustained by regular meetings, common action plans, regional or bilateral negotiations for Trade and Association Agreements (like the ones with Central America; the Andean Region – except for Bolivia; Mercosur; Chile and Mexico) and a common Parliamentary Assembly (Eurolat). This is facilitated by the increasing level of regional integration in Latin America, as the region that together with the European Union has been promoting different forms of regionalism, adapting the forms of regional and subregional dialogue to its ideological and political diversity.

A second argument relates to what can seem as purely political declarations and a discourse aiming at encouraging the interregional cooperation. It concerns the common norms between the two regions. The argument here is that even if this is a political discourse that can be encountered also in the EU relation with other regions, Latin America has the advantage that democracy is a reality since several decades, overcoming the period of military dictatorship and redrawing the regional reality, helping millions of people to overcome poverty in the last years. This has been consolidated together with the importance of human rights, sustainable development and the rule of law, all of them being common with the EU. The degree to which this can be considered similar between the two regions allows easier comparisons than those with other regions.

While the fact that Latin America has been traditionally a distant region to the EU, one that was not central to European strategies and not a priority from the security, political or economic perspective, this is seen here as more of an advantage and not a disadvantage

when analysing how the norm diffusion process works. This is because when interests are less at stake (without saying that they are completely absent), the norm diffusion may be better observed and analysed. However, interests are acknowledged and as scholars coming from the constructivist approach highlight, the perspective is that interests are informed by norms and the other way around, so both norms and interests condition each other (Youngs, 2004).

On the contrary, Europe has been central to Latin America at least from some concrete points of view. The European Union is the leading donor in the region and in this sense a key partner for the development cooperation, the second trade partner and the first foreign investor². This could potentially limit the type of reactions that Latin American countries and regional organisations will have to the EU normative initiative. If, on the contrary, a wide range of reactions can be detected and argued, the conclusion that we can reach is that in regions where the EU role is more limited, the challenges and rejections of the EU norms and initiatives will have an even higher probability.

A second question that needs to be answered and clarified at this point is how different concepts are used in the current research. The European Union is used as a concept defining all the institutions that are part of the organisation, with the aim to highlight the role of particular institutions at particular points in time. When talking about the EU, the research refers to its entire institutional structure, here included the Delegations in different countries and regions around the world and the actions that Member States choose to coordinate with or delegate to the EU level. However, higher importance will be given to

² For more information: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/methodology-eu-latin-america-development-cooperation-guide-2010_en_2.pdf, last accessed on 12th December 2016.

institutions like the Parliament, Commission, the European External Action Service and the Council, while other institutions will be mentioned less since their role in EU external relations is more limited. A more detailed explanation will be offered in Chapter 3, a conceptual chapter that proposes an explanation of how to understand the EU and its external relations.

Another concept that needs to be clarified is external relations, used also as 'external action' or 'foreign policy'. The way in which this is deployed in reference to the EU is similar to how it is explained by the Lisbon Treaty including Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security, Development, External Trade, with less attention given to additional dimensions like Humanitarian Assistance and Fisheries, since they are not well developed in the EU dialogue with Latin America (European Union, 2007). Next chapters will detail how the different dimensions of the European Union external relations interact with each other (development, trade and political dialogue).

When analysing different initiatives, programmes and forums of dialogue with Latin America and the Caribbean (the LAC region), references will be made to the whole region in the context of organisations like the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and when mentioning the political dialogue, while at trade and cooperation for development level more references will be made to Latin America and less to the Caribbean. This is because the relation with Central and South America has been developed independently, while the framework with the Caribbean has been debated and negotiated in the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) context. This justifies also the cases that were chosen for analysing the Association Agreement negotiation process and outputs. Only Central America, the Andean Community and Mercosur will be considered in this context.

Agency is another key concept and some further clarifications are needed concerning the way in which it is used and deployed here. Having agency includes initiating a process of norm diffusion or reacting to such process by adopting, adapting, resisting or rejecting a norm. It means the relation is a bi – directional one and it ensures the visibility of positions from both sides, the initiator or entrepreneur and the interpreter that may become entrepreneur when as reaction to the norm diffusion process decides to go beyond adoption, adaption, resistance or rejection and creates new norms. Even if the analysis presents the EU in the role of entrepreneur, it does not exclude nor ignore the situations when Latin American entities become norm entrepreneurs. On the contrary, this study considers such situations as enlightening and helpful in understanding the complexity of the dialogue between the two regions. *Normative encounters* are built exactly on this idea of agency on both sides of the cooperation and dialogue process, and on interactions and normative initiatives that condition, favouring or limiting the other actor's normative initiatives and policies. The way to understand *policies* is by referring to (changes in) institutional arrangements, or through concrete policy programmes and practices of the interpreter. These same dimensions are included in the way in which Chaban *et al.* analyse policies (Chaban et al., 2015). The current research does not have as objective to make a differentiation between the three elements, but it will treat them as part of the same dynamics.

Getting back to the importance of considering both agents, the election between terms such as *bi – regional* and *interregional* favours the idea of an interaction between actors and in this sense the use of *interregional* when referring to the relation between the two regions is preferred. The European Union itself uses both terms and a more neutral one, *regional*

cooperation. For example, the European Commission 2007 – 2013 programme for Latin America talks about an ‘EU – Latin American interregional dialogue’ when referring to migration (European Commission, 2007d, 13) and cooperation on combating drug trafficking (European Commission, 2007d, 22). However, the document talks about a ‘biregional partnership’ in topics such as ‘multilateralism, social cohesion and regional integration’ (European Commission, 2007d, 15). In the 2014 – 2020 multiannual programme with Latin America, the European Commission and the European External Action Service refer to ‘bi – regional’ Summits (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014, 1) that were being held between the two actors since 1999 with a change in 2013 when the EU interlocutor became the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States; but, when presenting concrete areas of dialogue, the cooperation is ‘continental’ (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014, pp. 2 - 3); and the 2014 – 2020 strategy itself becomes ‘regional’, while the ‘programmes pursued at continental level’ (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014, 1) are ‘regional’ as well.

This use of terms shows once more that a more horizontal, equal dialogue is missing, and the European Commission and the European External Action Service are not presenting in these strategies a vision taking into account the reactions and needs of the Latin American counterpart. *Interregional*, on the other side, shows an interaction between the two parts and takes better into account their reactions and encounters.

Sub – regional is a related term. It refers to the relation with regional organisations in Latin America such as the Andean Community, Mercosur and Central America. It is termed in the same way in the 2014 – 2020 Programme of the Cooperation for Development Instrument by the Commission and the EEAS (European Commission and European External

Action Service, 2014, 2) when referring to Central America. While these three regional groups are independent and fully fledged regional initiatives, the term *sub – regional* is only used with the purpose of making a difference between these entities and the dialogue with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Specific concepts used in different parts of the thesis will be clarified in the specific chapters. However, the concepts explained here are common to the whole thesis and they are fundamental for understanding the argument, objectives and propositions of the research.

4. Research methods

The objective of this study is to conceptualise the roles of ‘norm entrepreneur’ and ‘norm interpreter’. It means understanding the complex normative encounters between the EU and its interlocutors, in this case Latin America, looking at the dynamics on both sides, at how they adapt to each other reactions and how their cooperation and the norms on which this is based are being designed by this interaction and reflected in policies. The contribution of this approach is to analyse if differently from how it was perceived in the literature, the EU can also be a norm interpreter and not only an entrepreneur.

Even if the research will be based on a case study of different regional organisations and groups of Latin American countries, the remarks can be generalised although some limitations will apply. For example, facts like the ones concerning how the EU needs to pay attention to its counterparts’ reactions and adapt its norm diffusion process while at the same time become aware and fully integrate the idea that its norms are transformed and

changed in these interactions are remarks that can become important independently of the regional focus. On the other side, the intensity of these reactions and the importance that the EU gives to the reactions will be different depending on how important the actor is for the EU (in terms of economic interests and politics) and to what extent it is able to challenge the EU norms. These can be examples of generalisations that cannot be made following the analysis of this research.

The methods used to address the research propositions are multiple. On one hand, the process tracing method is used to understand the beginnings of the EU relations with different regional groups and actors in Latin America, as well as their evolution. In this sense the period of time is rather extensive, with every empirical chapter starting with a general overview and presentation of these antecedents. However, the period of time considered for a more detailed understanding of the different reactions is more limited to the negotiations of Association Agreements or crucial international negotiations linked to this interregional cooperation. The choices will be justified in each chapter, although keeping these common elements and focusing on the direct negotiations involving more than one dimension of the EU dialogue with Latin America (for instance trade, development and political dialogue all together).

On the other hand, Latin America is a case study and it will be developed using information from different sources, both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources will include official documents from the European Union, Latin America and interregional meetings. In addition, 70 interviews were conducted in different countries (on site in 3 countries, by phone in 3 other countries). A first set of interviews (40 interviews) was conducted in Brussels with both EU officials and politicians, and Latin American

diplomats working in the Missions to the EU, between September 2014 and June 2015. Brussels was chosen as a first place for the fieldwork because of the advantages it offers as an environment in which the EU interacts and negotiates with Latin America, and a place where several crucial meetings were held (including the second EU – CELAC Summit in June 2015). A second set of interviews (20 interviews) was conducted in Madrid (between January and April 2016) in Latin American embassies and some interregional forums (such as SEGIB, the Ibero – American General Secretariat), and this is because several Latin American diplomats that were directly involved in the negotiations with the EU moved meanwhile to Madrid, but also because of the strategic place that Spain holds in the EU dialogue with Latin America. A third and smaller set of interviews (5 interviews) was conducted in New York with Latin American Embassies close to two main events, the climate change negotiations for the Paris Agreement and the negotiations for the 2030 Agenda for Development that concluded with the Sustainable Development Objectives.

All these interviews were conducted face – to – face. Some additional interviews (5) were conducted by telephone with representatives from the EU – LAC Foundation, Latin American and European NGOs based in Germany, Chile and Ecuador (a balance between actors with which the European Union has different types of relations, at bilateral level with Chile, at almost interregional level with Ecuador – as part of the multiparty agreement with Peru, Colombia and Ecuador – after having failed to achieve such agreement in a first phase, in 2011 – 2012). In this sense an equilibrium was searched by getting input both from European and Latin American policy makers, and governmental and non – governmental actors (NGOs mainly, with some input from the business sector).

The interviews conducted with Latin American Embassies and Missions to the EU included almost all countries in the region. While all of them were contacted, some of them did not reply (this is the case of Venezuela, and, for data collection purposes, other sources were used, as for example asking countries with similar interests and regional position about the Venezuelan vision on regional and interregional negotiations). The diplomats contacted in the Latin American Embassies and Representations to the EU were at Counsellor – level or higher, in few cases the interviews were conducted with the Heads of Mission. In the EU institutions the interviewees were Heads of Units mainly, ensuring a broader perspective and the fact that inputs came from both the more practical, policy – oriented view and the high politics since Heads of Unit are direct interlocutors in many cases both for the Latin American diplomats and politicians, and the highest rank positions in the EU institutions (such as Directors and Commissioners).

The questions that were asked aimed to be the same in all the interviews. They were semi – structured interviews, with questions focusing on antecedents, the way the EU – Latin America dialogue has developed, challenges and successes, reactions from Latin American actors and the future and perspective of the dialogue between the two regions. The duration of the interviews varied between one hour and two hours and a half.

The aim of the fieldwork was to complete the information available in the primary and secondary sources and to add the ‘Latin American’ voice that is missing from previous research or has been considered only on a limited basis. The different geographical places (Brussels, Madrid and the smaller number of interviews conducted in other places) and the different types of actors (officials working for the EU institutions or coming from the EU Member States administrations in the case of some EEAS interviewees, Latin American

Embassies and Missions, but also actors coming from other sectors, such as NGOs and Foundations) ensure a broader perspective and the fact that the two visions (the European and the Latin American one) have equal weight (it was also thought this way in terms of number of interviews, dividing the 70 interviews in approximately equal halves – the European and the Latin American one; however, more interviews – 42 – were conducted with Latin American representatives since their views are less present in the literature than the European ones).

Why can these methods (process tracing and the use of a case study) be useful in answering the particular questions of the current research? The case study method has the advantage of being both holistic and context sensitive (Yin, 2003). It is holistic because of the number of interviews and sources that were used (from different geographical locations, with different types of actors from a wide institutional landscape). It is context sensitive because of the way of including interviews with Latin American representatives in the same way as European ones. The process tracing method on the other side allows for a more rigorous search of information, comprehensive and extensive in time, facilitating the connections of dots and conclusions concerning the missing ones. In addition, both methods – case study and process tracing – also offer the possibility to triangulate information from primary and secondary sources.

The last part of this chapter presents a content outline and offers an overview of the information detailed in the following seven chapters. The structure of the empirical chapters is determined by the type of reaction that norm interpreters can have to the norm diffusion initiatives of the norm entrepreneur (adopter, adapter, resistant, rejecter or norm creator through subsidiarity). This shows once more the commitment to a more balanced analysis

and an equal weight for both sides of the norm entrepreneurship process, entrepreneur and interpreter.

5. Chapters outline

The thesis is structured in eight chapters. Besides the Introduction (Chapter 1) and Conclusions (Chapter 8), the six remaining chapters are the Theoretical Framework (Chapter 2), a conceptual and empirical chapter that is an overview of the general institutional and political limitations and opportunities of the EU – Latin America dialogue (Chapter 3), before turning to the empirical chapters (Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7). The empirical chapters cover both the interaction between the two actors (Chapters 4 and 5), as well as mainly Latin America subsidiarity (Chapter 6) and European Union normative responses (Chapter 7).

A more detailed summary of each chapter is provided below.

Chapter 2 – *Norm entrepreneurship, the EU and Latin America. Normative encounters* – develops the theoretical framework. It does so by using concepts from public policy studies such as policy entrepreneurship and its three streams: problem, policy and politics (Kingdon, 1995). Understanding the way in which the streams constrain each other becomes crucial for the way in which norms succeed or fail. Policies are seen as embedding norms and, in this sense, the same constraints that apply to the three streams will be relevant for how norms are used and the way they are received. Therefore, five types of reactions are proposed: adoption, adaptation, resistance, rejection and subsidiarity. It means that the

direct link between norms and policies is analysed at the intersection between the three streams and the five types of reactions, showing how normative encounters can happen.

If in this Introduction chapter a brief argument has been presented for the geographic focus of the study, Chapter 2 details and analyses the EU norms that will be analysed in the context of the relation with Latin America: interregionalism and as closely related to it, regional integration. A literature review will show how previous research has seen the two norms as working together in EU external actions and how they can finish (or not) conditioning each other success.

Briefly, Chapter 2 builds the concepts based on which these norms will be analysed in the EU relation with Latin America and coins the way in which the thesis understands the concept of *normative encounter*. By doing so, it justifies the theoretical contribution of this research that will be empirically sustained in chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Chapter 3 – *The European Union and Latin America as international actors. Entrepreneurship, the three streams and frameworks of cooperation* – is a conceptual chapter in which common constraints and opportunities for the EU – Latin America relation are presented and analysed. While particular issues and negotiations with regional organisation in Latin America may bring new conditionals to the three streams, common elements are discussed. This includes looking at the main EU institutions, their potential and interest for cooperation with Latin America and the way in which they condition each other policies and norms. This is done mainly in the problem stream. In the politics stream limitations coming from both sides are mentioned, focusing on particular elements coming from the Latin American landscape such as ‘open regionalism’ (Sanahuja, 2012, 71) and ‘post – liberal regionalism’ (Sanahuja, 2012, 86). In addition, the chapter presents how

norms of interregionalism and regional integration have been promoted through concrete policies like cooperation for development and Association Agreements with the three regional groups: Central America, the Andean Community and Mercosur.

The role of this chapter is to empirically clarify the focus of the thesis and to explain the structure of the next chapters concerning the five types of reactions and the normative encounters between the two regions, with contributions from both sides and interdependences between the entrepreneur and the interpreter. It offers also an overview of the relations between the EU and Latin America before turning to the empirical chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, analysing the concrete cases of the Association Agreements negotiations and the content of policies related to cooperation for development.

Chapter 4 – *From Norm Adoption to Norm Rejection. The EU dialogue with Central America* – analyses the first type of normative reaction: adoption. It takes as empirical case Central America and the two dimensions of the EU dialogue with the region: the cooperation for development programmes and the successful conclusion of an Association Agreement. While both policies were thought by the European Union in general and the European Commission in particular as ways of reinforcing interregionalism and regional integration in Central America, the results were not always the aimed ones. The argument takes into account the fact that this is the first and only Association Agreement achieved by the European Union with another region and therefore it is analysed as a possible case of successful norm adoption. However, the analysis underlines the limitations of the process conducting to this Agreement: the contested EU attempts to diffuse norms of regional integration and the fact that the actual signature happened on a bilateral basis with each country in the Central American region. In addition, the success of the Agreement appears

to have been due to Central America efforts and less to EU policy, even if it was seen and presented by Europeans mainly as an EU diplomatic achievement.

This first empirical chapter suggests that the success of a policy initiative (such as the conclusion of an interregional Association Agreement) was not accompanied by successful EU norm entrepreneurship. It appears in a lot of cases that what we are witnessing is norm rejection at least when talking about regional integration. In addition, the decoupling made by the European Commission itself when signing the Agreement on a bilateral basis is one example of how interregionalism was not present in all stages of this process.

Chapter 5 – *From Norm Resistance and Norm Rejection to Norm Adoption. The cases of the EU relations with Mercosur and CAN* – analyses the other two cases of Association Agreements negotiations, with Mercosur and the Andean Community. As unsuccessful interregional negotiations (in the case of CAN) or under development since several decades (in the case of Mercosur), these cases may appear closer to resistance and rejection. However, even if interregionalism has not succeeded as a norm and the Association Agreement with CAN was not concluded on a region – to – region basis, several EU initiatives supporting regional integration of this regional organisation were successful. The same applies to Mercosur. An analysis is made of the way in which the normative rejection (CAN) and resistance (Mercosur) to interregionalism have challenged the EU as a norm entrepreneur and its policies aiming to support regional integration.

Chapters 4 and 5 look at who is the norm entrepreneur and show how this role switches between the European Union and the different regional groups in Latin America. Problematizing these distinctions brings a first element to a more balanced framework in which competing norms of similar content from the Latin American side are considered (as

it is the case of the Andean Community and the *living well* norm). In doing so, the relation between interregionalism and regional integration is better explored, as well as that between norms and policies.

Chapter 6 – *Latin America and Norm Subsidiarity. The case of the South – South Cooperation* – brings a new element to the analysis: norm subsidiarity from the Latin American side. Not only that each regional group in Latin America had a variety of reactions to the EU attempts to diffuse its norms, but Latin America becomes in this chapter a norm entrepreneur limiting the type of policies that the EU is able to propose at an interregional level and the type of normative basis for these policies. Concerning the policy sector used predominantly for norm diffusion by the European Union – cooperation for development – the South – South cooperation becomes the preferred approach in Latin America.

Normative friction is introduced in this context and used for comparing the traditional, North – South cooperation to the horizontal dialogue promoted by Latin America. It becomes a type of normative encounter. The limited EU attempts to be part of this new international cooperation approach are analysed. However, the chapter concludes that the EU legitimacy on this topic is still limited between actors in the LAC region. Factors in the politics stream are considered as especially relevant for explaining these dynamics. The international environment and the way in which the EU strategy was perceived by its counterparts in Latin America made the European Union to be seen only on a limited basis as a viable interlocutor in a changing normative framework, and even to a smaller extent as a normative entrepreneur.

Chapter 7 – *European Union normative responses to norm subsidiarity. Delegated and triangular cooperation* – argues that the European Union did not limit its reaction to

respond to Latin American norm subsidiarity but started using new norms in order to address the new reality of international cooperation³, norms that were more adapted to its status of traditional provider of ODA. These new norms gave new content to the role of the European Union as an adapted player in the field of the new international development policies. The chapter highlights the importance of analysing how the European Union, as a normative actor, whose behaviour on the international scene was largely recognised as being based on norms (Lucarelli and Manners, 2006) finds ways to keep its normative entrepreneurship in a context of norm subsidiarity.

While previous research has looked at the European Union as a norm entrepreneur, a promoter of region – to – region dialogues and regional integration, these analyses focused always on the EU normative nature, something inherent in the EU identity and history (Cerutti and Lucarelli, 2008, Diez, 2013, Jetschke and Lenz, 2013, Lenz, 2013, Lucarelli and Manners, 2006, Manners, 2002, Manners, 2013, Merlingen, 2007). On the contrary, the EU norm entrepreneurship behaviour is analysed in this chapter as having as starting point its need to adapt to a new international context of horizontal cooperation. Norm entrepreneurship becomes a reaction to norm subsidiarity and makes it imperative for the European Union to use new norms if it is to keep its normative identity.

Chapters 6 and 7 focus on cooperation for development and normative dynamics beyond the Association Agreements. What they add is the fact that when outside EU policy spheres (such as the Association Agreements), the Latin American contribution is even more relevant, and norm subsidiarity not only creates new normative frameworks in the region, but conditions the European Union presence and initiatives.

³ This is the term that starts replacing *cooperation for development* in the context of the South – South cooperation.

Chapter 8 – Conclusions. Normative encounters and the European Union – Latin America dialogue – goes back to the propositions formulated in Chapter 1 and assesses how normative encounters happen, how reactions are conditioned by both normative content and the three streams, how the European Union and Latin America both contributed to building a normative framework and based on this, to consolidating new policy approaches. The different reactions and the switching role of norm entrepreneur between the European Union (through its institutions and representatives) and Latin America show that a more horizontal approach is needed in both policy and scholar research, offering equal role to both actors.

This is a short overview of the following chapters, highlighting the main ideas that will be further developed in chapters 2 – 8. And now we should turn back to Chapter 2 and the theoretical framework of the thesis.

CHAPTER 2. NORM ENTREPRENEURSHIP, THE EU AND LATIN AMERICA. NORMATIVE ENCOUNTERS

'When addressing the wide range of current international affairs, and the pressing challenges that affect us all, from climate change to non – proliferation or countering terrorism, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean appear as the two most like – minded regions in the world. This is the combination of our shared history, cultural affinity and strong social contacts, but also of our shared principles and values, and strong belief in effective multilateralism' (Mogherini, 2015, online).

1. The European Union as norm entrepreneur – conceptual challenges and ways to address them

The High Representative Federica Mogherini talks in this quote about the importance of promoting norms, from both the European Union and Latin America side, and in their cooperation and dialogue. In line with this approach, the current thesis aims to understand the complex normative encounters between the EU and its interlocutors, in this case Latin America, looking at the dynamics on both sides, at how they adapt to each other reactions and at how their cooperation and the norms on which this is based are being designed by their interaction and reflected in policies. This will be coined as *normative encounters* of the involved actors, term around which this chapter is built.

The thesis acknowledges the fact that the EU is a different international actor in the global political affairs, mainly due to its supranational nature, and that its agency can still be seen as limited in some regions of the world, but the research is focused on analysing the nature of this changing actorness in external relations, aiming at international recognition

and legitimacy. In addition, the concept of norm entrepreneur helps to analyse the extent to which other actors have acknowledged the presence of the EU as an international player. The current chapter develops the theoretical framework which will be used in addressing the central research question and the three propositions formulated in Chapter 1. In doing so, it shows the link between the different concepts that will be used for understanding the roles and interactions between entrepreneurs and interpreters, starting from the normative bases, getting embedded in concrete policies (being conditioned in this process by the three streams) and looping back to the normative content, requiring in specific cases normative changes on the norm entrepreneur side.

Reflecting on the idea of 'norm interpreter' as a main contribution to the norm literature

Recognising the importance of analysing the two sides of the norm entrepreneurship process, both the entrepreneur, in this case the EU, and its interlocutor or, as it will be named here, the norm interpreter, the current research wants to highlight that the boundaries between the initiator and the target are more blurred than previously described. *Norm interpreter* is seen as a more appropriate term than *norm recipient* because the former acknowledges better the agency of the EU counterparts when we talk about norm diffusion, the way in which the actor situated on the other side of the norm entrepreneurship process interprets by adopting, adapting, resisting or rejecting norms or creates new ones, becoming an entrepreneur and reversing the way in which we look at the relationship between international actors. Using the *norm interpreter* term also prevents the dichotomy involved by terms such as *norm recipient* and *norm taker* as used in recent research (Chaban et al., 2015). While it is important to recognise the agency of those being

the target of the EU norm diffusion process, and the concept of *norm taker* is an important one from this point of view, the idea of keeping the *norm recipient* term suggests that in some cases the norm diffusion process happens without counting with any kind of reaction from the target country or region. Highlighting the fact that these reactions are situated on the continuum between adaption / adoption and rejection / resistance (Chaban et al., 2015), a key point in the current research is that the norm interpreter holds agency in all these cases, so using the term *recipient* would become inappropriate independently from the type of reaction. Even when the target country or region decides to adopt a norm without adapting it, this is still a process of interpretation through which the decision to adopt the norm is taken.

The concept of *norm interpreter* can be also seen as similar to *norm shaper*, a term used by Pu when referring to the increasing normative role of China on the international scene, as both norm taker and norm shaper (Pu, 2012). It is true that in some cases the interpreter can be a shaper, but the advantage of using the *norm interpreter* term is that it captures better the two extremes of the continuum, the adoption and the normative rejection and resistance. Deploying in this way the concept of *norm interpreter* is a first contribution to the norm literature and to a more balanced approach in the relation between the actors involved in the norm diffusion process.

In addition to this, the perspective is that of a less Eurocentric world, a multipolar world in which different regions are gaining an important role on the international scene. This needs also a renewed theoretical and policy makers approach marking a shift from a world in which it was easier for the EU to diffuse norms to other actors and regions, to a world in which the EU is perceived, interpreted and sometimes challenged, sometimes rejected. It

has been said that 'control over access to the world's largest internal market, at first glance, seems to provide EU – level actors a powerful tool with which to induce adoption of EU norms' (Björkdahl et al., 2015, 249). The thesis questions and adds nuances to such ideas, acknowledging however the concepts mentioned in Chapter 1 and that relate mainly to the EU as market power and the EU as ethical power, that contain, as previously argued, relevant dimensions, but prove to be limited in accounting for a balanced way including both actors and structures, as well as for the role of norms in EU external relations. Concerning the norm literature, the thesis looks into how the initial norm entrepreneur can become norm interpreter, and the *normative encounter* concept becomes in this way a circular one. This is the second contribution to the norm literature, providing a more complex understanding of both the concept of *norm entrepreneur* and that of *norm interpreter*.

In addition, not only that this boundary is not as obvious as previously characterised, but assuming the fact that the target country or region of the normative entrepreneurship process is an essential actor whose agency challenges, adapts, transforms and can sometimes reject foreign norms, brings a further and important question. Is this process of translation or resistance influencing in any way the norm entrepreneur? Is there something different about the EU that makes it a norm entrepreneur or does it also learn and adapt its norms depending on its counterparts? And in the end is such difference between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter still a valid distinction in a world that is increasingly interdependent and multipolar, where power differences are no longer as obvious as in the previous decades? To a certain extent, similar questions have been asked by Lenz (Lenz, 2013, Jetschke and Lenz, 2013), but without fully addressing and analysing them when

looking at the norm entrepreneurship process. The current research aims to present cases of both norm entrepreneurship success and failure or norm rejection by analysing examples in which the EU as norm entrepreneur needs to adapt its norms and become a norm interpreter to prevent such failures. This will be looked in more detail through the case of South – South and triangular cooperation.

The term introduced by Björkdahl *et al.*, *friction*, is an attempt to capture such dynamics, suggesting that the norm diffusion process affects both the entrepreneur and its target, however without analysing the way in which this process can change and challenge the entrepreneur, can require an active adaptation from the EU side, going beyond the very asymmetrical relations between entrepreneur and interpreter (Björkdahl *et al.*, 2015). Without denying the existence of such asymmetries, the research wants to look at the ways in which they are being challenged by latest evolutions. The concepts used here follow also the logic of norm import and norm export (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015a) when highlighting the interaction between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter. However, the aim in the current research is to create a more balanced approach in which these vertical approaches of normative interactions with the opposition between norm import and norm export can be replaced by a real interaction thought as a feedback loop receiving input from both sides. To be able to achieve these aims, the dynamics of the norm entrepreneurship process will be illustrated with examples from the EU – Latin America relations.

2. Norm diffusion, norm socialisation and normative reactions

In order to define the *normative encounter* concept, the analysis will be divided in three steps. This section presents the first two steps and aims to analyse norm diffusion / norm socialisation and normative reactions. It will provide insights on how norms are diffused and how they are received, transformed or rejected by the norm interpreter. It will also analyse the concept of *norm subsidiarity* offering in this way a theoretical tool for understanding how the norm interpreter and the norm entrepreneur can switch roles.

2.1. Norm diffusion and norm socialisation

Norms have been at the core of the constructivist research for decades. By way of defining the term, we will see norms 'as a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity' (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, 891). A controversial point, when trying to analyse the role of norms from both a constructivist approach and from other perspectives closer to Realist or Critical Studies, has been the relation between structures, agents and norms. In Chapter 1 the argument has accounted for the relation between actors and structures. The missing element is their respective links with norms. The research acknowledges the role of structures and the way in which they relate to norms, as in the historical structures of Cox (1981) and does not deny the influence of interests. However, the thesis is placed closer to the way in which Acharya (2004) sees norms as being promoted by particular actors, with both actors and norms mutually conditioning each other. It means that interests continue to play a role, however they do not always condition norms, but in many cases, they are dependent on norms and the way in which actors decide to frame them.

A related concept to norms is institutions. While some scholars conclude that the terms can be seen as too similar for a conceptual differentiation to be needed (March & Olsen, 1998), for clarity purposes, the current thesis does account for differences between these related concepts. Institutions, as defined by March and Olsen (1998), are ‘a relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behaviour of specific groups of actors in specific situations’ (p. 948). Norms on the other side are more related to ideas of desirability, and to identity or the way in which a specific actor wants to be perceived by third actors (Björkdahl, 2010). For example, in the case of the EU, norms will be seen as a way of defining a specific identity, differently and more nuanced than the way in which we can understand an institution. So, while both institutions and norms have behavioural implications, norms also help in defining what will make an actor unique or recognisable on the international scene. Processes, on the other side, are considered closer to concrete policy initiatives that incorporate specific norms in specific policy areas, while agents make them visible in an international context.

The role of norms in defining agendas, structuring practices and developing institutions, has been widely debated. Acharya (2004), for example, shows both successful and less successful norms in modifying the regional security agenda in the Asia – Pacific region, and the related institutions, in this case, ASEAN. He shows how the *common security* norm has been redefined to become *cooperative security* and to help reinforcing ASEAN as a regional organisation. While the additional aim was to go beyond the *non – interference* norm and build more on norms such as *constructive intervention* and *flexible engagement*, this has not been achieved, showing how ‘local agents [...] promote norm diffusion by actively borrowing and modifying transnational norms *in accordance* with their preconstructed normative

beliefs and practices’ (emphasis added) (p. 269). This goes in line with what Risse, Ropp and Sikkink (1999, 271) highlight, when affirming that ‘international norms are more likely to be implemented and complied with in the domestic context if they resonate or fit with existing collective understandings embedded in domestic institutions and political cultures’. These ideas are closely linked to *normative friction*, a concept to which we will come back in subsequent chapters, showing how the misfit between local norms (in this case of different Latin American actors) and norms of external actors (in this case, EU norms) can provoke norm resistance and rejection.

Concerning the way in which norms appear, they follow a three – stage dynamic, in which norm entrepreneurs make possible the emergence of the norm in the first stage and its definition, but also the norm cascade, when a sufficient number of supporters is ensured in the second one. A third stage, norm internalisation, is achieved when the norm is so deeply accepted that it becomes the only standard of behaviour (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). While this perspective includes an international dimension in which a sufficient number of states is required for example to achieve the cascade phase, the norm diffusion framework also offers additional elements for understanding how a norm that is already consolidated can become a standard of behaviour for new countries and regions that are not already using it.

Regarding the typology of norms, there are important mentions to be made and that will help to understand the ‘normative architecture’ which can be depicted from the empirical research in this thesis. The first idea is related to metanorms as defined by Axelrod (1986) in which ‘players [have] a strong incentive to increase their vengefulness lest they be punished by others, and this in turn [leads] to a decline of boldness’ (p. 1109). So, these are

general norms that will both provide a more general framework in which other subnorms can be created and deployed and at the same time will ensure the protection of these subnorms (Baier, 2013). We will get back to these types of norms when explaining the specific EU norms that will be analysed and showing how each one fits one of these two categories, as well as the way in which they enable and condition each other.

When talking about norm diffusion, we refer to ‘the spread of norms, ideas, institutions, policies and practices in time and space. Diffusion theory advances the distinct causal claim that the decisions in one unit of analysis – be it bureaucratic organisations, states or regional organisations – systematically affect the decisions in other units’ (Lenz, 2013, 213). Diffusion is a concept that captures the way in which both ideas and policies are spread and from this point of view it is crucial to the thesis’ theoretical framework.

Regarding the specific case of the EU and the way in which norms are diffused, for Manners there are six such mechanisms. Contagion would be a first type of diffusion, meaning the EU can serve as a model of regional integration, and different regions can decide to emulate the EU model for their own regional projects if the European Union is seen as an exemplar organisation. Informational diffusion contains the official message from different EU declarations and documents and their influence on other actors, while the procedural diffusion includes the institutionalisation of the dialogue with third countries or regions. Transference is accomplished through trade or technical assistance by promoting particular norms, while overt diffusion is understood as the presence of the EU in other countries or international organisations. Cultural filter is the last mechanism, used through ‘learning, adaptation or rejection of norms’ (Manners, 2002, 245).

Drawing on this perspective, Tobias Lenz concludes that the ideational impact of the EU consists of its indirect influence on regional integration through socialisation and emulation. The normative adaptation, adoption, resistance or rejection would depend in this context on the local structures and agents. Similar to Manners, he keeps the idea of contagion under the emulation process, but Lenz regroupes all the other types of influence under the concept of socialisation. Regarding the emulation process, Lenz highlights that what makes the EU model attractive is not what the EU does, but what the EU is. Its discourse becomes a source of inspiration, as it was the case of Mercosur in the 1990s, when following the crisis of their internal models, the EU model of regional integration was seen as a viable alternative (Lenz, 2013).

The current research looks at the norm socialisation concept as helpful for shedding light on how norms are promoted through a process comprising the emulation (from a three streams approach: there is no need of coupling since the initiative is coming from the norm interpreter side and not from the entrepreneur side), but also the stimulus from the entrepreneur side both in a positive (persuasion) and negative sense (shaming). This is why it is important to understand socialisation as a point of intersection between the two sides, between the entrepreneur and the norm interpreter, creating also the normative environment so that the entrepreneur can be fed back as part of the norm entrepreneurship process.

Socialisation is a more agent driven concept than norm diffusion, focusing on the norm entrepreneur role, but leaving also space for norm interpreter agency. It comprises the way in which the entrepreneur is using the normative understandings of the norm interpreter, including positive techniques such as persuasion, as well as negative techniques such as

shaming. Channels of socialisation include normally the institutional frameworks provided by cooperation agreements, political dialogue and technical assistance programmes. For Lenz, a good example is the way in which EU representatives have convinced Mercosur about the utility of eliminating non – tariff barriers (Lenz, 2013).

The argument here is that such distinction between the different ways in which EU norms can be diffused is important. However, the current chapter considers equally useful for the theoretical framework that it deploys the way in which these concepts are used by Waltz, talking about all these mechanisms under the concept of socialisation. This is because both Manners and Lenz tend to separate the processes in which the agency comes from the entrepreneur side and the processes in which agency comes from the norm interpreter side. The way in which these concepts would fit in the current theoretical framework suggests that such difference can create problems in the sense that separating them would mean rejecting the fact that both the entrepreneur and the norm interpreter can be agents at the same time in the norm entrepreneurship process. Differently from Manners and Lenz, for Waltz the socialisation includes both the emulation, a process that in this study involves more the norm interpreters, and the praise (the pressure to conform to the group norms) and ridicule (avoid deviant behaviours) (Waltz, 1979), processes that include the two sides of the norm entrepreneurship process.

Accordingly, the argument is that the concept of socialisation should be recognised as a process of mutual understanding, of knowing and interpreting the reactions of the other, a point of intersection between the entrepreneur and the norm interpreter (it is showed in a graphic way in a next section of this chapter). This is in line with the way in which Pu (2012) sees socialisation as a ‘two – ways process’. It can be understood as an interaction in which

there is diffusion from the entrepreneur side and shaping ranging from adaption to rejection and norm subsidiarity from the interpreter side.

Concerning the actors that diffuse norms, conceptual clarifications have been given concerning the norm entrepreneur, as the actor that initiates the process, and the norm interpreter, who can adopt, adapt, resist or reject these norms. An additional actor to be added to this landscape on agency is the *norm antipreneur*, a concept defined by Bloomfield (2015). Norm antipreneurs are those 'who defend the normative status quo' (Bloomfield, 2015, 311). If entrepreneurs are seen as 'pure changers', then 'antipreneurs [are] characterised as *implacable resisters*' (Bloomfield, 2015, 311). However, Bloomfield concludes that these are just extreme points on a continuum of much more nuances. In the case of the EU, we will see how some institutions have the natural tendency towards entrepreneurship (this is the case of the Commission and of the Parliament), while others tend to maintain the status quo (as it is the case of the Council). The idea of identifying also norm antipreneurs helps in conceptualising norm entrepreneurship failures and in placing the explanation within the realm of agency.

These concepts show how the EU can initiate the process of norm entrepreneurship and how the interaction happens with other countries or regions, giving insights on what norm entrepreneurship is and the conditions allowing such changes to happen. Despite this, they do not offer the same analytical tools for understanding how regions like Latin America are perceiving these norms, if they are willing to accept them or want to create different ones, if changes are to be made in order to fit the Latin American normative and political landscape. Despite being important tools for understanding the EU initiatives and foreign policies, they still consider the role played by the EU as the initiator of the norm

entrepreneurship process as the main explanation for how a norm is developed and deployed in policies.

The only concept that leaves a wider space for Latin American agency is the one of norm antipreneurs. However, in order to fully address such limitation, the use of additional norm diffusion dimensions, including the norm localisation and norm subsidiarity concepts helps in challenging and discussing the way in which particular norms forge a strong partnership between the EU and Latin America. This is the focus of the next section.

2.2. Norm localisation and norm subsidiarity

This is the second step in building the theoretical framework of this research work. With the concepts of norm diffusion and norm socialisation we can understand how norms travel. However, this is centred on the norm entrepreneur. Since they are perspectives focused more on norm interpreter, norm localisation and norm subsidiarity bring the balance needed in this analysis.

When talking about the norm diffusion framework, a first central idea taken from Acharya relates to the link between international and local norms – the localisation process (Acharya, 2004), ‘a complex process and outcome by which norm – takers build congruence between transnational norms (including norms previously institutionalised in a region) and local beliefs and practice’ (Acharya, 2004, 241). Localisation refers to the way in which the local context is affected or challenged by an external norm, but it also emphasises the agency of third actors, regions or countries, the way in which they shape foreign norms in order to ensure they fit the local normative environment. In this sense, the way in which

interregionalism and regional integration have been perceived by different Latin American partners of the EU (including the Andean Community, Mercosur and Central America) and adapted to fit regional realities can be used as an example that will be detailed in the following chapters.

Drawing on the concepts of adoption, adaptation, resistance and rejection (Björkdahl et al., 2015), we can consider them as the different types of reactions that norm interpreters can have under the localisation process. These reactions are from both sides, the entrepreneur and the interpreter, and they are rather ideal types than real models of interaction in the different norm diffusion processes. They involve a bi – directional negotiation and concrete cases of international dialogues can imply mixed reactions.

Analysing the first type of reaction, adoption is similar to emulation and contagion, meaning that the norm interpreter considers that the norm entrepreneur's norms are useful and worth using, and decides to directly adopt them without making any changes or adapting them to the local context (Björkdahl et al., 2015). The agency of the norm entrepreneur is in this case limited to promoting norms at an international level and building a level of support and confidence in the relevance of particular ideas that can make other countries and regions use these norms in their own national or regional context. As mentioned previously, while this may be seen as the type of reaction which involves less agency on the interpreter side, this idea loses even more support in this context when looking at adoption as an independent decision from the norm interpreter side, willing to import external norms.

Norm adaptation on the contrary involves a process of local adaptation of the norm to be used in a context different from that of the norm entrepreneur. While the core content

of the adapted norm is not opposed to the original norm, an exercise of interpretation is made on the interpreter side. On the other hand, resistance shows a normative change of the original content of the norm (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015a). While some practices may change on the interpreter side, they may follow a third option different from that of the norm interpreter (in this case the European Union) and from the *status quo*. An interesting idea that will be analysed in the case of the dialogue with Central America is what Björkdahl *et. al.* call 'formal trappings' meaning that the interpreter may try to give the impression of norm adoption or adaptation. However, the normative reality will show practices that are different from the European exports. 'Finally, *rejection* means that local norms, institutions, policies and practices diverge unambiguously and conscientiously from European norms' (Björkdahl et al., 2015, pp. 4 - 5).

When the norm diffusion process involves norm entrepreneurship initiatives outside the EU (free of conditionality related to adoption of EU norms because of potential membership), the fifth reaction can be added: subsidiarity. This is also a second concept in the Acharya's framework. If localisation can be seen as a process predominantly inward – looking, norm subsidiarity is 'a process whereby local actors create rules with a view to preserve their autonomy from dominance, neglect, violation, or abuse by more powerful central actors' (Acharya, 2011, 97). This process is outward – looking and highlights the agency of the third actors when confronted with external actors. They create norms that ensure their autonomy, showing their position and protecting their political culture when the normative practice of other countries or regions threaten their status. At the same time, they can protect transnational norms that were previously accepted by the international

community, but are being violated by more central actors, while at the same time the institutions in charge with their protection are unable to do so.

For Acharya, these norms are of a high value for more peripheral or smaller actors of the international system because they are being challenged by the bigger actors. These behaviours are threatening their identity, so smaller states want to protect the rules and norms such as they were previously accepted by all actors. The way in which this will be used in the current research gives less importance to the power relations, without contesting or forgetting them, but showing that they give less leverage to more central actors of the international system as the European Union.

Acharya (2011) makes a strong difference between localisation and norm subsidiarity. The main point resides in the fact that localisation implies the adaptation of a foreign norm to a local reality (by adopting, adapting or resisting it), while norm subsidiarity includes both rejection of foreign norms and the development of new norms. However, for clarity purposes in the way in which this concept is used, in the current thesis norm subsidiarity is understood only as the creation of new norms, while rejection is seen as another type of reaction under the localisation process. It is mainly due to the fact that rejecting norms does not always involve the second step, the creation of a different / new norm, and while rejecting a norm is a normative contribution *per se*, the aim is to go further and look at cases where Latin America started using its own norms in topics that were of mutual interest in the dialogue with the European Union. This is why subsidiarity will be defined and analysed as such only where the creation of new norms is involved. In addition, this concept is seen as different from the idea of norm antipreneur due to the dimension related to the

creation of new norms, that is not a prerequisite, nor an important dimension in Bloomfield’s framework.

Under the same idea of subsidiarity, traditional norm entrepreneurs as the European Union may create new norms as a response to a new normative reality in which norm interpreters have their own original contributions. An example is an international scene on which the norm of a more horizontal cooperation challenges an actor as the EU and creates a need for new norms on its side that will better deal with actors as Latin America for which this more horizontal cooperation becomes the regional norm.

The table below summarises how the five normative reactions will be understood in the current thesis and a comparison is made with the way in which they were originally defined mainly by Acharya (Acharya, 2004, Acharya, 2011) and Björkdahl *et al.* (2015). The way concepts are defined in this chapter is summarised in the section on *normative encounters*, an idea to which I will get back and define in more detail later in this chapter.

Table 1 – Normative reactions

	Acharya Björkdahl <i>et al.</i> Framework of normative reactions	Normative encounters
Adoption	(Localisation) Similar definition to emulation and contagion, the norm interpreter identifies norms that it decides to adopt in its local context without changing them.	(Localisation) Similar definition to emulation and contagion, the norm interpreter identifies norms that it decides to adopt in its local context without changing them (agency almost exclusively on the interpreter side).
Adaptation	(Localisation) The core content of the adapted norm is not opposed to the original norm; an exercise of interpretation is made on the interpreter side.	(Localisation) The core content of the adapted norm is not opposed to the original norm; an exercise of interpretation is made by the interpreter (equal degree of agency on the entrepreneur and interpreter side) and changes

		or adaptations are promoted by the interpreter in the implementation of policies.
Resistance	(Localisation) It shows a normative change of the original content of the norm; the practices on the norm interpreter side remain different from those of the norm entrepreneur. 'Formal trappings' may be identified meaning that the norm interpreter can make an attempt to show that the norm entrepreneur norms were applied to its context, but the actual practices remain profoundly different.	(Localisation) It shows a normative change of the original content of the norm; the practices on the norm interpreter side remain different from those of the norm entrepreneur. 'Formal trappings' may be identified meaning that the norm interpreter can make an attempt to show that the norm entrepreneur norms were applied to its context, but the actual practices remain profoundly different.
Rejection	(Subsidiarity) Local norms are opposed to those of the norm entrepreneur.	(Localisation) Local norms are opposed to those of the norm entrepreneur. This is not seen as a form of norm subsidiarity, but as a form of norm localisation.
Norm subsidiarity	(Subsidiarity) New norms are created by smaller countries (peripheral countries in the international system) or these actors decide to protect transnational norms that were previously accepted by the international community, but are being violated by more central actors, while at the same time the institutions in charge with their protection are unable to do so.	(Subsidiarity) As the only form of norm subsidiarity, the creation of new norms is a process in which countries and regions that were traditionally seen as norm interpreters decide to create their own norms. These norms are better suited to their reality and may contradict norms promoted by traditional norm entrepreneurs as the European Union. As a response to this, traditional norm entrepreneurs (the EU) may create new norms that will be better adapted to this new normative context in which norm entrepreneurs have their own normative contributions.

(Source: First column – information from Acharya (2004, 2011) and Björkdahl *et al.* (2015) / Second column – own interpretation)

3. Defining policy entrepreneurship and the three streams

The first two parts of the theoretical framework reflected on how norms are diffused by norm entrepreneurs and on how they are received and transformed by norm entrepreneurs. However, this leaves unanswered an important question: how can we see this normative interaction play in concrete policies? The argument is that a norm finds its application and manifestation through concrete policies. Even if at the level of political discourse we may see approval of particular norms, this cannot be really assumed if the norms are not incorporated in related fields of policy. The argument goes in line with Chaban (2015) when emphasising the ‘translation of imported European norms into changes of institutional arrangements, policies and / or practices by recipients⁴’ (Chaban et al., 2015, 1). This is the third contribution to the norm literature that in addition to the ones mentioned in the introduction to this chapter (related to deploying the concept of *norm interpreter* and looking at how the norm entrepreneur can become a norm interpreter and consequently may need to create new norms better adapted to the new normative context) helps in accounting better for the norm diffusion outputs through policy initiatives.

Looking at the link between norms and policy, the norm diffusion process and the norm localisation / subsidiarity concepts will be complemented by the policy entrepreneurship framework, providing the theoretical tools that would allow a deeper understanding of the techniques used to apply norms through concrete policies. This is the objective of this section. It takes a third step in the theoretical deployment of concepts related to norm entrepreneurship and uses concepts from public policy studies and the role of entrepreneurs in initiating ‘dynamic policy change [...] through attempting to win support

⁴ In the current thesis: norm interpreters.

for ideas [and] policy innovation' (Mintrom, 1997, 739). The following discussion considers Kingdon's theory of the three streams: the problem, the policy and the politics (Kingdon, 1995) that will be explained and detailed below. The public policy studies perspective and the analysis of the concrete measures which were implemented or failed are connected in this way to the norms based on which these external policies were designed, involving the EU and other actors, in this case Latin America.

The three streams theory helps us to understand how and when the entrepreneurship process is more likely to be successful, a part that is missing from the norm diffusion framework. Norm diffusion helps to analyse how norms are promoted, but not to understand when such norms have a chance to be successfully applied through policies. According to Kingdon, entrepreneurs depend on three streams: the problem stream, where new issues can be framed, the policy stream where concrete policies are promoted as solutions addressing the problem stream, and the politics stream, including political events, the public opinion and the flow of events. Change can occur when 'windows of opportunity' appear and when 'the conditions in all three streams favour a joining of problems, solutions, and political momentum' (Mintrom, 2000, 44). However, the order between these three streams can be reversed at any point, and particular issues or problems can be used to promote policy solutions and ideas that already exist. This follows the 'garbage can' model in which problems and policies are dumped and from which they can be used in the future, connecting problems and solutions (Stone, 2007).

The broader literature on policymaking and policy change (Kingdon, 1995, Mintrom, 2000, Mintrom and Norman, 2009, Roberts and King, 1991, Stone, 2014) also shows how the actions of entrepreneurs can change the political landscape and how they promote new

ideas in particular contexts and using favourable venues, receptive to their innovative ways of solving problems. Hence, entrepreneurs set the agenda by including new items, designing ways of dealing with these issues, implementing specific programs and institutionalising practices that become part of the political routines (Roberts and King, 1991).

‘There is no automatic process that [ensures] new [...] ideas will seep into the consciousness of political and policy elites. Instead, it is necessary to focus on the discursive constructions and agency of [...] entrepreneurs, their research institutes and their networks’ (Stone, 2011, 246).

Their activities include issue framing, networking, establishing the terms of the debate and creating coalitions. Regarding issue framing, entrepreneurs 'construct and revise *policy frames*, define new relationships between actors and chart courses of action' (Kaunert and Léonard, 2012, 425-426). Ackrill, Kay and Zahariadis consider that in the 'presence of ambiguity of information and issue complexity, entrepreneurs craft contestable meaning, which they in turn disseminate to policy – makers in order to activate attention and mobilise support or opposition' (Ackrill et al., 2013, 873). In this sense, entrepreneurs are expected to play a more important role in contexts of increased uncertainty and complexity of issues, and to be those actors that are able to promote solutions to different dilemmas. Transnational and supranational structures are good examples of how ambiguity can be a barrier in taking decisions and choosing solutions. Entrepreneurs help in finding appropriate ways of dealing with problems and in building coherent narratives around how particular norms and policies can be the response to pressing political problems. Thus, they promote shifts and redesign the political landscape.

This approach includes challenging policy images as defined by Baumgartner and Jones, a combination of *empirical facts* and *emotive appeals*, shaping the way to understand and present particular issues (Baumgartner and Jones, 1991, Baumgartner and Jones, 1993). When this involves building a need to solve a particular problem, it creates the favourable conditions for adopting a new policy solution. Besides this, venue shopping is also an important part of the framing process. Choosing the right venue is a crucial step in ensuring that a solution will be implemented. 'Strategically minded [...] entrepreneurs [...] shop for the most favourable locus for their policies' (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993, 35). Venues with tighter boundaries will discourage the work of entrepreneurs (Wendon, 2010), while targeting the venues with looser restrictions can become a strategy for guaranteeing the success of innovative ideas. Depending on the venue, the image will need to adapt, so the different ways of framing the same issue can be explained as being a way to address the needs and realities of different institutional venues.

Another important distinction needs to be made between the different types of actors that can play the role of policy entrepreneurs. Besides individuals (outside and inside governments), organisations can also be platforms for the diffusion of innovative ideas (Stone, 2001). In this sense, the different EU and Latin American institutions can be the initiators of policy change and the brokers able to create coalitions supporting their ideas. Organisations are not only platforms for policy entrepreneurs, but they can also be entrepreneurs helping to change norm and policies. It is important to understand who the organisational author is, instead of limiting the analysis to the actors that are the 'lead articulators' (Stone, 2014).

In conclusion, the policy entrepreneurship framework can help us to understand when an entrepreneur is likely to be successful, the link between the three streams, how venues can influence the possibility of streams' coupling and the opening of a window of opportunity, as well as the level of agency (individual versus organisational entrepreneurship). These theoretical concepts show how concrete policies come to be implemented and the conditions that need to be fulfilled if this is to happen. Linking it to the norm diffusion and norm localisation framework gives a more complex image on how norms are diffused, interpreted and applied through concrete policies. Norm diffusion / norm localisation and policy entrepreneurship may involve different actors whose agency will make a particular norm successful or will leverage the resources for a policy approach to be adopted and applied. In particular cases entrepreneurs may be the same in the normative and policy levels, while in others they will be different. This will be analysed in the different empirical cases of Association Agreements between the EU and Latin America and in the cooperation for development dialogue.

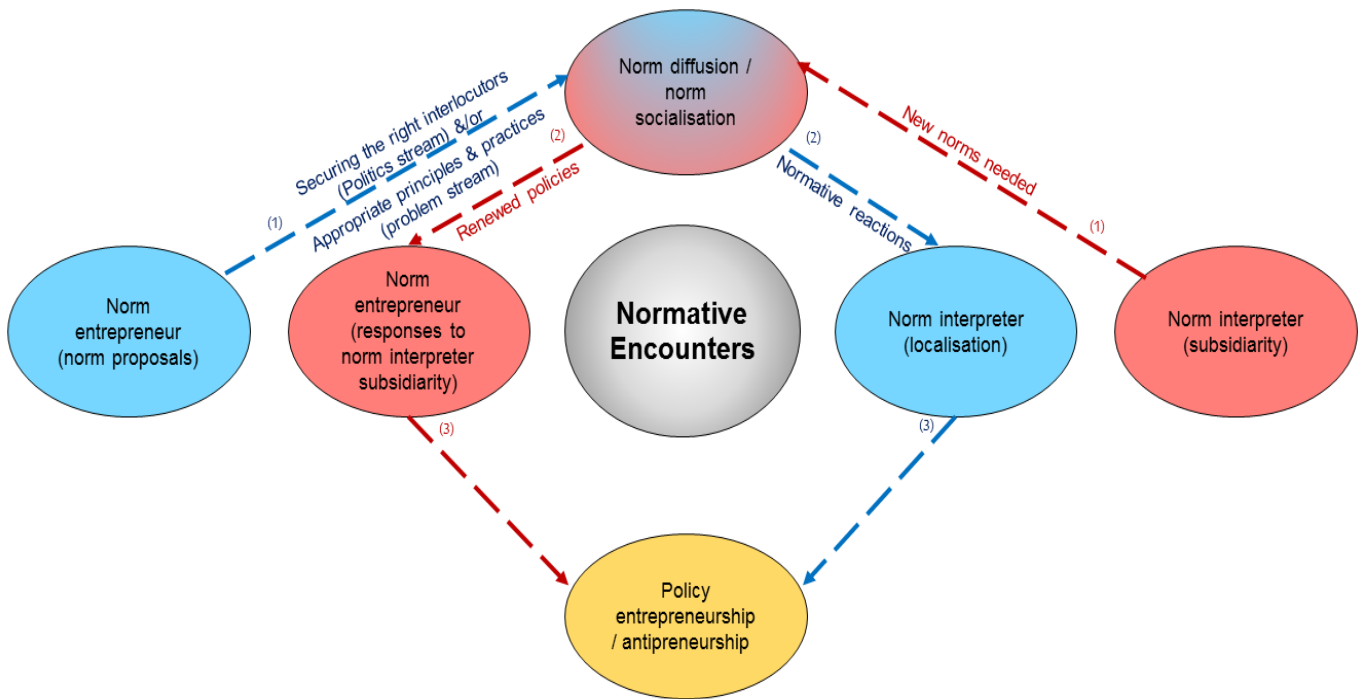
4. Normative encounters

Placing them together, the three perspectives provide a valuable analytical synthesis and framework: first, the socialisation as interaction in the norm diffusion process between the entrepreneur and the norm interpreter that creates a point of inspiration for the interpreter, dialogue or conflict between the two agents; second, the norm localisation and norm subsidiarity through which we can analyse how the norm interpreter is reacting to the norm that is being promoted by the entrepreneur, adopting or adapting it, resisting or rejecting it, deciding to create new norms or to protect norms that are being violated

despite having been previously accepted by all actors; and third, the three streams theory and its related concepts explains how the entrepreneur is being constrained by the environment in which its norms are to be applied through policies, but also how this creates opportunities of coupling.

Having analysed the three pieces of the theoretical framework (norm diffusion and socialisation; norm localisation and norm subsidiarity; the three streams and the link between norm and policy entrepreneurship), we can now get back to the idea launched earlier in this chapter: relating all these concepts around the idea of *normative encounters*. This means also getting back to the three propositions formulated in Chapter 1 and showing how each of the three streams relate to the norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter. The way all these frameworks (actors and processes, entrepreneur and interpreter, normative and policy implications) are linked to each other is illustrated below in a graphic way. This shows at the centre of the whole model the idea of a normative encounter, as well as the two agents of the process.

Figure 1 – The four parts of the norm entrepreneurship process and the resulting normative encounters



(Source: Own interpretation)

This graphic shows both the actors (entrepreneur and interpreter) and the processes that make the interaction possible (norm diffusion / socialisation and policy entrepreneurship, leading to normative encounters, or antipreneurship, resulting in failed normative encounters). The starting point may be the norm entrepreneur diffusing norms to the norm interpreter that localises the norms which then will be incorporated in concrete policies through policy entrepreneurship. It is suggested as in the second proposition that norm adoption and adaptation are mainly possible when the right interlocutors are addressed in the politics stream, and as in the third proposition, norm friction (manifested through norm resistance and rejection) can be avoided in the problem stream through renewed principles (for example horizontal cooperation) and practices (joint programming). The argument is that in order to see policy proposals being made and implemented in the policy stream, the

politics and problems streams start playing a role much earlier in the process interacting at the level of the norm diffusion process.

However, an equally important dynamic is the one that starts with the norm interpreter that creates new norms through norm subsidiarity, diffuses this new normative content and creates a need for the initial norm entrepreneur to adapt its normative approach and to make this visible to the norm interpreter through concrete policies. This is reflected in the first proposition as formulated in Chapter 1.

In this context normative encounters are the result of both norm diffusion or socialisation and policy entrepreneurship. Even if they contain a policy dimension (through the policy entrepreneurship part), the encounters are normative because policies are seen as a mere manifestation of more profound, normative interactions. The two agents, the entrepreneur and the interpreter, play a crucial role and their encounters are presented as a loop in which they both contribute to the result of the normative encounter. While the idea of an *encounter* may hold a positive connotation, the way in which it will be presented in the current thesis is a more neutral one, meaning that sometimes these encounters will happen, while other times they will fail. The objective is to highlight these dynamics and to analyse the conditions on which they depend.

This work problematizes the relevance of the distinction between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter. However, from an analytic point of view it is important to keep such difference, since independently of who started the entrepreneurship process, the argument is that the norm entrepreneur can become norm interpreter and the other way around. The objective is to study how these different dimensions of the norm entrepreneurship process relate to each other.

A next step in explaining the theoretical framework of the thesis is to present the norms around which the analysis will be deployed. To achieve this, the next section presents the two norms that will be considered as interrelated and at the same time important for the European Union – Latin America dialogue: interregionalism and regional integration.

5. Which norms and why?

‘Socialisation efforts take place through the institutional channels provided by cooperation agreements with regional organizations, especially in the form of political dialogues and technical assistance programmes’

(Lenz, 2013, 215).

5.1. Justification of norm choice

Extending this quote to both socialisation efforts and normative reactions, it shows how the norm diffusion process can be related to the norms that will be central for this analysis and through which the European Union – Latin America normative encounters will be analysed: interregionalism and regional integration. It means looking at how the dialogue created as a way of building a strategic partnership can be used in order to promote particular norms and especially interregionalism through region – to – region cooperation and agreements, and regional integration.

The process of choosing the norms to analyse and use as framework to problematize the normative encounters between the EU and Latin America offers a wide variety of options. The dialogue between the two regions has been based predominantly on norms, and the discourses coming from the EU side have always emphasised the importance of the common normative background for strengthening and deepening the cooperation between

the two regions, as it can be seen also from the quote used at the beginning of the chapter. For the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, the 'common values and principles' of the two regions should be used as 'an example to bring about positive change around the world' (Mogherini, 2015). It means that the options for this analysis are numerous.

However, choosing between these options, there are norms that have played a more important role on the agenda, and in this sense, interregionalism has been a norm through which the EU has tried to bring a new approach to the dialogue with Latin America and to promote regional integration. In this interregional framework, there are policy areas that gained high importance, and this has been due to international negotiations happening at the same time. They relate mainly to trade negotiations and sustainable development, ways to achieve social cohesion under the cooperation for development dialogue. On the other side, some areas of dialogue used to play an important role in the EU – Latin America dialogue, like the security cooperation in Central America in the 1980s, but they no longer represent a very central dimension for the interregional dialogue, keeping however a special status at least in the case of Central America. In addition to interregionalism, regional integration is a normative approach through which these same objectives (sustainable development, social cohesion e. g.) are to be achieved.

These two norms, interregionalism and regional integration are so closely linked and reinforcing each other that they need to be analysed together. At the same time, they can be considered as central for the European Union, defining the EU as an international actor and marking its interactions with other actors. This is also why they are considered here as norms, based on how they represent main elements of the EU identity, involving ideas of desirability and at the same time ensuring the EU uniqueness on the international scene.

This means that differently from other norms as democracy, sustainable development and the rule of law, interregionalism and, as closely related to it, regional integration, are specific to the EU to a higher degree than universal norms that are being defended and promoted by different Western countries and international organisations (such as democracy). Similar to the idea of Axelrod (1986) on metanorms, interregionalism and regional integration can be seen as general and overarching norms within which other subnorms as democracy or sustainable development can be protected and promoted.

Newer concepts as *transregionalism* that imply 'the establishment of common *spaces* between and across regions in which constituent agents (e.g. individuals, communities, organisations) operate and have close associative ties with each other' (Dent, 2003, 224) show how the region – to – region dialogue needs to involve interactions at all levels including economic, business, political and socio – cultural spaces. While not focusing on this approach, the research does take into account the participation of various types of actors (here included NGOs for example) during the different negotiations between the two regions.

5.2. Interregionalism

Talking about interregionalism, it is an important way of building an EU global image, 'improving Europe's international profile' (Regelsberg, 1990, 11 in Doidge, 2014, 40) and helping to gain legitimacy by promoting regional integration in other parts of the world. 'Interregionalism not only justifies and promotes the EU's *actorness* (both within the EU itself and to the rest of the world), but also strengthens the legitimacy of other regions

which, in turn, promotes further region – building and cross – cutting patterns of interregionalism’ (Söderbaum et al., 2006, 371).

Interregionalism has been ‘a true political identity – marker’ (Telò, 2005, 56) of the EU. Defined as ‘a process characterised by the *widening and deepening [of] political, economic, societal [and ideational] interactions between international regions*’ (Roloff, 2001, 20 in Rúland, 2010, 1271), interregionalism is a way to promote regional integration in other parts of the world. Theoretical approaches have been focusing on the five functions that interregionalism can accomplish: balancing, institution building, rationalising, agenda setting and collective identity formation (Doidge, 2014, Rúland, 2010). Considering the functions of interregionalism, they can be both internal and external, meaning that they have an influence over the way in which the region is developing as a process of internal dialogue and integration, but also over the relations a particular region has with other international actors (as in the case of the EU dialogue with Latin America).

Regarding the balancing function, the internal role is that of ‘avoiding possible marginalisation through maximising autonomy and room for manoeuvre in an anarchic / self – help system’ (Doidge, 2014, 42). This can be the case of the EU relations with Latin America in the context of the United States project having as objective a Free Trade Area of the Americas. The success of such project would have decreased the EU influence in the region, and as a result the interregional strategy with Latin America needed to be strengthened. The European Union reacted to this project by initiating negotiations for free trade agreements with several important actors in the region, including Central America, the Community of Andean Nations and the Southern Common Market (Mercosur). This region – to – region approach was not the first one in the EU foreign policy, having similar dialogues

with Asia and Africa, but the innovation was a community based on similar norms (democracy, human rights and the rule of law) more than ever before and a more complex network of agreements with all regional actors. It received more content through the Summits, at the beginning as EU – LAC dialogue, but recently replaced by the EU – CELAC cooperation (since 2013).

As for the external role of balancing, it concerns the way in which a region can influence other actors' behaviour and ensure their honest participation in the international system (Doidge, 2014). This corresponds to what Doidge terms as 'globally active' actors (Doidge, 2008, 242), changing the multilateral system through their interaction with other regions and establishing a new level of interaction 'in the hierarchy of global governance' (Doidge, 2008, 230).

The institution building function can be seen as 'regionalism through interregionalism' (Hänggi, 2003) since it concerns the ways in which the interregional cooperation constrains the actors 'to coordinate positions prior to dialogue with their interregional partners. Interregionalism, therefore, directly affects the building of regional structures' (Doidge, 2008, 230). In this way we can see how the 'dynamics of interregional relations drive regional states to strengthen intra – regional cooperation, in particular so among the members of the regional entity which exhibits a lower degree of cohesiveness' (Hänggi, 2003, 199). This is the case of Latin America in its relation with the European Union, and the creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) can be analysed from this perspective. Common positions are easier to achieve through a forum of dialogue like CELAC, with a Latin American Parliament and annual Summits held through a system of rotating presidency. In addition, this ensures a deeper dialogue with other regional

organisations like the EU and its support for strengthening these regional integration efforts:

[The] support for regional integration is something that distinguishes the EU as an external partner of Latin America and is one of its main assets. It could be said that the EU wants Latin America to *mirror* its own integration experience, but this European support is also based on a broad bi – regional consensus on the essential role of integration and regionalism in peace and security, socio – economic development and the international influence of Latin America’ (Sanahuja, 2006, 3).

This function shows the close link between interregionalism and regional integration and justifies the need to analyse them together, however questioning the way in which they reinforce (or not) each other. Interregionalism becomes a way to build viable interlocutors on the international scene and to consolidate their regional integration processes. In the case of the European Union as the most developed regional project, it is important to promote the region – to – region dialogue as the norm of international dialogue and using the Latin American example to help them become fully fledged regional organisations with which the EU can dialogue and cooperate.

As for the following two functions, rationalising and agenda setting, they are usually analysed together. They concern the ability of interregional negotiations to simplify multilateral negotiations in which it is hard to get concrete results due to the high number of participants (rationalising), and the chance to promote cooperative agendas that can then be translated to a higher level of global cooperation (agenda setting) (Doidge, 2014).

The last function, collective identity formation, concerns the interaction with the 'other' in which a region needs to define and redefine its own characteristics, its own identity. Interregionalism becomes in this way 'a locus for regularised contact and a venue for socialisation' (Doidge, 2014, 43). In the case of the European Union, interregionalism helped in strengthening the image of a global actor able to overcome its internal limits related to the ability of Member States to maintain a degree of decision power. This means that 'the building of the EU's identity as a global actor is closely related to and reinforced by a process of region – building and interregionalism' (Söderbaum et al., 2006, 371) and that interregionalism is

'a result of the ongoing need to forge a common European identity among the people of its constituent nations and by a belief in the utility of regions as a unit for organising the global economy' (Aggarwal and Fogarty, 2004, 14).

In the particular case of Latin America, interregionalism has been an essential dimension and a dialogue framework in which the European Union has tried to build its international presence and to defend its metanorms, here included the importance of regional integration. This has been done through different policy areas, some of which have received more importance and some more limited space and resources. Using this level of interaction, the thesis proposes an analysis of how both the European Union and different Latin American actors have promoted interregionalism and regional integration and the related concrete policies, have adapted their proposals and have reacted to the other's diffusion of regional integration and interregionalism as metanorms, adopting or challenging them and sometimes creating alternative normative approaches.

In conclusion, the reaction to different norms or the creation of new ones is analysed here as part of the collective identity formation, analysing towards the end of the thesis, the viability of a theoretical model in which this function could be split: one that is inward – looking, an internal identity consolidation function, and another one that is outward – looking, a normative shaper function promoting particular norms and creating expectations of how international interactions should happen. This is a way of applying similar ideas of a balanced approach between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter to the concrete case of interregionalism as an EU metanorm and of contributing to the study of regionalism and interregionalism in the EU context from a post – positivist standing.

The two metanorms, interregionalism and regional integration, allow the analysis of a wide range of policy areas and the comparison between them (including political dialogue, cooperation for development and trade as it will be presented in Chapter 3). This will help to address questions related to how both sides will react to norm diffusion initiatives depending on how central these norms are for their presence on the international scene. The difference between policy areas (cooperation for development versus trade for example) will help to show how interregionalism and regional integration are presented / defended through policy fields with different importance and history for the dialogue between the two regions.

6. Conclusions

The current chapter has built the theoretical framework that will be used in this doctoral thesis. The perspective proposed here is an interdisciplinary one with concepts mainly from public policy studies (policy entrepreneurship) and International Relations (norm diffusion

and socialisation, normative reactions). The aim is to problematize the way in which the relation between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter has been analysed and presented, by emphasising more the role of the *interpreter* (a concept that is explained at the beginning of the chapter) and presenting the relation between the two actors more as a *dialogue* and less as a *monologue* in which the norm entrepreneur diffuses its norms and its counterpart adopts them.

The three theoretical tools, norm diffusion and norm socialisation, normative reactions and policy entrepreneurship show three interrelated steps resulting in *normative encounters*, the term that is proposed for explaining the complex interactions between entrepreneurs and interpreters. There is a step of promoting the norms from the norm entrepreneur side and a step in which, as a response, the interpreter can adopt, adapt, resist or reject them. Sometimes, the interpreter can become norm entrepreneur by proposing its own norms that get to be the recognised way to deal with particular issues at regional level. In this way the focus is changed, and the relation is presented better in a circular way, a loop fed by both actors. The policy part is the manifestation of such normative reactions and the third step in this theoretical model.

Normative encounters are the result of the four elements (actors and processes) that have no unique chronology. As explained and presented in Figure 1, the loop can start with the norm entrepreneur, as well as with the norm interpreter, when the norm interpreter challenges not only its own regional normative reality, but also the normative basis on which the two actors interact. In such case, the argument presented is that the initial norm entrepreneur will need to adapt its normative vision and design policies that are better suited to the new normative reality.

The theoretical contribution of the thesis is given first by the interdisciplinary perspective and the way in which norm entrepreneurship is presented as an encounter between the two actors, entrepreneur and interpreter. It is also related to the analysis of the way in which norms and policies are linked; and finally, to the way in which norm subsidiarity can be better used exclusively to describe the creation of new norms, while norm rejection becomes in this context a reaction which is part of the localisation process.

The two metanorms that will be used to problematize the relation and dialogue between the European Union and Latin American regional organisations are *interregionalism* and *regional integration*. The argument behind this choice is related to the historical and discursive importance that has been given to both of them by the European Union in its external action in general and in the case of the relation with Latin America in particular.

The next chapter sheds light on the particularities of the European Union and Latin America as international actors, the importance of interregionalism and regional integration for their external policies and how this has affected their interaction with other actors as norm diffusers or interpreters. It also details the link between norms and policy by showing the limitations and opportunities of the EU in the problem, policy and politics stream. The structure of the chapter follows Kingdon's three streams and keeps the balance between the role of the entrepreneurs and interpreter presenting perspectives from both sides. It also exemplifies the type of policies that will be analysed, including political dialogue, cooperation for development and trade. While mentions will be made to the three of them, the part related to cooperation for development will receive higher importance. This is due to the centrality that this policy area has had in the region – to – region dialogue between

the European Union and different actors in Latin America, but also to the fact that the normative content related to it allows a more complex and diversified analysis of normative reactions (including the South – South and triangular / delegated cooperation).

CHAPTER 3. THE EUROPEAN UNION AND LATIN AMERICA AS INTERNATIONAL ACTORS. ENTREPRENEURSHIP, THE THREE STREAMS AND FRAMEWORKS OF COOPERATION

1. Introduction

The aim of the third chapter is to give content to the link between norms and policies and show how EU norms applied through concrete policies are limited by the three streams (problems, politics and policies). While the previous chapter has analysed these concepts, the current chapter applies them to the European Union – Latin America relation. It is in this sense that its first objective is to show how the different EU institutions and Latin American actors come to play a relevant role in each of the three propositions formulated in Chapter 1. The analysis will present common elements of the European Union dialogue with Latin America, elements that can be applied to all sub – regional negotiations, with limitations and particularities that will be discussed in each subsequent chapter.

Different European Union institutions have contributed to develop a reinforced relation with the Latin American region. The European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council and the European External Action Service are the main ones. Together with other EU institutions, agencies and bodies, they have designed the interregional strategy aiming to diffuse regional integration and the cooperation at a region – to – region level. At different points in time, new frameworks were introduced with the purpose to make the dialogue between the two regions a real partnership. The current chapter looks at these evolutions and does it from the perspective of the policy entrepreneurship concept. This means

deploying the concept and its three streams – problems, policies, politics – and looking at how they conditioned the European Union in its normative initiatives with the whole Latin American region. The aim is to propose an analysis of the way in which interregionalism appears as a normative approach and a metanorm that together with regional integration and through concrete policies contributes or not to give content to specific subnorms in the relation with different Latin American actors.

The chapter also analyses the frameworks within which these EU attempts were made – Association Agreements and Cooperation for Development Programmes – and how they relate to each other. This covers its second objective – to explain and structure the empirical chapters' material, giving insights on how normative encounters will be unpacked in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, including norm adoption, adaption, resistance, rejection and subsidiarity, and the relation and intersection between these reactions and the three streams.

The three streams theory has been chosen over other alternative public policies frameworks, such as *cycles* or *stages* (Lasswell, 1956), because of its ability 'to explore the impact of context, time and meaning on policy change and to assess the institutional and issue complexities permeating the European Union (EU) policy process' (Ackrill et al., 2013, 871). In addition, it offers the possibility to look into overlapping institutional responsibilities, as it happens to be the case of many external policies, and to go beyond 'models of rational behaviour' (Ackrill et al., 2013, 872). The framework also helps to shed light over the relation between agency and structure. As a way of understanding the relation between structural and ideational power (and in line with how this link has been previously explained in Chapter 1), the three streams propose 'an actor – centred analysis in

which material pressures are transmitted to policy – makers by information signals, interpreted through ideational frames, and acted upon with political strategies’ (Copeland & James, 2013, 3). This fits with the normative basis which is being proposed as a main condition and enabling factor for specific policies to be adopted. It offers in this way an explanatory framework for why similar policy proposals in similar contexts may result in different policy outputs.

A first contribution to the three streams literature in the EU context is applying this framework to external policies and acknowledging the role of third actors (here included a wide range of Latin American actors, but going beyond this and accounting also for the role of other actors as the USA or China). While, for example, research has been undertaken on the European Commission as a policy entrepreneur in topics related to external policies (such as CFSP) (Krause, 2003), the analysis has not made use of the three streams and has remained at the level of agency without accounting for the role of structures or context. The three streams framework has been previously used in explaining European Union policy variation, but mostly in terms of EU internal policies, in subjects mainly related to economic topics (Copeland & James, 2013, Schön-Quinlivan & Scipioni, 2017), and in relation to the sugar regime (Ackrill & Kay, 2011) (with remarks concerning the role of the WTO and the ACP countries) and the natural gas market (Herweg, 2017).

An additional contribution is made towards consolidating our understanding of EU failed entrepreneurship. While previous research in the public policy field has looked at mainly successful stories of entrepreneurship in general (Mintrom, 1997, Mintrom, 2000, Mintrom and Norman, 2009, Mintrom et al., 2014, Moravcsik, 1999, Roberts and King, 1991) and of the European Union in particular (Ackrill and Kay, 2011, Ackrill et al., 2013, Bunse,

2009, Herweg, 2017, Palmer, 2015, Saurugger and Terpan, 2016), only few references were made to the limitations of these attempts (Bache, 2013). The same applies for previous research looking at how the EU was constrained in its normative attempts in other regions of the world (as an example, Vadura, 2015, analysing Asia). In this context, the EU entrepreneurship literature remains one that speaks predominantly about successful attempts of norm and policy diffusion. The current chapter argues that more attention should be given to unsuccessful entrepreneurship. In addition, it states that normative and policy attempts of diffusion are not always caused by a crisis (Saurugger and Terpan, 2016), but they can also be described and understood as an incremental process in which actors get to know each other and adapt to each other reactions and priorities, in a process that can be analysed as a normative encounter. When such encounter is unsuccessful a main impediment relates to the politics stream and therefore to legitimacy seen as recognised agency by the right interlocutors, playing also the role of interpreters, but also to the problem stream and the way of framing the issue to be addressed.

It means that the chapter not only looks at both successful and unsuccessful normative attempts, but goes beyond this and aims to see how the link between norms and policies is determined by the three streams and how it results or not in an encounter. For conceptual clarity, the three streams will be presented separately. However, boundary issues and actors (institutions) will be presented and in this way the manner in which the three streams relate to each other will be better explored.

Adding the role of the interpreter to the three streams, the framework of this chapter is richer in terms of agency than previous analysis of EU policy using the Kingdon's framework. Few other concepts are particularly relevant, and while previously mentioned in Chapter 2,

it is important to get back to them and to further reflect on their role accounting for the way in which the three streams will be used in the thesis. The first one concerns the nature of the window, and, closely related to it, the second one is linked to the relation between the streams, explaining how in particular cases one stream can be dominant. This idea has been previously debated in the literature, with Howlett *et al.* (2014) highlighting that when the problem stream is the dominant one, it translates in a rational model in which a solution is searched for a problem with limited or no pressure from either the political or the economic agenda. The other extreme is when the political stream is the dominant one, and such case can be seen as ‘an ideological, politically driven *garbage can*, where the entire policy formation process is driven by a political decision to pursue a particular policy *solution*’ (Howlett et al., 2014, 428).

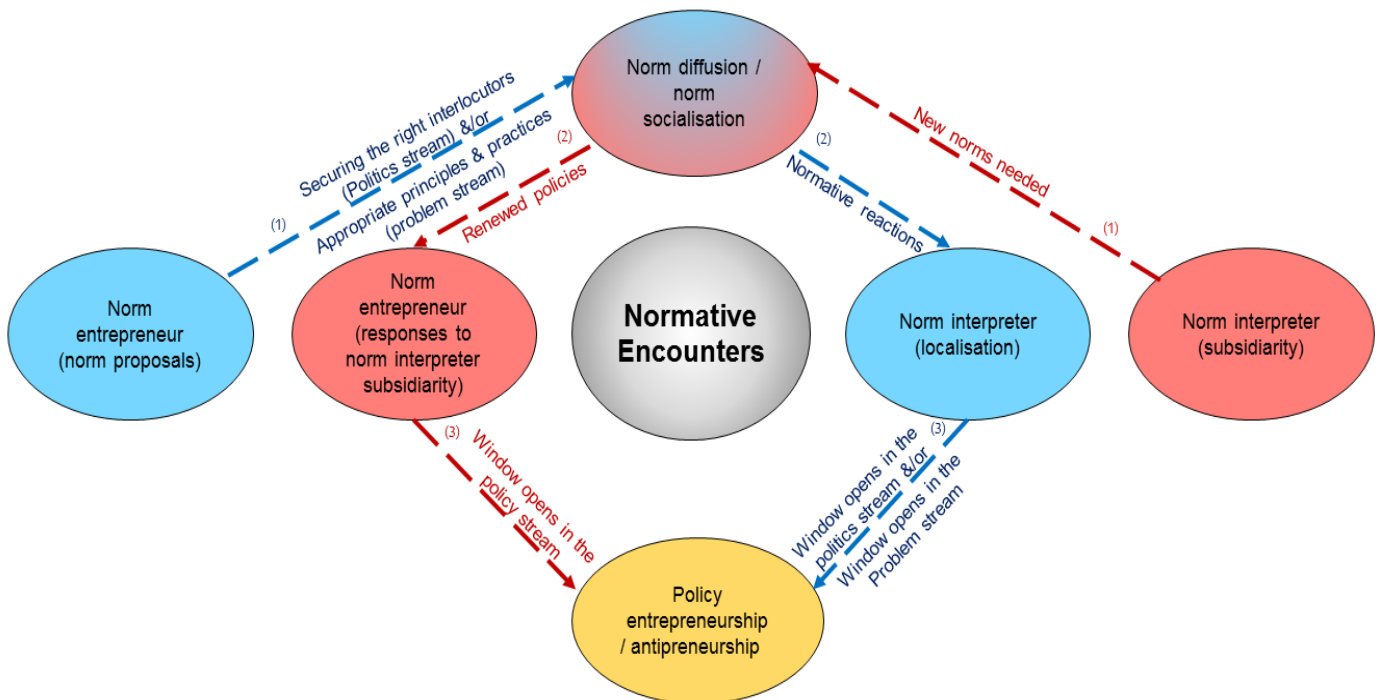
Concerning the nature of the window and in relation to the dominant stream, the coupling can be done by skilful entrepreneurs and a window of opportunity can be opened in both the politics and the problem stream. As stated in the second proposition, securing the right interlocutors is a main condition that needs to be fulfilled in order to be able to open a window of opportunity in the politics stream that would become in this case the dominant stream. When this type of window is opened, it may be time constrained (depending on the political landscape in the particular country or region, and on potential political cycles) (Ackrill & Kay, 2011) and institutionally limited, to the frameworks from which these actors come (for example, in the case of Latin American regional organisations, specific ideas are to be potentially successful within their particular institutions, and not within the broader regional landscape).

Reflecting in a similar way on the third proposition means understanding the nature of the window of opportunity when it is opened in the problem stream, which becomes also the dominant stream. It means that both renewed principles (for example switching from vertical to horizontal cooperation) and practices (like joint planning) are needed for framing the issue and start planning for policy solutions. This window of opportunity is opened wider and for longer periods of time, since it is not dependent on a specific political landscape. This is similar to how Howlett et al. (2014) understand the dominant problem stream.

Reflecting on the second dynamic of the normative encounters and in relation to the first proposition, norm subsidiarity creates a need for renewed EU policies which will reflect new normative content. Examples such as the triangular and delegated cooperation as a response to South – South cooperation will be analysed in the next chapters. In this case, the policy stream becomes dominant, and it is this stream that conditions the opening of a window of opportunity, when beyond how a problem is being defined and beyond politics, the policy solution must ensure a reinforced dialogue and a normative encounter between actors.

These ideas are reflected in an updated figure of normative encounters, that gets back to the figure in Chapter 2 and incorporates nuances on the nature of the streams and of the windows of opportunity in relation to the three propositions.

Figure 2 - Normative entrepreneurship and the resulting normative encounters. Revised process



(Source: Own interpretation)

Getting back to the EU institutional landscape and the way in which the three streams are to be understood in this context, it is important to highlight that we are talking about an actor whose international presence is still being developed and defined (Interviewees 47 and 49, EU officials in the EEAS HQ). While its external relations have been consolidated in the trade area and a network of agreements has been achieved⁵, dimensions related to political dialogue and cooperation for development have been gradually added and this has been done to a different extent with different partners around the world. An economic and diplomatic presence has been strengthened in strategic countries and regions.

⁵ For more information: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/>, last accessed on 25th February 2017.

Latin America and its regional groups are actors with which the European Union institutions have developed their relation and dialogue to a slower pace than with other regions like EU candidate countries and the European Neighbourhood that used to be and are still the main focus of the EU normative attempts even when issues of normative friction (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015a) are encountered, or with strategic partners like the United States (Interviewee 48, EU official in the EEAS HQ). However, these countries were treated as potential candidates to EU membership (in the case of the candidate countries) or strictly on a bilateral basis (in the cases of partners as the United States). When talking about interregionalism, Latin America has been a main partner for the European Union and this was not only due to the European Union preference for cooperation and dialogue on a region – to – region basis, but also to the fact that Latin American regional integration processes helped indeed to consolidate a dialogue with the European Union at an interregional level (Interviewee 58, Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid).

The second part of the chapter analyses the problem stream, looking at main challenges of the EU – Latin America dialogue and at the way in which they appear in the European Union institutions documents, as well as at how they were perceived by Latin American actors. The European Commission has the advantage of being the institution making proposals to the Parliament and the Council and designing new ways to look at the EU policy. In the case of the relation with Latin America, the Commission was a main actor since the 1990s and this is the reason why it plays a crucial role in the analysis undertaken in this chapter. The influence of the more recent European External Action Service was added since 2010. The Parliament played also an important role in highlighting and facilitating topics of

cooperation, while the Council was crucial in supporting the debate on different EU – Latin American challenges. In the case of the Council, it also had an influence in the politics stream, being a facilitator or harnessing the inclusion of particular ideas on the agenda, exemplifying in this way the manner in which the streams relate to each other.

The third part of the chapter looks at the politics stream, including both internal (related to the EU and Latin America) and external factors (the role of actors as the United States) and the way in which they have contributed to or limited interregionalism. It means that the analysis highlights how political particularities in Latin America as open or post – liberal regionalism have influenced the region – to – region relation with the European Union, as well as how different EU institutions have particularly enabled or limited interregional cooperation between the two regions. In addition to analysing the EU institutions role, the chapter places a much higher focus on the role of the norm interpreter, in this case Latin America, in the politics stream, a part that is very limited in previous research on the EU – Latin America relations.

The fourth part looks at the policies stream and analyses how policies at interregional level have been presented as a solution for the challenges of the European Union cooperation with Latin America. After the general argument, the section focuses on the two frameworks of cooperation and dialogue that will be treated in the empirical chapters: the Association Agreements with the different regional groups in Latin America (Central America, the Andean Community – CAN and the Southern Common Market – Mercosur) and the cooperation for development programmes and projects that were developed at the same time as these agreements were negotiated, mainly since the 1990s.

The fifth and final part of the chapter presents some concluding remarks on how the three streams have been sometimes enabling and their coupling has facilitated the opening of a window of opportunity, while sometimes one or several streams have not allowed interregionalism to be promoted through policies in the dialogue and cooperation between the two actors.

2. Norm entrepreneurship in the EU – Latin America relation. The problem stream

This part of the chapter is analysing the main challenges that the European Union institutions identified in their relation with Latin America. It also analyses how the same issues and objectives were perceived by the Latin America counterparts. Latin America became a topic on the European Union agenda since the late 1960s – early 1970s. Since then and in relation to the regional and interregional focus of this research, a framework of formal encounters and institutions was created, with Eurolat (since 2007), the European Union – Latin American and Caribbean Foundation (since 2010) and the interregional Summits (since 1999) as main examples. In order to identify convergences and possible coalitions in the problem stream, an analysis will be made of the main EU institutions and this will be compared to the way in which the same issues were presented by Latin American counterparts.

2.1. The European Parliament

2.1.1. The European Parliament and foreign policy entrepreneurship

Concerning foreign policy, the European Parliament has been traditionally seen as a supranational forum for debate and an agenda setting actor. The declarative resolutions have been the main internal tool in promoting its vision on the EU foreign policy. Through them the Parliament has managed to use its rhetorical power, going beyond the Treaties and its formal competencies. However, with the Lisbon Treaty and the confirmation of its budgetary power, it has become an important actor for the decisions taken not only on trade agreements, but also on development and political dialogue (European Union, 2007). Through its legislative power on the Multiannual Financial Framework, including the Heading 4 on European External Action and the Development Cooperation Instrument, the European Parliament has managed to become a relevant player in foreign policy.

In addition, when talking about the policies and ideas able to guarantee the ‘soft legitimacy’ needed by the EU as an international actor, the Parliament has been the main institutional promoter of the European norms and of the human rights principles (Bajtaj, 2015). Consolidating its reputation as the institution focusing on political conditionality relating to the rule of law and democracy for all EU external agreements, the European Parliament has been seen as a norm entrepreneur (Šabic, 2013). As highlighted by a former Chair of the EP’s Committee on Foreign Affairs, even if this is not part of the Treaties, it has been assumed informally by the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the EU Presidency and the Council Secretariat (Troszczyńska-van Genderen, 2015). The EP has managed in this way to frame objectives, normative and policy choices through binding and non – binding instructions to the executive branch in charge with the European external

action, through its three Committees: Foreign Affairs, Development and International Trade (Bajtay, 2015).

2.1.2. The European Parliament and Latin America

In the context of the EU relation with Latin America, the European Parliament was the first institution to establish a regular contact with the region, in the 1960s, when the Commission and the Council were still focusing on former African colonies. This is actually something particular to the EU – Latin America dialogue, with the Parliament acting ‘as a forerunner for their current [interregional] relations’ (Stavridis et al., 2013, 222). The first mention is in a 1963 resolution on the commercial cooperation between the two regions (European Parliament, 1963). In 1974, the dialogue between the EP and the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino) was institutionalised through biannual inter – parliamentary meetings between the two regions (Dri, 2015), a unique feature of the European Parliament in developing the dialogue with other regions (Bajtay, 2015). In the 1980s, during the military dictatorship, Europe had a difficult time in approaching Latin America and so the parliamentary dialogue was the main tool for political contact (Dabène, 2009). This strengthened the cultural and historical ties between the two regions and provided a unique political dimension (CELARE, 1996, 45). It reinforced cooperation in the 1990s and in recent years in all the topics related to external action: political dialogue, trade and development cooperation. During this period, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have built their credibility based on ‘reconciling contradictory qualities: on the one hand, determination and engagement and, on the other, moderation and realism’ (Costa and Dri, 2014, 136).

In order to input its ideas and vision on the EU cooperation with Latin America, the European Parliament has benefited from the possibility to send messages and recommendations to the EU Summits firstly with Latin America and since 2013 with the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC). This was done mainly through the Euro – Latin American Inter – Parliamentary Assembly – Eurolat that was seen as a favourable venue for entrepreneurship initiatives and ‘a more horizontal dialogue with Latin America’ (Interviewee 38, European Parliament Official in Brussels).

Eurolat was created in 2006 and it represents the parliamentary institution of the region – to – region Strategic Association between the European Union and Latin America. It is a multilateral Parliamentary Assembly having 150 members, 75 from the European Parliament and 75 from Latin America (from Parlatino – the Latin American Parliament, Parlandino – the Andean Parliament, Parlacen – the Central American Parliament, Parlasur – the Mercosur Parliament, and from Mexico and Chile). Its bodies include the Presidency and Executive Bureau and four Committees: on Political Affairs, on Economic Affairs, on Social Affairs and on Sustainable Development. In addition to this, Eurolat has a Working Group on ‘EU – LAC Migration Issues’⁶. In this way, ‘the EU-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly creates a space of dialogue and parliamentary diplomacy, able to talk about topics that would be too sensitive for the EU – CELAC Summits’ (Interviewee 39, European Parliament Official in Brussels). Since its creation, Eurolat held nine Plenary Sessions, the first one in December 2007 and the last one in September 2016.

In order to promote its ideas, Eurolat has adopted official Messages to be forwarded to the European and Latin American Heads of State in 2008, 2010, 2013 and 2015. The main

⁶ For more information: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/eurolat/menu_en.htm, last accessed on 5th May 2017.

issue that was identified and proposed in the problem stream urging to be addressed is the consolidation of a strategic partnership. In order to answer the need to ‘integrate diversity’, to ‘move forward together’ and to strengthen the relation between the two regions (Eurolat, 2008, 1), Eurolat promoted the need to create a Euro – Latin American Interregional Global Partnership Area, an objective that in the initial message from 2008 was intended to be achieved by 2012. Its vision included a genuine cooperation in ‘the political, economic, social and cultural fields and [...] the joint search for sustainable development’ (Eurolat, 2008, 1). The idea was a way to step up the EU – LAC relation by ensuring that all fields were covered by the region – to – region dialogue. This normative and policy approach addressed the need to reinforce the interregional Strategic Partnership and to boost the dialogue in all the mentioned fields. The initial ambitions were diminished in 2010 and the deadline to achieve these objectives was moved to 2015 (anyway, the deadline proved to be too ambitious once more).

A second idea on the Eurolat agenda was to draw up a Euro – Latin American Charter for Peace and Security. This idea appears in the Messages to the Summits from 2008, 2010 and 2013 and was even developed as an independent document in the form of a draft proposal on what the Charter should contain (in the Third Plenary session, April 2009, Madrid). Aiming to ‘enable the adoption of joint political, strategic, security and peace proposals’ (EuroLat, 2013, 2), the Charter is an interregional document having the objective to strengthen the political and security cooperation between the two partners. The document talks about

‘joint political and security strategies and action guidelines, so as to tackle the common threats facing the members of the [interregional] Strategic Partnership

[and] to strengthen security, economic development, solidarity and democratic governance in the Euro – Latin American area, within a climate of mutual trust and respect, and to meet their citizens' expectations of peace and security, well – being and freedom, and contribute to international peace and security' (EuroLat, 2009, 4).

This type of initiative intends to tackle challenges such as 'poverty, pandemics and infectious diseases, the deterioration of the environment, threats to governance and good government, war and internal violence, anti – personnel mines, the proliferation and possible use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, terrorism and transnational organised crime, drug trafficking and the trafficking of human beings' (EuroLat, 2009, 4 - 5). All these threats are affecting the two regions and, according to the document, facing them together can result in more efficient strategies. The Charter is seen by EuroLat as having the potential of creating a deeper political dialogue concerning peace and security and the adoption of common positions on the international scene.

A complementary idea was to strengthen the institutional, promotion and research mechanisms. This proposal includes the need to create (2008, 2010) and step up (2013) the EU – LAC Foundation

'whose primary purpose would be to help prepare for the summits, follow up on the decisions and political courses of action adopted at the summits, and act as a forum for dialogue and coordination in the periods between summits for all the political, institutional, academic and civil society bodies working to strengthen Euro – Latin American relations' (EuroLat, 2010, 3).

While very general and comprehensive, touching practically all topics of possible cooperation and dialogue between the two regions, all these ideas share a common element: the idea that a region – to – region approach would be the most appropriate and that such ambitious objectives could only be achieved through an interregional approach, coordinating replies and strategies between the two regions (Interviewee 37, European Parliament Official in Brussels). Even if bilateral agreements can be easier to achieve, the European Parliament approach has been to favour the region – to – region one. This follows the philosophy that it is 'easier to negotiate with a sole country, but it is more interesting [for the EU] to negotiate with a group of countries' disseminating the EU model of regional integration (Spanish EP official in Dri, 2015, 170). The Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) 'have traditionally advocated for *pure* interregionalism that is guided by European values and principles' (Costa and Dri, 2014, 146) (*pure* refers here to the idea that it should not combine this approach with bilateral relations). Promoting regional integration has been seen within the EP 'largely as a way to optimise the EU's global position and to affirm its status both internally and externally as a parliamentary institution' (Costa and Dri, 2014, 140).

The influence that the European Parliament had in the EU – Latin America dialogue is not limited to the Eurolat framework, and the European Parliament had indeed interventions in almost all important documents and decisions concerning the region (here included the Parliament role in defining the cooperation for development with Latin America through its reinforced competencies over budget emanating from the Lisbon Treaty). However, the Eurolat framework has one important particularity: it is one of the

few spaces where ideas are brought to discussion and common problems are debated in the framework of a shared institution where the two regions interact directly.

Even if this space of dialogue and *parliamentary diplomacy* (Interviewees 36 and 39, European Parliament officials, Šabic, 2013, Stavridis and Irrera, 2015) was seen as an opportunity for more horizontal cooperation, it had some important limitations. During interviews, Latin American officials from almost all countries that were part of the research (except for those coming from Central America) saw Eurolat as more of a European proposal and less as a space for horizontal cooperation. Examples of these limitations relate to the topics that were included on the agenda: they were seen as European priorities and while some were also present on the Latin American agenda, they were addressed using a different approach. In this sense, references to peer – to – peer learning between Latin American countries became predominant and this approach was seen as the solution to problems ranging from development to social cohesion, security and trade.

A further example to support this argument is the fact that Eurolat did not manage to issue a common message to the EU – CELAC Summit of Heads of States in 2015. Instead of providing a Eurolat position, two different Declarations were issued: one by the EP President and a second one by the Latin American President of Eurolat. This was mainly caused by the antagonistic positions of the European Parliament and Latin American parliamentarians on Venezuela. The European Parliament wanted to highlight the importance of holding democratic elections and releasing political prisoners, while the Latin American parliamentarians saw this approach as a proof of EU interventionism. The two declarations show a significantly different landscape, and the European Parliament and the LAC priorities appear to be different.

Value – acceptability proved to be a strong issue. Legitimacy problems, including differences in ideology (Kingdon, 1995, Zhu, 2008), prevented the European Parliament from using the window of opportunity offered by the Summit. It meant that the European Parliament failed in its agenda – setting attempts and in this way failed in using interregionalism as a norm. In this case the Venezuelan situation was a red line for value acceptability, seen as a question of national sovereignty that Latin America was not willing to negotiate. The way in which the European Parliament wanted to interfere in a sphere that was seen by Latin America as part of its sovereignty made this European attempt to ‘correct’ political directions in Venezuela an unsuccessful normative encounter. As highlighted during interviews, this was not even caused by different perceptions of how the Venezuelan situation should evolve. A majority of Latin American countries agreed indeed that democratic elections were crucial for Venezuela. The European Parliament was not seen as the legitimate actor to promote this solution to a problem that was seen as a Latin American one to which regional actors were perceived as the appropriate interlocutors.

Even if confronting limitations like the ones mentioned above through examples and concrete cases, the European Parliament was a key factor in showing and arguing that a stronger partnership with Latin America could only be achieved through interregionalism and in this sense even if it did not fully contribute to setting an interregional agenda, it did contribute at least to setting a European agenda and suggesting solutions that will be analysed in the policy stream. In addition to this role in the problem stream, the Parliament also had an important potential for coupling and opening a window of opportunity in the politics stream. As explained in the introduction of this chapter, ensuring a coalition of actors in the politics stream is crucial when the political agenda has priority (this idea is also

stated in the second proposition). As in the Venezuela case, the Parliament had access to the relevant Latin American actors, in the EuroLat framework, and while its efforts to bring together these actors were not always successful, this type of institutions gave important leverage to the Parliament in terms of the politics stream.

The role of the Parliament was more at a normative level due to its limits in influencing the policy level, showing how policy outputs start to be conditioned early on, in what is intended to be a normative encounter. Opposed to this, the next institution that will be analysed, the European Commission, had entrepreneurship potential in both normative and policy dimensions. Through its documents and Communications to the Parliament and the Council a normative approach was proposed. Through the negotiations of Association Agreements and cooperation for development strategies a policy approach gave content to this normative vision.

2.2. The European Commission

2.2.1. The European Commission or how to leverage entrepreneurship

Working closely with the Parliament, the Council, the EEAS, as well as with other EU institutions, the European Commission (EC) is a supranational body of the EU and the guardian of the treaties, being the institution that forwards initiatives to the European Parliament and the EU Council and that has as main responsibility to ensure that, through its work, the content of the EU Member States commitments is fulfilled⁷. However, the right to initiate legislative and non – legislative proposals grants an entrepreneurial potential to the Commission and converts it in a source of reports aiming to stimulate the debate and

⁷ More information: http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/index_en.htm, last accessed on 19th April 2017.

deepen the integration process. This was theorised in the EU literature as the EC formal ability to influence the European Union agenda and promote particular ideas and policy solutions (Haas, 1964). The 'sole right of the Commission to propose legislation puts the organisation as a whole in a unique position regarding agenda-setting' (Ackrill et al., 2013, 876). It also explains why 'entrepreneurship by the Commission has so far been the focus of most studies' (Bunse, 2009, 42). Without limiting the analysis to this institution, the current research recognises the special role of the Commission in this plethora of actors.

The role of the European Commission in the EU external relations goes in line with these ideas and, due to its controversial nature, depending on its content, can be made visible through predominantly legislative (trade) or non – legislative (Common Foreign and Security Policy and cooperation for development) initiatives. Prior to the Lisbon Treaty, the three main areas of external relations were fulfilled by the Commission. After 2010, the foreign policy was transferred to the newly created European External Action Service (EEAS). The Commission kept trade in its area of attributions (in the DG TRADE), an exclusive competence of the EU, and cooperation for development (in the DG DEVCO), in which advice is expected from the EEAS on the political side⁸.

Analysing the new institutional landscape, the Commission is still a strategic actor and not only due to its formal competences, but also due to its informal power in influencing the area of external relations (Moravcsik, 1999). This claim is further supported by the fact that the High Representative (a function created by the Lisbon Treaty and being in charge with the coordination of the EEAS) is also a vice – president of the Commission keeping an institutional link between the EC and the EEAS. Even if outside its current area of

⁸ More information: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3Aai0033>, last accessed on 24th April 2017.

competences, the European Commission tradition in foreign policy is the argument for issuing reports with the purpose of influencing the European Parliament and the EU Council in their way of conceiving the external relations policy (Interviewees 31, 32, 33 and 34, European Commission Officials in DG Trade and DG DEVCO in Brussels). In addition, the EC is the institution negotiating directly with third countries and international organisations the EU association agreements (with trade, cooperation for development and political dialogue dimensions) and it plays an important role in gathering other EU institutions and the Member States around common ideas on external relations.

The way in which the European Commission has managed to keep its relevance in external policy has been justified by its entrepreneurial skills. 'The European Commission, in particular, is often portrayed as a skilful [entrepreneur]: eager to introduce innovative ideas into policy – making and capable to create supportive coalitions around its preferred solutions' (Kauert and Della Giovanna, 2010, 278). The European Commission can succeed as entrepreneur based on three arguments: on the first mover advantage – proposing normative and policy approaches before its competitors, the persuasion strategy – convincing other actors of the desirability of its initiatives, and the need to create alliances – key actors need to join the entrepreneur in its initiatives creating a bandwagon effect (Kauert and Della Giovanna, 2010, 279).

However, the EC way of coordinating the EU external relations has been criticised because of being 'measured in the number of dialogue meetings at different levels, with perhaps less regard to the actual results' (Duke, 2015, 65). Taking these ideas as important drivers of the European Commission role in developing the EU external relations, the current chapter argues that the EC has an important role in external relations and, due to its

institutional position, its possibilities of becoming an entrepreneur are high, by feeding reports to the European Parliament and the EU Council on the way the agenda should be designed in the dialogue and cooperation with third actors.

2.2.2. The European Commission and Latin America

The European Commission relations with Latin America started with important events in the 1980s, such as the conflicts in Central America and the EU support to a peaceful solution (more details are provided in the chapter on Central America), but the Commission has framed its relation with Latin America through several documents after 1990, including: *Closer partnership between the EU and Latin America 1996 – 2000* (European Commission, 1995), *New EU – Latin America partnership on the eve of the 21st century* (European Commission, 1999b), *A stronger partnership between the European Union and Latin America* (European Commission, 2005) and *The European Union and Latin America: Global Players in Partnership* (European Commission, 2009). They show the priorities that the European Commission considers as main topics for reinforcing the partnership between the two actors. The issues are related to three areas of intervention: trade (‘creating a climate favourable to trade and investment’ (European Commission, 2005, 10)), cooperation for development (with special emphasis on regional integration, sustainable development, climate change and the promotion of social cohesion) and political dialogue (‘stepping up and focusing political dialogue’ (European Commission, 2005, 10)). Through a fresh impetus, the Commission proposes to face the following challenges:

Table 2 – A stronger partnership between the European Union and Latin America

<p>Joining the forces of two world players. Some consideration should be given to joint action to improve the political dialogue between the two regions with a view eventually to expanding their world influence.</p>
<p>Stimulating economic and commercial exchange on a balanced basis; it is important for the strategic partnership that trade between the two regions continues to grow. Despite a significant increase in trade and investment flows between the two regions over the last fifteen years, their growth potential has been underutilised.</p>
<p>Latin America is a region of ongoing consolidation: to avoid jeopardising long – term stability in Latin America, the EU needs to support its efforts, above all in the following areas: social inequality, poverty and exclusion; migration; democratic governance; illicit drugs and organised crime and the environment.</p>
<p>Taking greater account of Latin American diversity. Although it favours the integration of the region as a whole, the Commission believes that it is time to develop the current approach by tailoring relations with certain countries to specific policies and by conducting a more targeted dialogue.</p>

(Source: European Commission, 2005, 5)

The Parliament and the Council took on board a number of these topics in final documents, resolutions and speeches during Plenary Sessions in the case of the Parliament (as examples: European Parliament, 1996, European Parliament, 2001, European Parliament, 2006, European Parliament, 2010a, European Parliament, 2010b, European Parliament, 2012) and Council Meetings (for the Council, as mentioned by Interviewees 53 and 54, EU officials in the EEAS HQ). In this context, a region – to – region strategy emerged as an

appropriate normative approach and a framework in which both policy opportunities and challenges of the relation between the two regions could be exploited. These ideas are highlighted in different documents issued by the EC previously to EU – Latin America Summits or aiming to create a supportive environment in the politics stream for a stronger interregional partnership. They talk about the importance of supporting the regional integration process in Latin America:

‘The Latin American countries have embarked on regional integration processes, which have already made a considerable impact. Latin America is in lead position among the developing countries on the integration path. Regional integration is a fundamental priority area of the Commission’s support for the development of the Latin American region [...]’ (European Commission, 2005, 15).

‘The Commission would like to discuss with the Latin American partners the advisability of a regional integration strategy for the whole of Latin America. It would be a long – term strategy that would not jeopardise the current commitment to subregional integration processes’ (European Commission, 2005, 15).

‘The EU should reiterate its commitment to regional integration in Latin America by pursuing the ongoing [region – to – region] negotiations and supporting integration efforts within the region [...]’ (European Commission, 2009, 7).

This shows that attention was given to both interregionalism and regional integration, making the Commission approach a more comprehensive one. However, as in the case of the Parliament, similar issues were raised during interviews with Latin American representatives. This included the fact that the Commission ‘was slow in adapting to a

changing reality in Latin America and to a changing panorama of regional entities on the continent' (Interviewee 19, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid). While the Commission played a crucial role in promoting a region – to – region approach with Latin America, it was always conditioned by the need to convince the Council and the Parliament that its approach was the appropriate one. The Parliament also promoted these same ideas. However, when talking about the Council, things were not always easy, and no approach could be preserved for a long time due to the rotating Presidency and the sometimes contradictory or at least different priorities.

In addition, other constraints came from inside the Commission. In the Communication from 2009, the Commission put as an additional framework of interaction the bilateral relations:

'The Commission believes it necessary to develop a deeper relationship and a more structured and intense dialogue with *individual countries* in the region. However, this dialogue should bring added value. To that end, bilateral dialogue and cooperation should be intensified in areas of common interest' (emphasis added) (European Commission, 2009, 8).

While this approach was intended to be complementary to the region – to – region dialogue, it also posed challenges in terms of framework coherence and normative behaviour. The two levels of interaction were competing at particular points in time and the case of the Andean Community and the Agreement achieved with Colombia and Peru in 2010 is an example in this sense. This meant that internal normative friction could be identified inside the Commission, favouring two normative approaches at the same time: bilateralism and interregionalism. This will be exemplified in the following chapters.

Concluding on the European Commission's potential role from the three streams perspective, it is important to highlight its capacity to open windows of opportunity in the problem stream, due to both its privileged position in the EU institutional landscape (in terms of trade and cooperation for development mainly) and to its capacity to interact with Latin American actors in the negotiation of Association Agreements, understanding their priorities and preferences, as for example, the need for renewed principles and practices as stated in the third proposition formulated in Chapter 1.

The European Commission has also an important role in terms of the first proposition, when the European Union becomes an interpreter as a result of new norms being promoted by Latin American actors. It is the Commission in this case that will need to make visible new policy solutions, and in future chapters a more detailed analysis of triangular and delegated cooperation will help in shedding light over these policy solutions coming from the Commission.

The next section analyses the role of the Council and of the European External Action Service. The information is structured in this way due to their linked work concerning the preparation of the interregional Summits. It completes the image of the problem stream already captured through the European Parliament and Commission contributions.

2.3. The Council and the European External Action Service. Relations with Latin America

Both the European Parliament and the European Commission have important contributions towards the agenda setting process and this has been shown in the case of the relations with Latin America. While the European Commission also plays a limited role in the decision

making and implementation part (mainly in trade and development), the other two important actors in the remaining sector of cooperation with third actors – the political dialogue – are the European External Action Service – mainly in agenda setting, and the EU Council through its Presidency – mainly in the implementation and decision making phase (Bunse, 2009).

As for the EU Council Presidency, it can be analysed as both a formal neutral broker, representing the Union, and as an informal entrepreneur (Bunse, 2009). These double – hatted approach means that the Presidency needs to moderate, limit and even ignore national priorities when proposing agendas for Summits and other international meetings. The approach contrasts with the idea that the Presidency may concentrate its efforts on achieving particular objectives using the six months' timeframe that it has at its disposal for advancing proposals and ideas on the European agenda, and in the decision – making process. Ways to do so include support certain policies by structuring and encouraging related debates and decisions, or the opposite: excluding items from the agenda or favouring the *non – decision* by delaying the conclusions on particular topics (Bunse, 2009). This idea appears to place the Council closer to an *antipreneur* as it was defined by Bloomfield (2015).

In addition to this, the Council Presidency receives help from a permanent Secretariat. It is important to underline the fact that through particularly skilled and motivated officials from the Secretariat it may be possible to introduce items on the agenda and pursue them for decision making steps. The Secretariat benefits from the advantage of the continuity that the Presidency does not have. However, the argument here is that the privileged position that the Presidency has in topics of external action and the fact that it keeps the

competence of deciding in foreign policy matters (Lisbon Treaty, 2009) makes it easier to propose and pursue particular approaches and ideas. In addition, previous institutional arrangements included the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, working from the EU Council structure. Since 2010, the High Representative has been moved to the European External Action Service. Due to both professional skills and history, Javier Solana has been seen as an example of policy entrepreneur that facilitated initiatives on the Council side in areas of external action (Helwig, 2015).

Concerning Latin America, the Presidency of the Council played a more important role when Spain held this position. This is due to historical ties and to strong Spanish interests in the region, making Spain a *natural bridge* between Latin America and Europe (Santander, 2013, 113). Regarding interregionalism as an appropriate approach to build a stronger relation between the two regions, the Council has been more prone to support a bilateral relation instead of a region – to – region one. Both Member States, especially Spain and Germany, and the High Representative, Javier Solana, '[believed] that the interregional strategy has failed and that it is time to negotiate ambitious bilateral FTAs with certain countries, as [it] has been done with Mexico and Chile' (Santander, 2013, 121). This created an important limitation for the interregional approach and it was actually during the Madrid Summit in 2010 (under the Spanish Presidency) that important advances were made with Colombia and Peru for signing a multiparty agreement instead of a regional one with the Andean Community. While it is true that Spain 'pushed for achieving an Agreement with the remaining countries in the region, its strategy did not mean a bet for region – to – region

Agreements, but rather for more practical bilateral relations, that were easier to achieve and more realistic' (Interviewee 24, Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels).

In this context, interregionalism becomes more an approach coming from the Parliament and the Commission with some limits (the example of the mention made to bilateral relations in the Commission Communication from 2009 works as an example) and less one that received support from the Council. The role of the European Action Service sits somewhere between. The EEAS and the High Representative play a role in supporting the work of the Council Presidency for the Summits, but it also inputs its political vision to the Commission cooperation for development strategy. During interviews in the EEAS, officials agreed more with the vision proposed by the Council, including bilateral relations being deployed and 'being realistic' (Interviewee 41, EU official in EEAS HQ). With the new High Representative, Federica Mogherini, there is an increased interest in Latin America in her discourses and other EEAS documents. During her hearing in the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, she put Latin America amongst the key partners (Mogherini, 2014, 4). This was perceived in this same way by Latin American counterparts, considering that she 'can make a shift in the EEAS priorities list' (Interviewee 13, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels).

The work of the EEAS with the Commission in the field of cooperation for development meant support for the region – to – region approach. A common vision is presented in the Multiannual Strategy for 2014 – 2020, the first one in which the EEAS took part. This creates a contradiction between fields, with trade being encouraged at bilateral level and political and cooperation for development dialogue at a region – to – region level. It implied

limitations and resulted in different types of agreements (bilateral and interregional) being achieved.

The analysis in this first stream – the problem stream – presents the way in which the EU institutions described and planned the dialogue and cooperation with Latin America as a whole, as well as the way in which this was perceived by the Latin American counterparts. Interregionalism was seen from the European side as a particularly enabling framework for deepening the cooperation between the EU and the different actors in the region, with a limited support from the Council and a contradictory position from the Commission. In addition, the EU position was not always seen in a positive or supportive way by Latin American counterparts. Examples related to Eurolat and the fact that at the 2015 Summit no common declaration was issued, and to the idea that peer – to – peer learning was seen as an appropriate solution from the Latin America that was not sufficiently applied by the EU. Other useful examples may include the idea that Latin America did not feel fully represented and its interests fully reflected in the 2015 Final Declaration from the Brussels Summit. A second document was issued under the coordination of the Ecuadorian Presidency of CELAC: a shorter political declaration, ‘A partnership for the next generation’ (Interviewee 29, Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid). Concepts that are not part of the EU *vocabulary* on regionalism appear, as *open regionalism* (European Union and CELAC, 2015, 2), a term that marked the Latin American evolution in regional integration and that will be presented in this chapter as an important factor in the politics stream that is the subject of the next section. Both the EU and Latin America factors will be considered in this stream, without forgetting international players like the United States. This will provide

details on the way in which limitations and opportunities appeared for the EU when using interregionalism.

Normative encounters in this first stream were conditioned by legitimacy issues related to Latin American perception of the EU (as example the European Parliament and the Venezuelan case), but also to internal contradictions between institutions such as the Council and the Commission (with the first favouring bilateral relations and the second betting for interregionalism), and even inside the same institutions (such as the case of the Commission when proposing in recent approaches to combine interregionalism with bilateralism).

3. Politics stream

3.1. The European Union and the United States presence in Latin America

In the politics stream, there were two types of factors that affected the way in which region – to – region relations evolved, factors related to both the EU and Latin America as an interlocutor, but also to other actors like the United States, China and other emerging actors whose presence in the region determined the decisions on the European side or can be suspected as having an important role in designing European policies in order to keep leverage in the Latin American region. This was the case of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a United States initiative to extend NAFTA to all countries in Central America and South America except for Cuba. While this project was finally rejected in 2005 and this was mainly due to the lobby of Latin American countries as Venezuela, it did help in revitalising the EU interest in the region. Under the threat of being isolated and its interests jeopardised in Latin America, the European Union started negotiating similar agreements.

If at the beginning the agreement with Mercosur was the only one on the European Commission agenda at a regional level with Latin America, similar negotiations started in mid – 2000s with the other regional groups on the continent (Interviewees 33, 34, 37, 38, Officials in the European Commission and the European Parliament respectively, in Brussels). And at the same time, when the United States project of the FTAA failed, the intensity of the European Commission negotiations and its interest in signing the Association Agreement also suffered, and the dialogue with Latin America returned to the previous reality when less attention was dedicated to the region. This external influence of the United States can be thought both ‘as a threat and an opportunity for the European Union to gain visibility in Latin America’ (Interviewee 21, Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels). From the point of view of interregionalism the role of the United States can be considered as having created the need for balancing to ensure continued presence of the EU in the region. However, it was not sufficient for keeping a long – term commitment from the EU side to achieve ambitious region – to – region agreements with all Latin American sub – regions and differentiate in this way the EU from the USA that was betting all the way for bilateral relations.

Other actors such as China and emerging powers have conditioned the EU presence in the region. As an example, between 2015 and 2019, China proposed 500 billion dollar in trade and 250 billion dollar in direct investment with the Latin America and Caribbean region. Compared to the EU, these do not seem very ambitious figures when thinking about the fact that in 2010 trade exchange between the EU and Latin America was 174 billion euro in one year and only in goods exchange⁹. More recently, in 2016, not only that these

⁹ More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Latin_America-EU - economic indicators, trade and investment&oldid=239901](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Latin_America-EU_-_economic_indicators,_trade_and_investment&oldid=239901), last accessed on 15th June 2017.

numbers have not decreased, but total trade has achieved 195 million euro¹⁰. In addition, when looking at the direct investment figures, the EU is the first investor, in 2013 the EU invested 505 billion euro in the region (Garcia, 2016, 7). This shows that the EU contribution is far from an average 100 billion dollar Chinese promise per year. However, and this will be further discussed in Chapter 6, China is a more legitimate player in areas like South – South cooperation with increasing importance in Latin America and giving leverage to its presence in the region.

3.2. Latin American regionalism

In addition to these external events, the politics stream was also marked by a changing panorama of regional actors in Latin America and by different forms of regionalism. The cyclical change of paradigm on regional integration in Latin America (Sanahuja, 2012) produced a challenging reality that the European Union needed to address. The context in which norms related to interregionalism and regional integration should be understood in Latin America was at times similar and at times different from the European ones, favouring or limiting the EU presence in the region.

Which are the particular characteristics of this normative environment? The current analysis does not claim that all Latin American countries and regional organisations share the same vision on dialogue and integration and that all initiatives of regional cooperation and integration are based on the same political claims. However, it does identify common elements of these initiatives and argues that this has not only had an influence at regional level, but it conditioned negotiations with other regions, in this case the European Union.

¹⁰ More information: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_111527.pdf, last accessed on 15th June 2017.

Latin American perspectives on regional integration show that different histories have brought different forms and contents of regional dialogue in the different regions (the Andean Community versus Mercosur for example). While the European *model* has been identified as a guiding example in some institutional examples in the cases of the Andean Community, Mercosur and Central America (as the analysis will show in the next chapters), there is one characteristic on which we should focus when looking at the whole Latin America region. This is the vision of *lax or flexible* regionalism (it was called this way by Latin American diplomats), or as it was called by scholars, one that evolved from an old to an open (Sanahuja, 2012), post – hegemonic (Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012) and post – liberal regionalism (Sanahuja, 2012).

The claim made in the current research is that this vision on regional integration shared by Latin American policy makers has been congruent with peer – to – peer learning and opened up a space in which dialogue became complex and multidirectional, but also ‘more horizontal, and even if only to a limited degree institutionalised, more effective and legitimate’ (Interviewee 19, Diplomat from a Mercosur in Madrid). This included numerous regional initiatives, some of them overlapping (UNASUR, the Union of South American Nations, and Mercosur and CAN for example), some of them even contradictory (as example we have the Free Trade Agreements with the USA of some actors that were also part of other regional initiatives such as CAN where Bolivia and Venezuela were against Free Trade Agreements with the USA). This follows the idea of the ‘spaghetti bowl’ with various regional initiatives, mixed and overlapping (De Lombaerde and Garay, 2008, Nolte and Comini, 2016).

However, only few initiatives have had a vision including both economic and political dimensions and their institutionalisation remained limited. This was the result of a trade – off between ‘being inclusive and being more ambitious in topics of regional integration’ (Interviewee 23, Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels).

3.2.1. From old regionalism to new regionalism...

‘Old regionalism’ (Sanahuja, 2012) was a result of the post – war experience, and in Latin America had as a result the proliferation of regional organisations. The Organisation of American States (OAS) was created in 1948 as a way of building dialogue between all countries on the American continent, including the United States, but it was never meant to be an integration process. The Central American Common Market (MCCA by its abbreviation in Spanish) and the Latin American Free Trade Association (ALALC) were founded in 1960. In addition, by the end of the decade, the Andean Pact was established (in 1969). From these initiatives, ALALC did not find enough political support and did not evolve into a real integration initiative. The Andean Pact never created a real common market. Between the three initiatives, the Central American Common Market was the only one that aimed at stronger regional integration, searching models and solutions, here included the European experience (Sanahuja, 2012, pp. 23 - 24).

At the beginning of the 1980s, old regionalism was weakened due to political events like the crisis in Central America and the military dictatorships in the region. Security became a big concern and a strong reason for searching new regional integration solutions and ways of dialogue. The Organisation of American States was not an option due to the USA involvement in the Cold War, its strategy of intervention in Central America and an

increasing mistrust between the North and the South of the continent. Therefore, several initiatives were envisaged, with the creation of the Rio Group in the broader Latin American region, the Contadora Process and the Peace Agreement of Esquipulas in Central America (that will be explained in Chapter 4). This gave place to 'new regionalism' at the beginning of the 1990s, and besides the economic dimension considered since the 1960s and the security part that was critical in the 1980s, an incipient political content was added to the Latin American regional vision of integration. It was mainly due to the common belief that globalisation and interdependence were so complex that regional dialogue was the only path to address them in a successful way (Hettne, 2004, Hettne, 2014, Söderbaum, 2003).

New regionalism was defined at the beginning of the 1990s as 'a new process that results from reconciling [...] two phenomena [...]: the interdependence that stems from special, preferential agreements and that which basically arises from the market signals that are produced by trade liberalisation in general. What open regionalism seeks to accomplish is to make explicit integration policies compatible with, and complementary to, policies to enhance international competitiveness' (ECLAC, 1994, online). Focusing on the economic and trade aspects of regional realities in Latin America, the way of framing the originality of the Latin American experience in regional integration was also due to the sometimes competing trade agreements that started to proliferate on the continent. Countries like Mexico and Chile launched negotiations both with other countries, as the USA, and other regions like the European Union. At least at its beginnings, this period is also characterised by a continental belief that an advantageous agreement could be achieved in the hemisphere (the USA proposal for a trade agreement including the whole continent with the exception of Cuba, as mentioned previously) (Grugel, 2004).

The Andean Community and Central America reactivated their integration schemes and aimed at reinforcing them; in addition, Mercosur appeared in the Southern Cone in 1991. Intra – region trade multiplied by five between 1990 and 2005, and started to concentrate more on manufactured goods, while with other regions and countries remained mainly focused on commodities (Sanahuja, 2012). However, by the end of this period trade numbers were decreasing at least in the Southern part of the continent, and this was mainly because there were no real complementarities between these regional groups (CAN and Mercosur). An exchange based predominantly on commodities was no longer sustainable due to the falling prices. In addition, the negotiations with the USA proved to be far from the Latin American expectations and the USA reluctance to liberalise sectors such as agriculture proved to be a red line for the different Latin American countries and regional actors.

3.2.2. And to post – liberal and post – hegemonic regionalism

The main rationales behind the open regionalism period were integrating Latin America from the inside and with the outside world, other regions and countries. While attention was given to a new political content that was added to the purely economic vision from the 1960s and to the security concerns that marked the 1980s, this remained marginal and it was not until the end of this period that national level politics became crucial. The end of the FTAA project led by the USA and the changing political cycle mainly in South America marked a change in the vision and the way to use regionalism. A renewed approach was needed to give a new direction and prevent crises like the ones in the Mercosur region (economic crises in Argentina and Brazil at the beginning of the 2000s) (Sanahuja, 2012). At

the middle of the decade, with the end of these crises, we can notice shifts and the signs of a changing paradigm on Latin American regionalism. Around 2005, we can see these changes in approaches by several countries and their regional organisations, mainly the Andean Community and Mercosur.

While the USA were starting to focus on their wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and while some countries were concentrating their efforts on establishing a wide network of trade agreements (like Mexico, which decoupled from other regional Latin American initiatives), others concluded regional agreements, here included UNASUR (members are countries from Mercosur and the Andean Community, as well as other South American countries like Chile) and ALBA – TCP (the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty, including countries like Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Ecuador). These initiatives are post – liberal (Gardini, 2010, Sanahuja, 2012) in the sense that they no longer aim only at regional economic integration, but they are thought more as independent political hubs and forums of regional debate concerning common problems and challenges. They mark the return to national politics (populist and left wing) and to a development agenda, in which the post – Washington consensus¹¹ meant mostly taking a different path from the previous period that was no longer characterised by the importance of free trade and that was contesting the involvement of traditional powers in the region, here including the European Union to a large extent (Interviewees 15 and 17, Diplomats from Mercosur countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively).

In addition, the post – liberal dynamics of the regional integration experience in Latin America included the return of the state as the main subject of international politics, and

¹¹ The period named in this way is the period after the failure of the USA initiative for a Free Trade Area of the Americas, including all countries on the continent.

the search for more autonomy in the relation with the markets (Cienfuegos and Sanahuja, 2010, Altamann Borbón, 2011). If during the previous period of open regionalism Latin America can seem as closer to the way in which the EU itself conceived regional integration and interregional dialogue, during this new cycle of regionalism, Latin America appears to walk away from the EU vision and in the next chapters the analysis will focus on how this has affected the EU normative presence in the region.

Underlying similar dynamics, concepts such as post – liberal or post – hegemonic regionalism (Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012) describe the Latin American reply to the ‘will to renew politics’ (Arditi, 2008, 57), building ‘new foundations for political and social cohesiveness that can be also interpreted as a sense of community building’ (Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012, 5). They bring another concept – regionness (Hettne, 2004, Hettne et al., 2000, Hettne and Söderbaum, 2000) with its internal dimension – self – recognition as part of a region, and external dimension – being recognised as part of a region by outsiders. As other forms of regional cooperation and integration, these concepts focused on institutionalising forms of regional dialogue, but also on a constructivist approach where the sense of ‘belonging’ to a region and being recognised as such are crucial. In the words of Riggirozzi and Tussie (2011), the focus of post – hegemonic regionalism is on ‘what the region is for, [...] common goals and [a] common space’ (p. 6). It means that compared to post – liberal regionalism, post – hegemonic regionalism is a more constructivist approach, describing similar dynamics which in the post – liberal perspective are focused on shifting economic realities.

The proliferation of regional initiatives resulted in ‘overlapping regionalisms [allowing space to] even speculate on the extent to which processes of regionalisation [were] forming

regions without regionalism' (Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012, 9). This goes beyond geography and creates forms of Latin American regionalism focused on sharing the idea of being part of a community based on the same norms, and the will to build independent forms of cooperation, sometimes even making manifest their conflicting position with traditional powers (as ALBA – TCP and its relation with the USA, but also with the European Union). Presidents like Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia or Rafael Correa in Ecuador are just examples of proponents of such movements and regional initiatives in Latin America in these post – liberal and post – hegemonic perspectives, with left wing views and large support from their respective populations.

In addition, it is worth underlying that these forms of regionalism are not mutually exclusive. They evolved in a changing environment and depended on the regional reality. Some regional groups like Mercosur tended to use predominantly a post – liberal approach to regional integration. It remains an open question if these tendencies will continue after the coming into power of right wing presidents in the main Mercosur countries – Michel Temer in Brazil and Mauricio Macri in Argentina.

Other regional groups used a different approach, and, in this sense, the Andean region is a good example of a more contradictory reality. The Andean Community is the regional group with more tradition and history, but it is being challenged as a regional and integration initiative by the more liberal and trade focused approaches of presidents in Colombia and Peru. This is shown by their membership in one of the newest regional group, the Pacific Alliance that is mainly a trade block, in which Chile and Mexico are also members. These contradictions limit both regional integration in Latin America and interregional

negotiations with Latin America and its regional groups (Interviewees 11 and 13; 28 and 29, Mercosur and Andean Diplomats in Brussels and Madrid, respectively).

3.2.3. Latin American regionalism and its normative and policy implications

In this context, it is important to highlight some normative implications of these forms of regionalism. While they can be considered as independent normative contributions, they were not common to the whole Latin American region and even in the cases where some forms of evolution into common visions on regionalism can be detected, their ideas were not used with the same intensity in the whole Latin American region. They can be considered as normative choices, but in particular cases (and this is mostly the case of open regionalism) they were the results of genuine economic constraints. However, they did create normative possibilities and limitations in which other forms of regionalism and integration could be promoted, here included the European Union normative attempts in the region.

The normative framework of Latin America and its vision on regional integration can help us to understand why similar EU strategies had different results with the three sub – regional groups. For Central America and for some countries of the Andean Community – Colombia and Peru, the open regionalism was the dominant norm and political vision on how to develop relations with other countries and regions, and on how to consolidate their international presence. Despite the EU attempts to negotiate with the Andean Community as a group on an interregional basis (supporting at the same time the regional integration process), this was not possible due to the opposing visions on regionalism and to internal

differences inside the Andean Community. This split the Andean Community and threw into question its future as a regional group.

3.2.4. Getting back to EU norm diffusion and the politics stream

Concerning the politics stream, these evolutions had important normative implications for the EU – Latin America relation. However, they were not the only limits that the EU Commission and other EU institutions needed to face in their interregional proposals. Another significant issue was related to the fact that ‘according to opinion polls, people in Latin America [were] relatively unfamiliar with the EU [while the same happens] for most EU countries with regard to Latin America’ (European Commission, 2005, 10). It meant the different European Commission programmes could be seen as having a limited legitimacy as ‘the European Union was considered an outsider’ (Interviewee 22, Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels).

These limitations that were to be turned into opportunities conditioned the way in which the European Commission in particular and the European Union in general negotiated and applied policy solutions in the Latin American region using the interregional approach. In the next chapters the analysis will consider how the politics stream made possible sometimes to couple the three streams and open a window of opportunity while other times prevented windows from opening and norm diffusion from happening.

We can think in terms of the three propositions from Chapter 1 and the nature of the window of opportunity to be opened by the different EU institutions, and mainly the Commission, as being conditioned by these political evolutions in Latin America and by its relation with the USA and, more recently, China. Concerning the first proposition, these

renewed visions on Latin American regionalism create the premises of norm subsidiarity and as such the need to renew EU normative content and the associated policies. In terms of the second proposition, the coalition of actors that will help the coupling in the politics stream will in some cases be easier to create (as in the case of Colombia and Peru, as it will be shown in subsequent chapters), while in others will be almost impossible to get (we are talking here mainly about countries that follow post – hegemonic regional integration ideas, like Argentina or Venezuela). In terms of the third proposition, due to the reinforced Latin American relation with developing countries such as China, the EU is under the pressure to apply principles like horizontal cooperation and practices as joint programming (to be detailed in Chapter 7).

4. Policy stream

Previous sections have looked at how and if interregionalism and the promotion of regional integration were accepted as normative solutions for consolidating the relation between the European Union and Latin America, as well as at how political factors may have influenced the way in which they were used. Promoted by the different EU institutions, used to different extent in different regional contexts and perceived in a sometimes contradictory way in Latin America, interregionalism started to be used by the EU as a normative approach in two policy areas of dialogue between the two regions.

On one side, the Association Agreements that were negotiated with the different regional groups and organisations in Latin America became the more general and comprehensive policy framework in which topics related to all three areas of interest (trade, development and political dialogue) were included. On the other side and including besides

the dialogue with regional organisations, also the most general type of dialogue between the EU and Latin America – Latin America as a continent – cooperation for development was used as a main policy instrument for programmes applied through the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). These are the two policy solutions around which interregionalism and regional integration will be analysed as norms in the context of the dialogue between the two regions. They are not independent, they actually reinforce each other. Cooperation for development aims to create a more adapted context and a reinforced regional process so that the Association Agreements can be achieved easier. However, while interregionalism will be mainly analysed in the Association Agreements context, the regional integration norm will be analysed to a large extent through the cooperation for development part.

4.1. Cooperation for development

Cooperation for development started being used as a way to consolidate the regional integration approach of the European in Latin America through the Multiannual Strategy with the three regional groups: Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community. In addition, a Strategy for the whole Latin America region and country strategies were approved. These strategies were elaborated and applied by the European Commission with feedback from the Parliament (mainly concerning the budget dimension, but not exclusively related to it) and the Council (mainly during the European Union – Latin America / CELAC Summits and in the Conclusions or the Final Declarations of such meetings). They are on one side a way to establish a cooperation agenda and priorities of the European Union in its dialogue with different actors in the region, and on the other side a way to reflect on how to

improve the programmes and to link the European agenda with the global development objectives (the Millennium goals, replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals).

Even if programmes of cooperation for development existed before, the multiannual programming or strategy started to be published by the Commission since 2002. Since then, these documents were elaborated for three periods: 2002 – 2006, 2007 – 2013 and 2014 – 2020. The last one, for the period 2014 – 2020, has the specificity that it no longer presents a strategy for each regional group, but only for Latin America in general and Central America in particular. These multiannual strategies come together with the documents, Communications and suggestions sent by the Commission to the Parliament and the Council that were already presented in the problem stream (European Commission, 1995, European Commission, 1999b, European Commission, 2005, European Commission, 2009). They provide a policy framework in which the different challenges and opportunities from the Commission's Communications are exploited and followed up (Interviewee 31, European Commission Official in DG TRADE in Brussels).

The priorities established in each type of strategy (with Latin America as a whole and with the different regional groups) are thought to reinforce each other even if creating sometimes confusion on the Latin American side concerning the level of cooperation preferred by the EU (Interviewee 32, European Commission official in DG TRADE in Brussels). In this way, at the continental level, the strategies aim to support social cohesion and the reduction of poverty and inequality, to reinforce regional integration and enhance mutual understanding between the EU and Latin America. Programmes with the whole region and available to all actors in Latin America were designed to cover all these areas: Alfa (for academic networks), Urbal (for territorial development), Eurosocal (for social

cohesion), Copolad (against illegal drugs), Eurosolar (for renewable energy) and Euroclima (for climate change) (European Commission, 2007d). While some of these programmes will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7 (on EU responses to Latin American subsidiarity) what is important to highlight at this point is the fact that at continental level the European Commission 'made clear which were its goals that were to be achieved through region – to – region relations' (Interviewee 35, European Commission Official in DG DEVCO in Brussels).

This was detailed and additionally followed up through programmes with each regional organisation, providing further support to the more general objectives of the EU – Latin America cooperation. In this way, in Central America the objectives are institutional strengthening in order to achieve regional integration, support for the customs union and the regional policies on governance and security (European Commission, 2007d). Even if these regional entities are not the subject of the last strategy for 2014 – 2020, in the case of Mercosur and the Andean Community objectives are similar in the previous periods: support for regional economic integration, social cohesion and fighting against illegal drugs in the case of CAN, and institutionalisation of Mercosur and a deeper understanding of the future EU – Mercosur agreement in the case of Mercosur (European Commission, 2007d).

What becomes interesting and relevant in the context of these strategies is the distribution of the budget between the programmes with Latin America as a whole, with Central America, CAN and Mercosur respectively, and with specific countries: in the 1996 – 2003 period from the 3.48 billion euro, 72% went to bilateral actions, 17% to regional programmes with the whole Latin American region (Eurosolar and other regional programmes) and only 12% to projects with specific regions, 8% with Central America, 3% with the Andean Community and 1% with Mercosur. In 2007 – 2013 from the 2.57 billion

euro, 71.5% went to bilateral actions and 28.5% to action with the whole Latin America. Only 6.7% went to projects with specific regional organisations: 2.9% for Central America, 1.9% for Mercosur and 1.9% for the Andean Community (Sanahuja, 2012, 81). As already mentioned, in the latest strategy (for the 2014 – 2020 period), only Central America and the whole Latin American region appear as actors of the Multiannual Programming. These statistics show that while regional groups were mentioned in the strategies and while they were the subject of specific strategies before 2014, they never received the same importance in terms of budget for cooperation for development.

Central America seems to have a higher importance, however in terms of real budget at least in the 2007 – 2013 period the differences are not considerable. As for the 2014 – 2020 period, the continental budget is 805 million euro, and for Central America, it is 120 million euro. Central America is increasing in importance compared to both its share in the budget dedicated to the whole Latin America region for 2014 – 2020 (13% compared to 2.9% in 2007 – 2013), and to the absolute value of the budget dedicated to the region (compared to the previous programming period (2007 – 2013), Central America is benefiting in 2014 – 2020 from almost a double budget) (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014, 11).

Which are the implications of these facts? Different levels of cooperation have coexisted in all the strategies. However, not all actors that were the subjects of these documents have received equal importance. Approaches, priorities and programmes have been established with the three regional organisations – Central America, the Andean Community and Mercosur – but not all of them have benefited from similar interest and budget for projects in cooperation for development. Central America has been clearly

favoured, and the Andean Community and Mercosur have received only reduced attention through much more limited budgets. The way in which this planning has affected the negotiations and dialogue with the different regional entities will be further discussed in the chapters dedicated to each one.

4.2. Association Agreements

Together with the cooperation for development strategies and programmes, Association Agreements became since mid – 1990s an important EU policy solution for consolidating interregional relations with Latin American regional groups and regional integration in Latin America. These Association Agreements with Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community were proposed and developed by the European Commission as the main interlocutor and negotiator. This support was also made manifest through the Commission's Communications from 1999, 2005 and 2009, it was endorsed by the Council (at least until 2010) and 'in a more detailed, stringent manner, by various reports and resolutions of the European Parliament for which there has been a broad political consensus' (Sanahuja, 2012, 73).

The Association Agreements were designed by the Commission as the more comprehensive frameworks in which in addition to cooperation for development planned mainly under the Development Cooperation Instrument, trade and priorities of the political dialogue were debated and negotiated. The way in which these negotiations developed was different with each regional group, and details will be presented in the chapters discussing each negotiation. The results varied from a successful region – to – region Agreement that was achieved with Central America as a region (concluded in June 2012) to a multiparty

Agreement with Peru, Colombia and Ecuador (excluding for the moment Bolivia) and to a still pending negotiation with Mercosur which while the first one to be proposed by the Commission, with the official dialogue started since the 1990s, it is still the only one that did not achieve yet any results. In addition to these negotiations on a region – to – region basis, Association Agreements were signed with Mexico (in 2000) and Chile (2003).

As it can be noted, not all negotiations finished successfully or followed the path that was designed by the Commission from the beginning. Due to differences in interests and trade volumes, in the case of the Andean countries it was possible to reach an agreement only with Colombia and Peru (in 2012), followed by Ecuador (in 2014). Being thought as a multiparty agreement, it leaves Bolivia the option to join in the future. The negotiations on a framework including the three dimensions (trade, development, political dialogue) with Mercosur were the first ones to start, but they are still undergoing having received a fresh impetus with the political change and the new presidential cycle in the region.

How can we understand the role of both the cooperation for development support that the EU provided to different entities in Latin America and the negotiation of these Association Agreements? On one side, it appears that the role of the European Commission in developing an interregional cooperation between the European Union and Latin America has evolved and muted over the last decade. The traditional discourse was to support the region – to – region approach with the goal of helping the Latin American counterpart in strengthening its integration process and building in this way a credible partner for the EU as an international organisation. This perspective was promoted through continental (the continental dialogue with Latin American) and regional strategies (with Central American, the Andean Community and Mercosur), as well as through EC communications to the

European Parliament and the Council, and development strategies and their mid – term reviews (the last strategy is the one for the 2014 – 2020 period). This aimed to promote a region – to – region dialogue in three sectors: trade, development and political cooperation.

However, country strategies and strategic associations were agreed (documents on Brazil – 2007 and Mexico – 2008), bringing a bilateral dimension to the interregional approach. ‘This may seem at the same time reinforcing, but also contradictory, making it not very easy to see how important a region – to – region relation is for the Commission’ (Interviewee 29, Diplomat of an Andean country in Madrid). A challenging objective was to link the different levels of cooperation and dialogue, the bilateral and the interregional one, making Latin American counterparts to perceive this European Commission position as ‘dividing partners in the region in two categories of different strategic importance’ (Interviewee 18, Diplomat of a Mercosur country in Madrid).

In addition to this, the Commission was confronted with some additional issues along the way. A main impediment for the Commission in achieving its objectives was the difficult balance between the three areas of cooperation, keeping at the same level the political and economic dialogue which followed often different objectives and faced different challenges. The three structures that were in charge with the different policies, DG TRADE, DG DEVCO (cooperation for development) and DG RELEX (for political dialogue, it does no longer exist after the creation of the EEAS) were guided by sometimes opposing aims, even if the common ground was to strengthen the EU – Latin America cooperation (Interviewee 66, Latin American NGO representative). In the trade sector, perspectives on what an Association Agreement should contain and on how to achieve a balance between the

European and Latin American interests were not always congruent (Interviewee 24, 25, 28, 29, Diplomats from Andean countries in Brussels and Madrid).

While these policy solutions were intended to promote a reinforced dialogue between the EU and the different Latin American actors, a part which should not be forgotten is related to the way in which this policy stream works in a loop, to which the European institutions need to incorporate feedback coming from the Latin American actors. This will be mainly shown in Chapter 7, but also chapters 4 – 6 will include reflections in this line.

5. Conclusions

This chapter has explored the relation between norms and policies and has applied the three streams to the EU – Latin American context. Limitations and challenges have been identified describing the problems that the EU wanted to solve through interregionalism and regional integration, the policies through which this was supposed to be achieved and the different characteristics of the political environment in Latin America that the EU needed to face.

It can be argued that the missing unity and convergence within regional organisations in Latin America made it difficult for the European Commission to reach an agreement with all of them (Interviewee 33, European Commission Official in DG TRADE in Brussels). This meant that the region – to – region approach was an almost impossible objective for the Commission and asked for retailoring the ambitions in negotiating with Latin America. As one interviewee mentioned, the Commission started in this way to ‘speak the same language as its counterparts’ (Interviewee 46, EU official in the EEAS HQ). It provides a good

example of failed entrepreneurship initiatives and contributes to a better understanding of why and when EU entrepreneurship succeeds or fails. Legitimacy issues played also an important role limiting the EU success in the region and the case of Venezuela is a representative example.

This chapter sets the scene. The thesis aims to go further and look for an answer to the question on why the different EU – Latin American negotiations had different results. The different results will be analysed in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 and the framework will be based on the different type of reactions that norm diffusion can involve from both the norm entrepreneur and the norm interpreter that in this framework can switch roles at any point in time. It will mean from a practical point of view analysing norm adoption, adaption, resistance, rejection and subsidiarity from both Latin America and the European Union, and how this is related to the three streams. This will frame the term *norm encounters* and the way in which this can be understood from the perspective of the EU – Latin America interregional relations. It will also give content to the term *interregional* in a similar way to Grugel when highlighting that ‘the EU has endorsed the pursuit of *inter – regionalism*, that is an agreement between two distinct but *equal* regions’ (emphasis added) (Grugel, 2004, 608).

The aim is to go beyond previous research on norm diffusion and policy entrepreneurship in an interregional context and build a connection between the literature focused more on the European side of the story (Aggarwal and Fogarty, 2004, Allison, 2015, Costa and Dri, 2014, Hardacre and Smith, 2014) and the literature focused on the way in which third actors react and adapt norm diffusion attempts (Acharya, 2004, Acharya, 2011), but also how this is made visible through concrete policies. This means making these types

of literature talk to each other. The idea of a normative encounter aims to find a balance in which both actors contribute to the norms that are being introduced or modify those already in use, a gradual process of mutual learning, reflected in policy outputs.

CHAPTER 4. FROM NORM ADOPTION TO NORM REJECTION. THE EU DIALOGUE WITH CENTRAL AMERICA

‘Much of the EU influence in the [Central American] region stems from its substantial and well – designed cooperation in key sectors which have been useful tools to push forward the Central American integration process’ (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014, 14).

1. Introduction

The EU dialogue with the different sub – regions in Latin America had a wide range of outputs, from successful negotiations like the ones with Central America to pending ones like the ones with Mercosur and unsuccessful negotiations like the EU – CAN attempt to sign an interregional agreement. The current empirical chapter analyses the first type of negotiations, the successful ones, referring in this context to the EU – Central America negotiations and the type of reactions this involved from Central America to the EU attempt to diffuse its norms concerning interregionalism and regional integration and the related policies. This means also questioning the quote at the beginning of this chapter in which the European External Action Service is assuming its influence in the region.

It is part of the first dynamic related to normative encounters as described in Chapter 2, in which the norm entrepreneur tries to diffuse its norms to norm interpreters that can adopt, adapt, resist or reject them. Depending on these reactions and conditioned by the three streams (problem, policy, politics), the norm entrepreneur (the EU) manages or not to embed these norms in concrete policies. The three streams as they will be deployed in the

current chapter include in the problem stream first the EU attempts (mainly of the Commission and the Parliament) to put Central America on the cooperation agenda, and second its intentions to consolidate an interregional partnership with the region and to strengthen its regional integration process. In the policy stream, the two dimensions that will be analysed include, as presented in Chapter 3, the Association Agreement on a region – to – region basis and the regional programmes following the multiannual strategies in cooperation for development. The politics stream will refer to the Doha Round, the interregional meetings between the EU and Central American counterparts, the dialogue between Summits or the lack thereof, and additional international and internal events like the conditions associated to the GSP scheme (and the way they were perceived by the business sector), the contradictions inside the Parliament and the Commission and at EU interinstitutional level, as well as regional integration evolutions in Central America.

We can expect that in the context of successful negotiations the EU norm diffusion process would also be a successful one, involving the adoption of EU norms through concrete policies. However, in the current chapter the aim is to problematize and analyse how the norms of interregionalism and regional integration were promoted by the European Union in its relation with Central America and how Central America adopted them or combined this reaction with other types of reactions – adaptation, resistance or rejection. Central America offers the most propitious context of analysing the adoption reaction, taking into account that it is the only actor with which the EU has signed a region – to – region agreement. The purpose is also to analyse if what seems to be a success of the European diplomacy of promoting regional integration and the region – to – region dialogue

has worked in this way and if it was perceived as such by its counterpart, in this case Central America.

Even if it may seem the easiest reaction to identify and analyse (considering that it implies just the decision on the interpreter side to directly adopt the norm instead of adapting it to the local context), the current chapter has as first aim to question such a simplistic way of analysing the process of adopting norms. This will involve looking at how the different normative reactions (adoption, adaptation, resistance and rejection) can be mixed in real – world cases of norm diffusion, contributing to a better understanding of the distinction between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter, as well as answering the question related to who took the initiative in these negotiations and who was trying to build a supportive coalition for achieving an Association Agreement at interregional level being in this way the entrepreneur (facts related to the second proposition from Chapter 1). The chapter also looks at how practices and principles in relation to the problem stream condition norm diffusion and the incorporation of norms into policies.

Empirical data includes besides interviews with EU officials from all main EU institutions (Council, Parliament, EEAS, Commission), Central American diplomats working in the Missions to the EU in Brussels and in the Latin American Embassies in Madrid and New York, European Commission regional strategies for 2002 – 2006, 2007 – 2013 and 2014 – 2020, but also European Parliament resolutions, and the final declarations from the interregional Summits, bringing in this way perspectives from both sides and including Central American views.

The chapter is structured in four parts. The first one offers contextual information on the European Union – Central America relations and looks at how the region – to – region

dialogue was initiated, its main proponents and the initial topics of this dialogue. This part offers the background on how we can understand the EU cooperation with the sub – region, the motivations and scope behind it. The second part analyses the importance of norms in this dialogue, the way in which interregionalism and regional integration are presented in the EU documents and how this has been seen and interpreted by both EU officials and Central American diplomats.

This information is used in the third part to contrast it with how the Association Agreement between the EU and Central America was negotiated and signed, to analyse who promoted a coalition of actors that would support the signature of the final document and how the actors adapted to each other position on how and when the Agreement should be negotiated. The purpose of this part is to analyse the link between norms and policies through detecting any discrepancies between the general approach proposed by the EU and the way it was applied in real cases of agreement negotiations, where different areas were negotiated: (i) trade, (ii) political dialogue and (iii) international cooperation for development. This link is also analysed by looking at possible differences between these three areas and the ways in which both communities of political actors were socialised to accept and support the region – to – region agreement. The subsequent section presents the theoretical implications of the empirical findings and aims to make the empirical case talk to the theoretical approach of the research, identifying and debating possible limitations to normative encounters between the EU and Central America, as well as (missed) opportunities.

2. Cooperation and dialogue between the European Union and Central America – precedents

The history of the dialogue between Central America and the European Union has more than three decades. Analysing the way in which the EU policies developed in relation to Central America, Hazel Smith concludes that in the 1970s the EU Member States through the Council were still very much interested in developing their dialogue and cooperation with the African states and their motivation to deepen the dialogue with Central America was smaller (Smith, 1995). However, the Commission and the Parliament urged the Council to first develop a policy towards Central America and second to diffuse it. The European Commission showed interest from the very beginning in consolidating its cooperation with the Central American Common Market (CACM), as well as the bilateral dialogue, and in this sense the first visit from the EU to Central America was the one of a Commission representative, Sir Christopher Soames, in 1975. Two other Commissioners visited the region in the following years.

However, the argument here is that it was the Central American region that initiated the process of fostering the dialogue with the EU by proposing through its Ministers of Economy to design a similar cooperation agreement to the one between the EU and ASEAN. The aim was to consolidate the Central American integration process and to start building an international network of partners. It was in this context that the Commission accepted the proposal and the Secretariat for the Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) was identified as a viable interlocutor. As a concrete output of this incipient form of dialogue between the two regions, a dialogue between the Commission and SIECA was established during the Tokyo Round of the GATT negotiations, and several meetings were organised in

1979 and 1980 between the EC and the Group of Central American Ambassadors in Brussels (GRUCA, including Panama) (Smith, 1995). The Commission was nevertheless limited in its competences to trade and aid, being able to talk about and aim to develop subjects related to these areas of the interregional cooperation. The EC added to these competences recognised by the Treaties, the central position given to regional integration in its dialogue with Central America, and this was seen as an expression of its identity as the supranational EU institution representing and defending this level of governance at the EU level.

How can we understand these first manifestations of interest in consolidating the EU – Central America dialogue and cooperation? Why is it that even if the European Commission was the one initiating a direct contact with representatives from Central America by its official visits at the end of the 1970s, it was only when Central America proposed it, that a more institutionalised dialogue was initiated with CACM and SIECA? We can answer these questions in different ways. On one side, we can consider Smith (1995) proposal and look at the trade arguments and interests: while Central America was mainly an exporter of coffee and bananas to the EU (that were not strategic products for the EU) and received only 0.5% of the EU exports, the EU was an essential trading partner for Central America receiving, in 1979, 24% of the total exports and 40.5% of the banana exports from the region.

Alternatively, if we analyse this through the policy entrepreneurship framework, we can conclude that from the European Commission side it was impossible to couple the three streams (problem, policy and politics) and to show to the other EU institutions the advantage of such cooperation. Here Smith (1995) offers an argument that may perfectly fit this explanatory framework: in the problem stream, Africa was a key priority and there were no doubts inside the EU institutions (including the Commission and the Council) concerning

the importance of this region for EU external action. However, when talking about including new actors like Central America to the EU list of priorities, whereas the European Commission and the Parliament were prone to include it, other institutions like the Council were 'supporting a similar reorientation of attention and funds towards the poorest Asian countries' (Interviewee 3, Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels).

Nevertheless, in the policy stream, it was the support to regional integration that started to differentiate the EC in its relation with Central America through the technical and financial assistance given to the region in its use of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP¹²). It meant less, or no duties were paid by Central American countries for their exports to the EU. By the end of the 1970s, in the problem stream, the Commission was able to channel aid for development to other regions that were not previously included on the EU priority list (only the poorest and the associated states were eligible), here included the countries in Central America.

The EU interest in the region started to increase in this same period (the beginning of the 1980s) when Central America was affected by violent events and civil wars, focusing on security and political concerns. It was institutionalised through the San José Dialogue (in 1984), the main objective of which was to consolidate the peace in the region. The role of the European Communities at that time was to support the peace process and the demilitarisation efforts of several Central American societies, like Honduras (where human rights were violated), El Salvador (where the militaries of the Revolutionary Government Junta of El Salvador concentrated the power in their hands) and Nicaragua (with the

¹² EU's *Generalised Scheme of Preferences* (GSP) means that developing countries pay less or no duties on exports to the European Union. For more information: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/development/generalised-scheme-of-preferences/>, last accessed on 1st February 2017.

Sandinista violent government). This European vision on military dictatorships in Central America put the EU in opposition with the United States. While the USA were intervening militarily in Nicaragua and supporting the rebels (Chasteen, 1993), the European institutions tried several times to call on the USA to stop this type interventions, even if without directly naming 'the country' that was supporting the military movement (it was only to a limited extent that the USA as such were identified in the EU documents), concentrating the efforts and political discourse on how to achieve a sustainable peace agreement between the parts and prevent violation of human rights.

The European Parliament was divided between the two main forces – the Socialists, that were trying to find the root cause and solutions to the Sandinista violent government and were saying that the USA sponsored war was making impossible a democratic government, and the Christian Democrats, that were accusing the Sandinistas of being a communist regime and making impossible the restoration of democracy in Nicaragua. It seemed to be easier for the Commission to have a unified position, however depending on the political vision and priorities of its Commissioners. The interest for the situation in Central America changed indeed its intensity and it 'was always subject to alterations depending on the internal configuration of the Commission' (Interviewee 7, Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid). The British Commissioner for Development, Clinton Davies, was less prone to confront the Parliament to get support for Central America, while the French Commissioner, Cheysson, urged support for Nicaragua to prevent it from slipping towards totalitarianism (Interviewee 2, Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels).

We also need to consider the fact that the Council was always the least prone to propose new initiatives for the EU – Central America dialogue, being more the one following and trying to integrate Commission's and Parliament's proposals and to find consistency between these proposals and Member States preferences (the United Kingdom for example did not always support European declarations defending the need to stop the USA intervention in Nicaragua, while Spain and France were the most supportive actors of the peace process) (Dominguez, 2015).

Important to highlight in this context is the support that the three European institutions managed to provide to Central American initiatives and ways of showing regional agency. In this sense, it was the president of Costa Rica (the most democratic and peaceful country of the region in that period), President Arias, who promoted the idea of the Esquipulas Peace Plan, a peace plan that was emanating from the five Central American countries and was endorsed by their presidents in 1987. This was a form of regional dialogue highlighting the autonomy of Central America and its desire to find forms, even if incipient, of political cooperation at regional level. The EU institutions, despite their internal limitations and changes in political discourse and position, supported this regional desire of restoring peace and saw it as an appropriate way of dealing with military issues in the region.

When analysing the EU normative presence in Central America, it is crucial to understand the relevance of this episode: even if the European Communities were an important source of inspiration (mainly for economic integration models), Central America discovered and promoted a way to overcome the hardest political and military challenges the region has faced in the last decades, constructing in the policy stream a regional solution and agreeing on how to use it (Interviewees 4, 5 and 8, 10, Diplomats from Central

American countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively). Supporting this, from the European side, the French Commissioner Cheysson considered important to highlight that the European Community 'had since 1984 largely contributed to the dialogue between the five countries of Central America' and that 'this policy of the Community which consists in making countries talk to each other within the framework of regional groups could be an important factor for stability in the international scene in the years to come' (Smith, 1995, 97); and he was right since in the 1990s the region – to – region dialogue between the EU and Central America continued to be the central framework within which the negotiations for a deeper dialogue were conducted.

Concluding, in the 1980s, the European cooperation in the region started to be built, but in the problem stream it was Central America who took the initiative to deepen the institutionalisation of the dialogue between the two regions. In the policy stream, the most successful contribution of the Europeans was the participation in the peace process since the mid – 1980s. This was despite breaches in the Parliament between the main political forces, in the Council between main Member States like the UK and France, and changing political agendas in the Commission.

We can say it was impossible to couple the three streams (politics, policies and problems) for both the Parliament and the Commission, in order to promote more ambitious proposals to the Council and to make possible a normative encounter. In the problem stream there was no real interest in building a stronger partnership with Central America. In the policy stream, no real solutions could be envisaged, and in the politics stream the internal contradictions within the Parliament and the Commission did not allow a common vision.

Concerning agency in these initial region – to – region dynamics, even if interregionalism started to be regarded as the norm of dialogue between the European Community and Central America, this initiative came from both sides. While we can identify incipient forms of emulation of the European model from Central America (here we have as an example the episode related to economic integration, and the dialogue with GRUCA during the Tokyo round of the GATT negotiations), the theoretical model proposed in this research (with a norm entrepreneur, norm interpreter and a socialisation process stimulating the interaction between them) cannot be fully applied during the 1980s. In this sense, the EU – Central American Common Market (CACM) agreement in 1993 can be seen as the first event including a more institutionalised manifestation of interregionalism and a commitment towards it.

However, the period since the 1970s and up until the beginning of the 1990s created an incipient dialogue and interaction which gave an important place to norms, and in this sense, as previously argued, interregionalism played an important role. This is the reason why the next section looks at how regional integration and the importance of the region – to – region dialogue were presented in official documents in the two decades that followed these incipient episodes of the cooperation between the European Union and Central America, and how this was perceived from the Central American side.

3. Norms and the importance of interregionalism and regional integration in the EU – Central America dialogue

Having as background the first manifestations of interest for a deeper cooperation between the two regions in the late 1970s and in the 1980s, the current section looks at how regional

integration and interregional dialogue were used as core norms in the dialogue between the two regions and translated into concrete policies as part of the cooperation for development programmes. The section unfolds as follows. The first part presents how Central America as a region was present in the regional strategies of the EU before the signature of the Agreement in 2012, comparing this with the most recent strategy for 2014 – 2020. The second part makes a comparison between how this was perceived by EU officials and Central American diplomats during interviews, and the information is triangulated with data coming from concrete EU programmes in Central America. The last part analyses how important was the promotion of regional integration for the EU – Central America dialogue, while looking at how the EU initiatives were perceived and the Central American reactions to them.

3.1. EU vision on the cooperation with Central America

For the period before 2012, we have two main documents from the Commission: the 2002 – 2006 (European Commission, 2002b) and the 2007 – 2013 (European Commission, 2007b) Regional Strategies for Cooperation. These two documents can bring a first overview of how the EU vision of its dialogue with Central America evolved. A first step was to give more coherence and structure to the region – to – region cooperation with the introduction of a regional strategy to which the EU institutions were invited to contribute and reflect on how the interregional dialogue should be developed as part of the problem and policy streams. For Central America, this meant ‘gaining a permanent and more coherent place on the EU agenda’ (Interviewee 9, Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid). A second step was narrowing the number of topics of the interregional cooperation to deepen its

content; and even if in practice it started earlier, at official level it is reflected in the 2002 – 2006 and 2007 – 2013 regional strategies, when affirming that:

‘Following a period of relatively wide *sectorial dispersion* of aid in the 1980s and 1990s, in a context of alternate political and economic ups and downs in the integration process, the EC cooperation with Central America at regional level has progressively focused on a more limited number of priorities, with a longer term perspective and special emphasis on support to the integration process’ (European Commission, 2007b, 14).

This meant not only giving more coherence and follow up to the EU strategy with Central America by having a multiannual strategy, but also increasing the interest in a particular topic: regional integration, and giving support to the consolidation of this process in Central America. It came together with an increased budget for cooperation for development, trying to show to the Central American counterparts that the interest and focus were real, going beyond political declarations and discourse:

‘Out of an overall indicative allocation of 74.5 million euro for the RSP [Regional Strategy Paper] for 2002 – 06, some 40 million euro is currently being channelled into direct support for the process of regional integration which, in fact, can be seen as the principal focal sector of the strategy. By contrast, during 1984 – 2000 only 5% of the estimated total of 450 million euro for regional cooperation with Central America (in the broadest sense) was allocated by the Commission directly to support the regional integration process’ (European Commission, 2007b, 15).

This increase with almost 50% of the allocated budget to support the regional integration processes shows the interest that the issue had during the specified period for the EU in its relations with Central America. This same idea is reinforced by the fact that ‘the bilateral country strategies for Central America will also include specific provisions aiming at strengthening the national capacities for dealing with the commitments taken on at regional and international level’ (European Commission, 2007b, 23), making it clear that even when the aid will come in a bilateral form, it will still be meant to reinforce integration in the region and the dialogue beyond it.

The picture that we can get from the EU Commission documents is that of coherence between numbers / budget and political intentions, channelling all the efforts towards creating a strong regional actor – Central America – able to interact with the EU at the interregional level. The Commission also highlights that it wants ‘to reinforce integration at sub – regional level as an intermediate goal on the way to deeper integration in Latin America and as a means to promote a strategic association with the EU’ (European Commission, 2007b, 17). This stance gives us insights into the longer term objectives of the Commission in its relation with Central America. Its support to subregional integration in Central America is seen as an intermediate and necessary step in fostering the dialogue with Latin America as a whole and in supporting the Central American continental integration process.

Concerning the next strategy, the one for the 2014 – 2020 period, some changes can be noted. However, these shifts concern more the form and less the content of the EU focus in its dialogue and cooperation with Central America. In this document, Central America is part of the bigger strategy with Latin America, all regions being treated as part of a same

coherent document, planning and detailing the direction of the interregional dialogue. As for Central America, it is the only region treated also as an individual actor, with which the EU will focus on three main objectives for the years to come: support to the regional economic integration process in order to maximise the benefits of SIECA (the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration, as the economic regional institutional framework supporting the countries in the region in their economic integration), and of the EU – Central American Association Agreement with its trade component (40 million euro), support to the Regional Security Strategy (40 million euro), and support to the Regional Climate Change Strategy and the Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (35 million euro) (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014).

The priorities are similar to the ones in the strategies published by the Commission before the signature of the Association Agreement, with the only difference that as part of an effort to coordinate the dialogue with the region, there is only one document for the whole Latin America. In this document Central America appears to play a differentiated role, being the only actor which is mentioned at subregional level and a set of priorities is also set at this level. This may be seen as a result of the fact that the Association Agreement was signed in 2012 and Central America is presented as having the potential and the need of a deeper integration process, in order for both actors (the European Union and Central America) to better exploit the opportunities resulting from such Agreement (Interviewee 33, EU official in DG TRADE in Brussels).

Which are the implications of the way in which the EU¹³ has promoted regional integration and the region – to – region dialogue with Central America? On one side, it appears clear that this is a priority for the EU and these are main norms that it wants to promote in the dialogue with Central America. On the other side, SIECA becomes the institution and regional mechanism towards which the EU has focused its attention as the main organisation addressing economic integration and going beyond it in Central America after the 1990s. Resources were mainly directed towards SIECA as part of the more general Central America Integration System (SICA, the acronym of its name in Spanish, appeared in 1991 as the structure incorporating all institutions contributing to the integration efforts in the region). While High Level Meetings started to be held with the Heads of State and Government of the SICA countries in the framework of the EU – Latin America / CELAC Summits (like the one celebrated in Brussels in June 2015), no other structures part of SICA received similar attention to SIECA.

It also meant that the European Commission did not pay enough attention to the dynamic political and institutional landscape in which the regional integration process was developing in Central America. It was a repetition of the same objectives with the same counterpart institutions, in a reality that was altered during the fifteen years that these strategies cover (Interviewees 4, 5 and 7, 9, Diplomats from Central American countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively). This will be better explained by comparing the way in which the strategy was perceived by EU officials on one side and Central American diplomats on the other side, as discussed below.

¹³ Since the proposals made by the Commission pass through an interinstitutional process in which other EU institutions need to agree on the Commission documents, we can say that in this way the Commission proposal comes to represent the EU as a whole.

In terms of the second proposition formulated in Chapter 1, this restrained institutional focus limited the European Commission in building the coalitions needed to first make possible the adoption or adaptation of its norms, and second to translate these norms into concrete policies by opening a window of opportunity in the politics stream.

3.2. European and Central American perceptions of the region – to – region dialogue

During more than 25 elite interviews, the EU policy makers' vision of Central America was that of the only coherent sub – region in Latin America, 'small enough to allow a real regional integration process' (Interviewee 44, EU official in the EEAS HQ). Not only that EU officials see Central America as the most successful regional integration process in Latin America, but they also see the sub – region as the most dynamic one, having the desire and the political will to deepen even more this regional dialogue and process of economic integration through SICA in general and SIECA in particular as a main regional institutional mechanism (Interviewees 32 and 43, EU Officials in DG Trade and the EEAS HQ in Brussels). No limitations are mentioned, no particular issues are identified, and no institutional challenges are seen as especially relevant.

However, for Central American diplomats, the integration process is seen as a complex one, with a hard to develop political dimension that is still dominated by mistrust, suspicion and fear of the neighbour (for example between Costa Rica and the other Central American countries). This is seen as a limit in the long – term and a condition for the success of the Central America regional integration process. More permeating initiatives and spaces for encountering are envisaged, without limiting the institutional perspective to the SICA configuration, and making special emphasis on the intergovernmental dialogue between

presidents and on the integration initiatives such as the customs union between Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, seen as a success story of regional integration (Interviewees 3, 6 and 8, Diplomats from Central American countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively). Arguably, the vision of a more lax, open regionalism in Central America was not properly integrated by the European Commission in its strategies and this limited the EU normative presence in the region and made the Commission overlook alternative institutional frameworks and regional efforts that were less institutionalised.

In addition, during elite interviews, Central American diplomats highlighted that it was through the diplomatic efforts of the countries in the region that success was ensured for the EU initiatives. It was only through these intraregional initiatives that Central America was able to make full use of EU resources that were to be invested in regional integration. For example, Costa Rica was a difficult actor to include in several initiatives, here included trade negotiations with the EU. It was however due to the efforts of the other countries in the region that Costa Rica accepted to be part of the regional negotiations (Interviewee 4, Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels). In this sense we can argue that Central America made both the exercise to adapt EU norms to its regional reality and to couple the three streams to ensure the successful use of EU policy proposals (making efforts especially in the politics stream by convincing Costa Rica to be part of these regional initiatives). This is related to the second part of proposition 2: when the norm interpreters (Central American actors) create a coalition on their own, the norm entrepreneur (the EU) is on a weak position. However, the result is not the one initially predicted, and the EU norms are not resisted nor rejected because of the Central American coalition, on the contrary, interregionalism is favoured by these actors.

The observations can be supported through examples from particular projects aimed at fostering the regional integration process. The conclusion that we can reach is that the EU efforts through regional programmes received official recognition and were seen as contributing to the reinforcement of the regional institutional structures that they were designed to address. However, the limitations originated in the reduced number of institutional structures that they were contributing to. The EU tried to promote a deeper political integration process in Central America, however its focus was on institutions that were created mainly for economic integration purposes, as it is the case of SIECA.

Other efforts contributing to other institutional structures such as other Secretariats, the Court and the Central American Parliament – PARLACEN were more limited and remained always at the level of the incipient forms of supranational institutions. This left out other structures and institutions aiming for example to create a more coordinated political dialogue at regional level, but from a more intergovernmental perspective having the potential to create alternative spaces of regional integration and dialogues (such as the thematic meetings between Ministers of all Central American countries on topics of security and diplomacy) (Interviewee 9, Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid). Limitations to the EU attempt to diffuse its norms came from two sides: restrained institutional focus (SICA and within it, SIECA as main actor, all other institutions had a much more reduced focus) and cooperation only at a supranational level, with the purely intergovernmental one being omitted. This is also an example of how the politics stream prevented coupling, in this case because the right interlocutor was not identified, and the programmes were not implemented with the support of those that validated the process at its end (i.e. Ministers).

3.3. From political discourse to concrete cooperation for development programmes

One example of EU programmes having as objective contributing to regional integration and institutional development is the Support Programme to the Central American Integration (PAIRCA, the acronym of its Spanish name). It is a two – phase project, with a first phase that was developed between 2003 and 2009, and a second one between 2009 and 2014¹⁴, covering practically the whole period that is being discussed in the first two Commission Multiannual Strategies. This type of programmes is also one of the best examples of how the norm diffusion and socialisation process can be understood in the EU – Central America context. Promoted under the logo ‘the EU and Central America as strategic partners’, there are results at different levels in the project final evaluation report, coming in the form of outcomes recognised by both Central American and European parts.

The first level of results concerns the reinforcement of the decision – making process in SICA, while the second one is related to an improved interinstitutional coordination between mechanisms of regional integration in Central America, referring to different Secretariats, the Court, the Parliament – PARLACEN and other technical organisms supporting these institutions. These two results are the ones that can help us to understand how norm diffusion and socialisation happened. While the EU bet was to reinforce the process of alignment, appropriation and harmonisation of regional integration going beyond mere economic integration, Central America never took any decisive steps within these institutional structures to extend their ambitions to political integration and emulation of

¹⁴ For more information:

http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/nicaragua/documents/press_corner/publications/20150407_03_es.pdf, last accessed on 17th December 2016.

the European norms in other areas than the ones related to economic integration (Interviewee 10, Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid). However, in the economic area there were some limited attempts to create a tax restitution mechanism and to reduce non – tariff trade barriers following the EU model (European Commission, 2015).

Going beyond mere economic and institutional cooperation, another particularly relevant episode is related to the last Summit between the EU and Central America, celebrated in the context of the second EU – CELAC Summit (Brussels, June 2015). While the EU proposed a strategy on how to address citizens' security in Central America (in July 2014) (European External Action Service, 2014), there is no concrete action plan and no concrete measures are proposed in the conclusions achieved at the Summit (European Union and Central America, 2015). In addition, in the general EU – CELAC Declaration, when mentioning the EU strategy on citizens' security in Central America, a reservation was made by Nicaragua: 'the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua does not accept [the] mention in this Declaration, since it considers that the Central American Security Strategy is the only binding instrument for development of regional security in Central America' (European Union and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, 2015, 16).

Central America economic interest in the EU made it prone to an emulation process when concerning economic integration. However, this was not accompanied by a similar interest in the political dialogue and the regional security dialogue with the EU. The message is reinforced when highlighting in the framework of the EU – SICA High Level Meeting during the Brussels Summit the idea that 'the Central American Security Strategy (ESCA) [is] the tool to address regional security in the framework of the Management, Coordination and Information mechanism for regional Cooperation' (European Union and Central America,

2015, 2). It becomes clear that the EU Strategy for Security in Central America had little, if any, recognition from the Central American side (Interviewees 3 and 7, Diplomats from Central American countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively).

In a report published recently by the EU Commission itself (European Commission, 2015), an analysis is made of the EU contribution to regional integration in Central America. There are some limitations which are identified and represent the milestones for the next period. A series of initiatives that were proposed through the EU region – to – region cooperation programmes were not taken up by the Central American presidents. One example is ‘the harmonisation of competition policies [...] in spite of the fact that this was an issue that is emphasised in the Association Agreement between Central America and Europe’ (European Commission, 2015, 80). This means that the economic integration vision developed with EU resources ‘was eventually abandoned, as the national governments did ultimately not approve the final draft of the vision. A tax restitution mechanism [...] was eventually not approved by national political leaders, and progress in reducing non – tariff trade barriers has been slow as well’ (European Commission, 2015, 80).

It shows that even those initiatives that could be seen as successful at the end of the EU programmes (such as the previously mentioned tax restitution mechanism and the impulse to reduce non – tariff trade barriers) were not fully integrated in the Central America regional mechanisms. The report goes onto say:

‘The successful *Escuela Centroamericana Aduanera y Tributaria* (ECAT) closed when EU – support ended, as no follow on financing mechanism could be developed, in spite of the criticality of ensuring commonality of interpretation on the complex

regulatory environment that is typical of this domain' (European Commission, 2015, 88).

The motivation behind these failures lays in the low political will and low level of ownership of the programmes and of their objectives by the Central American countries. The report itself recognises that 'EU programmes and the associated cooperation processes were aligned primarily with the regional organisations of the SICA system. As primary intended counterparts of EU regional cooperation, the identification and formulation of interventions were carried out in coordination with those organisations, and also during implementation of EU – financed programmes, these organisations remained the primary counterparts of EU regional cooperation' (European Commission, 2015, 82). While the EU initiatives were followed up during high – level meetings with Central American governments to consolidate the EU regional approach and to identify relevant regional programmes, this high – level cooperation was never present in the implementation phase, to ensure political support and the endorsement for EU reform proposals. This sheds light over how, as in the third proposition from Chapter 1, an alternative can be found for preventing these failures: renewed practices like joint programming, which would ensure more ownership, and principles like horizontal cooperation, which would make it possible in the implementation stage.

Other examples include the unsuccessful attempt of the EU to secure funding for the secretariats in the environmental sector (the Central American Commission for Environment and Development – CCAD, the Regional Committee for Water Resources – CRRH and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America – CEPREDENAC) when ending the Regional Program for the Reduction of Vulnerability and

Environmental Degradation (PREVDA) (European Commission, 2015, 84). Ownership comes out in all these programmes as a critical issue, that even if assumed in the EU official discourse (as an example, we can look at the EU declarations in the PAIRCA closure document (Sandomingo, 2015, 2)), was not achieved. In the case of PAIRCA, the report concludes that there was no clear identification of the needs of the SICA General Secretariat nor of the institutional shortcomings to be addressed by this EU financed programme (European Commission, 2015, 86). It means limited implication and feedback were obtained from the Central American partners.

The recommendations with which the report ends include the fact that ‘institutional owners of these interventions should be individual inter – governmental oversight bodies of the SICA system, such as the SICA Executive Committee, COMIECO¹⁵. As such, the EU should consider these bodies also as possible recipients (i.e., beneficiaries) of EU cooperation and technical assistance, if this support has the potential of improving their functioning in line with their intergovernmental mandate’ (European Commission, 2015, 95). In the context of the current thesis, it means that not paying attention to these different normative reactions from its counterparts prevented the EU norm diffusion through concrete policies in the framework of cooperation for development programmes, and in this sense a normative encounter.

¹⁵ Council of Ministers of Economy and Trade of Central America

3.4. Perspectives of the EU – Central America dialogue

Some other issues were highlighted during interviews with Central American diplomats, issues that show how the cooperation with the EU in general and the European Commission in particular could evolve in the short term. Since all Central American countries are relatively small countries, suggestions that were made by the Central American diplomats include consolidating a special dialogue with smaller countries in Europe, like the ones in Eastern Europe and the most recent members of the EU (Interviewees 3, 4 and 7, Diplomats from Central American countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively). This is justified in terms of a similar approach and closer visions in terms of development. Currently, for some Central American countries (like El Salvador) more emphasis on such strategy would make more sense and would bring more advantages on both sides.

In addition, the countries that are no longer beneficiaries of bilateral aid (like Costa Rica) see the region – to – region strategy of international aid as not being enough. The fact that some countries have ‘graduated’ is perceived as more of a punishment for doing their ‘homework’ instead of what they would expect as a reward in the form of reinforced and continued bilateral cooperation (Interviewee 4, Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels).

Moreover, building on the contradictions described previously from the Brussels Summit Declarations, during one interview the conclusion was that even if in practice the EU and Central America may seem closer than ever before after the signature of the Association Agreement, the entry into force of the trade component and the high level meetings that are being held in the context of the EU – CELAC Summit, in practice this is part

of a gloomier landscape in which ‘the EU and Central America are more different than ever before in their way of seeing the world in general and international cooperation in particular’ (Interviewee 4, Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels), making reference to how interests and norms need to be in agreement, and even when common interests exist, a different normative vision may prevent cooperation.

Concluding, the importance that the EU gave to regional integration and region – to – region dialogue with Central America was high and constant on the European agenda. However, its success was not as high as its importance, and the examples of initiatives in which the EU invested resources, but which did not receive Central American support for approval or follow up, show that the EU proved commitment to interregionalism, yet the approach had only limited results in terms of policy. Both the official evaluations of the Commission and the interviews with Central American diplomats showed that the EU used European lens for looking at a region that was developing in its own way regional integration processes. Even if there was no official denial concerning the participation in EU projects aiming at deeper integration in both the political and economic areas, the results were limited. A more flexible approach on the EU side would have guaranteed a broader and more sustainable success for European programmes by including emerging spaces of regional dialogue in Central America. This would have ensured more normative adoption and adaptation, and less resistance and rejection.

What kind of reactions can we identify in these official EU documents, but also in the data coming from the interviews with Central America actors? While we can say that Central America was the subject of several programmes aiming to consolidate regional integration at all levels (economic, political, environmental), Central American actors tended to reject

an important number of European proposals. This was mainly because the EU was not able to identify the right interlocutors, nor to secure support in the politics stream by including in the loop the relevant political actors from Central America. From the Central American side we can say that the normative reaction was that of ‘formal trappings’ (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015b), meaning that as interpreter Central America tried to give the impression of norm adoption and adaptation in the economic and institution building fields, but its normative reality remained different from the EU proposal.

The way in which Central American actors conceived regionalism was different from the European vision (here included open regionalism) and this prevented the success of EU policies in areas of regional integration. We can affirm that there was a disconnection between norms and policies, and thus regional integration was not followed by successful implementation of EU policies. In the context of the current study, it means that a normative encounter was not possible. The way of framing the problem and policy streams was different on the EU and Central America sides and this explains the low political will and support that EU programmes received. The issues addressed were not the most pressing ones and the Central American policy makers were not sufficiently involved in the implementation phase.

The next section looks at how the process of negotiating and signing of a region – to – region agreement was seen by the EU and Central American sides, offering more empirical arguments for the final part of this chapter. Its purpose is also to look in detail at the link between these regional programmes that had limited results and the signature of an interregional agreement. The ultimate goal is to analyse how and if these two realities were

connected and how and if policies gave content to the EU normative approach in the context of the Association Agreement.

4. The story of an Agreement – who was the entrepreneur?

This section analyses and problematizes the main episode of the dialogue and cooperation between the European Union and Central America, the negotiation and signature of the Association Agreement, the first interregional agreement that the EU has ever signed, going beyond mere cooperation for development as analysed in the previous section, and including trade and political dialogue. The main aspects to be analysed relate to the way in which the idea was introduced on the agenda, who was the main promoter and how the agreement negotiations were finally launched. The analysis considers the limitations that entrepreneurs face when trying to introduce new items on the agenda and deepen the international dialogue aiming to diffuse their norms and policies.

The Association Agreement between the EU and Central America was signed in 2012 and its Trade component entered into force in 2013. Yet, the negotiation process behind the agreement was a diplomatic journey of more than ten years. As the first region – to – region agreement ever achieved, the Association Agreement with Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama) was seen by the EU as ‘a milestone in the relationship between the two regions. Once ratified, this agreement will open up markets on both sides, help establish a stable business and investment environment, increase benefits for citizens and [...] foster sustainable development’ (European Commission, 2012, online). At the same time the Agreement has been thought as a way to reinforce ‘regional economic integration in Central America, and the EU hopes for it to have

a positive spill – over effect on the overall political integration process and contribute to the stability of the region’ (European Commission, 2012, online).

How were these negotiations launched? On the European side, in the 2007 – 2013 EU Strategy with Central America, the Commission highlights that ‘Central America must deepen its integration process in order to be eligible for a full Association Agreement with the EU’ (European Commission, 2007b, 15). The process was still developing, and no clear schedule was envisaged.

On the other side, for Central America it was equally urgent and a priority to sign the agreement with the EU. This was also because of the business sector asking for more clarity than the GSP+ scheme (the successor of the GSP scheme explained previously) was able to provide (Interviewees 1, 3, 4 and 7, 9, 10, Diplomats from Central American countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively). In this sense, for the EU it was important to consolidate the regional processes in Central America and therefore to sign an Association Agreement, but signing the Agreement meant for Central America going beyond the normative attachment to regional integration and interregionalism. In practice, while at official levels the negotiations started in 2007 and lasted until 2010 (Dominguez, 2015, 86), at the diplomatic and political level the Central American countries started occupying the institutional spaces and diplomatic encounters since 2002, here included mentions made on a constant basis in the final declarations of the SICA Summits, highlighting the importance that the EU Agreement has for Central America¹⁶. Central America started showing in this way entrepreneurship by aiming to couple the three streams.

¹⁶ For more information: <http://www.sieca.int/Documentos/DocumentoMatriz.aspx?ClasificacionId=10>, last accessed on 12th November 2016.

The politics stream was seen as crucial and this is why efforts concentrated on it. During elite interviews with Central American diplomats that were directly involved in the negotiations of the Agreement, it became clear that at the EU level 'there was an obvious institutional breach between the Parliament and the Council on one side, supporting the region – to – region agreement with Central America, and the Commission, with DG Trade and its Commissioner Pascal Lamy, on the other side, insisting that the EU should invest in the Doha Round and the WTO instead of establishing an individual agreement with Central America' (Interviewee 9, Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid). The argument was that the SICA system was too different from the EU, so a region – to – region agreement would not be advantageous for the EU.

Several actors are worth mentioning when talking about how the diplomatic space was occupied by Central America to make possible the inclusion and consolidation of the interregional agreement on the EU agenda. The Central American Embassies in Brussels and the Permanent Spanish Representation in Brussels, as well as the support of important EU officials, which sympathised with the cause, were identified during interviews as key for the success of such initiative. Between these EU officials, the ones that were mentioned in almost all interviews are Benita Ferrero – Waldner, the European Commissioner for External Relations between 2004 and 2009, and Ignacio Salafranca, Spanish Member of the European Parliament since 1994. We can observe a contradiction both between EU institutions (the Council and the Parliament versus the Commission) and inside the Commission, that while being the institution which defends and promotes interregionalism and regional integration, was at the same time the EU institution that was perceived as being against the Agreement with Central America. On one side we have DG DEVCO and DG RELEX (led by Benita Ferrero

– Waldner, in charge with External Relations), both supporting regional integration and consequently an interregional agreement, and on the other DG TRADE – less prone to support a region – to – region agreement during the first half of the decade.

In this context, we can see Central America and its Embassies in Brussels as entrepreneurs, able to consolidate a coalition of actors both from the Member States (the Spanish Permanent Representation in Brussels) and from the EU institutions (the Parliament and the Commission) to support the introduction on the EU agenda of an Association Agreement with Central America. While this coalition was gradually consolidated, the three streams conditioned the evolution of the proposal.

The politics stream was the main impediment for the opening of a window of opportunity, and the policy solution found by Central American diplomats was compromising the trade component of the future agreement in favour of a deeper political and development agreement along the way. In this sense, the EU – Central America Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement was signed in 2003 (replacing the Framework Cooperation Agreement from 1993), Central American representatives hoping that this ‘will increase the possibility of a multi – pillar agreement’ (Interviewee 6, Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid), as the real issue to be addressed in the problem stream. This also ensured the coherence between interregionalism as a metanorm and the interests related to trade.

The fact that a trade agreement was achieved by Central America with the USA in 2004, together with the failure of the Doha Agreement and changes in the European Commission DG Trade management facilitated the opening of a window of opportunity in the politics stream. The conclusion of the EU – Central America High Level Meeting from 2006 (part of

the Vienna EU – Latin America Summit) was that ‘the concerned parties [the EU and Central America] share the objective of concluding a comprehensive Association Agreement and look forward to a rapid process of negotiations, as well as an effective implementation of the future Association Agreement’ (European Union and Central America, 2006, 2).

After four years of negotiations, the negotiations were resumed in 2010. It is essential to underline which were the agents within the political environment that made possible this agreement: Benita Ferrero – Waldner supported it during the year she was in office as Trade Commissioner (2009 – 2010) and the Agreement was concluded while Spain held the Presidency of the Council. The Agreement was signed in 2012, but only the trade component entered into force in 2013, the political and development components pending ratification from the Member States (since these components are not EU competencies). It was not free of criticism. Civil society opposed it, mainly NGOs in the field of human rights, accusing the EU of being inconsistent, adding a clause on this without building a control mechanism and making it in this way ineffective. The same was highlighted on labour and environmental standards (Interviewee 67, Latin American NGO Representative).

The Association Agreement negotiation and signature bring some additional elements to what was previously analysed in terms of reactions that Central America had to the EU normative initiatives. While deepening the integration process was a condition, Central America did not adopt an important number of policy initiatives that would have ensured more compliance with EU norms. However, it proved to be a *pragmatic* entrepreneur, building a supporting coalition of actors and designing a step – by – step strategy through which political circumstances were used when they aroused to open a window of opportunity. Central America managed to place on the agenda the policy topic that was of

relevance for the region and which was asked by both its governments and the business sector: a region – to – region agreement with the EU, becoming in this way an entrepreneur of this policy solution, and ensuring coherence between norms and economic interests.

Yet, the broader landscape shows a disconnection between norms and policies: the EU did not promote this region – to – region agreement even if it wanted to support interregionalism and regional integration in Central America, and Central America promoted the Agreement as an appropriate policy solution, but its attachment to the EU model of regional integration was secondary during the negotiation process while the interregional level was seen as the appropriate level to negotiate an Agreement with the European Union. It means that the disconnection was between regional integration ambitions and interregionalism, rather than between a normative commitment versus the economic interest to be defended through the Agreement. Entrepreneurship can be seen at institutional level (Spanish Representation and Central American Embassies in Brussels), but also coming from individuals (Benita Ferrero – Waldner and Ignacio Salafranca), and the interplay between these levels ensured the successful signature of the Agreement. What is even more important is that entrepreneurship from both sides was needed prior to the Agreement.

5. Conclusion: Interregionalism and Norm Socialisation

The final section of the chapter has two objectives. On one side to analyse the implications of the Central America reactions to the EU norm diffusion related to regional integration and region – to – region dialogue in terms of normative encounters. On the other side, to analyse how relevant is to make a distinction between norm entrepreneur and norm

interpreter or how practice showed that the two roles can be switched in particular moments of international negotiations.

First, the analysis of the EU – Central America dialogue confirms the idea of a shift from a world in which the EU diffuses norms to other actors and regions, to a world in which the EU norms are perceived, interpreted and sometimes challenged, sometimes rejected. The advantage of being the world's biggest internal market did not mean that other actors, in this case Central America, would adopt EU norms. Central America found ways of creating 'formal trappings of European institutions and policies to give an impression of adoption or adaptation' (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015b, 4). While to a limited extent, the EU managed to promote its norms in Central America, and this was mainly through the way in which it gave strength to the importance of regional integration. However, when looking at concrete EU policy initiatives, Central America reactions are closer to resistance than to any other reaction that a norm interpreter can have, presenting in this way examples of failed entrepreneurship and missed normative encounters, and a disconnection between norms and policies.

Through the examples presented in this chapter, the conclusion is that we cannot talk about importing or adopting EU norms and in most cases not even about adapting them to the local context. In practical terms, it means a limited EU normative influence in the region, and it was exactly an important part of the EU normative content that limited the norm diffusion results. When establishing as interlocutor SIECA, as the regional partner and representative of the Central America integration process, trying to promote interregionalism as a new way of international interaction between actors, the EU limited the success of its cooperation for development programmes. A more flexible approach,

betting more for a bottom – up regional integration process (starting by cooperating more at bilateral level) would have ensured better results for the EU and a more successful socialisation process of the Central American actors using European norms. This could also have translated in more successful policies. On the contrary, signing the Association Agreement with each country instead of SIECA (even if it was the EU interlocutor during the whole process) weakened the importance given to interregionalism.

This brings empirical data on how to understand the second proposition as introduced in Chapter 1: the politics stream proved to be crucial and identifying the right interlocutor and level of interaction a *sine qua non* condition for EU norm adoption or adaptation. The EU should have negotiated more at bilateral level and give the required importance to regional integration and interregionalism by signing the agreement at SICA / SIECA level (Interviewee 4, Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels). Concerning the third proposition, the right principles and practices (horizontal cooperation and joint programming) would have ensured norm adoption or adaptation, made visible through concrete policies.

Normative encounters were limited by the institutional spaces which were used by the European institutions to promote their norms of interregionalism and regional integration. From the EU itself there were moments (like the first steps of the negotiations for an interregional agreement with Central America) when a detachment from interregionalism became clear. In addition, a fracture can be seen between the objectives of the two actors. For the EU, the political dialogue and international cooperation have a higher importance on the agenda, while for Central America trade had a crucial role, both in terms of the regional

agenda (intraregional integration) and its international dimension (interregional dialogue, negotiations with other actors like the EU).

Central America proved to be a pragmatic entrepreneur when it came to put the region – to – region agreement on the agenda as part of the policy stream. While not agreeing internally on using the European model to advance with the regional integration process, it prioritised the Agreement with the EU, showing that economic interests as part of the problem stream can facilitate the coupling and opening of a window of opportunity, but keeping the commitment to interregionalism. The two actors switched roles and even if the EU tried to become a norm entrepreneur through its regional and subregional strategies, Central America was able to introduce items on the policy agenda on crucial topics and became an entrepreneur on its own when there was an agreement in the whole region that a new type of Agreement with the EU was needed.

CHAPTER 5. FROM NORM RESISTANCE AND NORM REJECTION TO NORM ADOPTION. THE CASES OF THE EU RELATIONS WITH MERCOSUR AND CAN

‘We [the EU] will invest in regional orders and in cooperation among and within regions’

(Mogherini, 2016, 4).

1. Introduction

This thesis looks beyond European agency, highlighting and problematizing the Latin American contributions to designing the normative framework of the region – to – region dialogue with the EU. It analyses the different reactions that norm interpreters can have to the entrepreneurs’ norm diffusion intentions and how these reactions condition and determine the results of the diffusion process. This means that sometimes it becomes a successful socialisation process (followed by norm adoption or adaption) and sometimes fails to do so. In practical terms, the current chapter analyses the different reactions and how they change and challenge the interaction between entrepreneurs and interpreters and the translation of norms into policies facilitating or not normative encounters as part of the first dynamic highlighted in Chapter 2: the norm entrepreneur tries to diffuse its norms, the interpreter can adopt, adapt, resist or reject them, and, depending on the three streams (problem, policy, politics), these norms are embedded or not in concrete policies.

The focus of the empirical work on the EU – Latin America interregional relations offers a wide range of analysis possibilities. As seen in the previous chapter, the negotiations and dialogue with Central America can seem at a first glance a case of mainly adoption and

adaption, while in reality they were closer to resistance and rejection. Even if it is true that the interregional negotiations finalised successfully and a region – to – region agreement was signed, the normative content related to regional integration and the importance of consolidating this to be able to interact on an interregional basis was only scarcely applied through concrete policy initiatives. The resulting normative encounters were conditioned by these limitations.

If the negotiations that finalised with a region – to – region agreement did not imply a successful norm adoption process, the unsuccessful or pending ones can be suspected to imply even more evident cases of norm resistance and norm rejection. This is where the cases of this chapter fit. While the EU dialogue with the Andean Community (CAN, formed by Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Bolivia) no longer exists as such since Bolivia does not participate in the multiparty agreement signed by the EU with the other countries of the region, the negotiations with Mercosur benefited from a renewed interest since the coming into power of a right – wing president in Argentina (Mauricio Macri, since December 2015).

How did this translate from a norm diffusion point of view? How did the norm interpreter, in this case Mercosur and CAN, react to the EU intention to diffuse its norms, and was the EU consistent in its attempt to consolidate region – to – region dialogues with the two regional groups? From a methodological point of view, this implies testing the second proposition from Chapter 1 related to how coalitions condition norm diffusion and the incorporation of norms into policies in the case of less successful policy initiatives. It also involves reflecting on how useful is the distinction between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter is. In addition, the chapter looks at how practices and principles in the problem

stream condition norm diffusion and the incorporation of norms into policies, as explained in the third proposition as formulated in the Introduction chapter.

The three streams are deployed similarly to Chapter 4. The problem stream includes the EU attempts (mainly the Commission and the Parliament) to put the dialogue with Mercosur and CAN on its international agenda, its intentions to consolidate an interregional partnership with these regional groups and to strengthen their regional integration processes. In the policy stream, the two dimensions that will be analysed include the Association Agreements on a region – to – region basis and the regional programmes following the multiannual strategies in cooperation for development. The politics stream will refer to the interregional meetings, the dialogue between Summits or the lack thereof, and additional international and internal events like the end of the GSP scheme (and the way in which this has been perceived by the business sector), the contradictions inside the Parliament and the Commission, and at EU interinstitutional level, but also the regional integration evolutions in Mercosur and CAN.

Empirical data was collected from interviews with EU officials from all EU institutions with a constant participation in external relations (Council, Parliament, EEAS, Commission), Latin American diplomats from both CAN and Mercosur working in the respective Missions of their countries to the EU in Brussels, as well as in the Embassies of CAN and Mercosur countries in Madrid and New York. Other sources of data included the EC regional strategies for 2002 – 2006 and 2007 – 2013 (these regions no longer benefit from an EU individual regional strategy in the 2014 – 2020 framework), but also European Parliament resolutions, and Council and interregional Summit final documents.

The chapter is structured in three parts. The next one analyses the case of the EU relations with Mercosur and looks at how the negotiations unfolded during the more than two decades of dialogue, the challenges and successes, as well as the Mercosur reactions during this whole period to the EU attempt to consolidate an interregional partnership. The third part looks at the case of CAN and analyses if the example of an apparently failed negotiation process weakens the importance given by the EU to interregionalism and regional integration and affects the normative reactions of the norm interpreter, including the case of the *living well* norm. The fourth part links the empirical cases to the theoretical aims of the thesis, and addresses the questions asked in this introductory part, while presenting some concluding remarks related to the subregional negotiations of the EU in South America.

2. The EU – Mercosur dialogue – the never – ending negotiations of a region – to – region agreement

Mercosur or the Southern Common Market is a result of the Asunción Treaty in 1991. It was formed initially by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Venezuela joined in 2012, after a long process of admission, but its membership is suspended since 1st of December 2016, because it failed to incorporate to its national law system Mercosur provisions on human rights and trade. Bolivia is in the process of becoming a member, missing only Brazil's signature to become a full member¹⁷.

¹⁷ For more information: <http://www.mercosur.int/innovaportal/v/7823/2/innova.front/paises-del-mercador-sul>, last accessed on 15th December 2016.

2.1. The beginning of the EU – Mercosur dialogue

Concerning the EU dialogue with Mercosur, it was initiated at the beginning of the 1990s, with the EU rising interest in regionalism around the globe, but also with the high importance attached to free trade. Scholars treated this dialogue as being different from the one that Mercosur had with the USA. This is mainly due to the relevance that human rights and sustainable development have for the EU in its external policies, and to the fact that negotiations were never thought as focusing exclusively on trade, but they included also cooperation for development and political dialogue (Dudek, 2013).

In addition, 'contrary to the European vision, the USA authorities [considered] that the Latin American regional spaces [were] merely temporary and must eventually be absorbed into the broader spaces proposed by the USA' (Santander, 2005, 292). This vision affected Mercosur when the USA attempted to incorporate Argentina in its regional project during Menem's presidency, a pro – USA president, at the beginning of the 1990s. This would have destabilised Mercosur and made president Collor's Brazil retire its support to this regional project. However, it was not the case. In addition, in a Joint Declaration, made by the Presidents of Mercosur countries only three years after the creation of the regional group (in 1994), they highlight 'the rich and valuable antecedents that the integration experience of the EU' (Mercosur, 1994) can bring to the Mercosur similar efforts of regional integration.

As for the European Union, it was only after 1986 when Spain and Portugal became members of the EU that Latin America started to have a higher importance on the European agenda. Vicente Palacio points out that Spain 'invented Latin America as a political and economic regional partner' (Palacio, 2011, 279) for the EU, and it was always Spain that was

the leader in promoting a stronger interregional dialogue. As a new member, Spain could use its new status for proposing new policy solutions and opening windows of opportunity for their adoption.

EU cooperation with Mercosur was considered a main instrument of support to the democratisation of the region and the deepening of its regional integration process. There was a growing normative congruence between the EU and Mercosur concerning the importance of interregionalism and regional integration in order to ensure the regional development along with a higher importance given to civil society involvement and non – governmental organisations (Grugel, 2004), aiming to ensure durable democracies following the European model.

From 1986 to 1996 the EU foreign direct investment (FDI) in Latin America increased four times, passed from 10 per cent of the EU FDI to 40 per cent of the EU FDI (Santander, 2005). ‘Capturing 60 per cent of the investments made by European enterprises in Latin America, Mercosur became a leading partner of the EU in the Latin American sub – continent’ (Santander, 2005, 293). In the problem stream, it meant that the EU needed a new and reinforced strategy with Mercosur. Commissioner Manuel Marín, who was in charge with the Latin America portfolio under the Santander Commission, proposed a two stage *rapprochement* strategy: on one side an economic and trade region – to – region agreement and on the other side, following this new stage in the EU – Mercosur dialogue, an agreement of a both political and economic nature, aiming to reinforce and reinvigorate investments and cooperation between the two regions in international bodies and negotiations (Santander, 2005). The Essen European Council in 1994 and the Madrid European Council in 1995 supported this approach. At the same time, from the Mercosur

side there was political will to start the negotiations to reinforce the relation with the EU, meaning that there was an agreement between the four countries concerning the importance of such agreement.

2.2. Negotiating a region – to – region agreement

The Interregional Framework Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Mercosur was signed in 1995 and it brought higher on the agenda the importance of starting the interregional negotiations of an agreement involving the three dimensions, political dialogue, trade, and cooperation for development, envisaged as an appropriate policy solution. This agreement included mentions to an institutionalised dialogue between the two regions, a reinforced support of the EU to Mercosur regional integration to benefit from the European experience and highlighted the importance of the economic and trade cooperation. It also marked an important step in Mercosur history, by making it an international entity, able to sign international agreements, and it was recognised as such by the EU (Santander, 2005, 294). The purpose of the Agreement was:

‘to strengthen the cultural links [...] and encourage the dissemination of information on the nature, objectives and scope of their processes of integration’ (European Union and Mercosur, 1995, 9).

Concerning the future Association Agreement, with a trade component besides the cooperation and political dimensions, the negotiations started four years later, in 1999, but not without serious opposition from several Member States and EU institutions. This was mainly due to the agricultural competition that a Mercosur agreement would have brought

for some EU countries in sectors like sugar, beef and cereals. Ireland, France and the Netherlands were opposing the trade agreement, as well as the Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler, French Commissioners de Silguy and Cresson, and Irish Commissioner Flynn, while the UK was supporting the WTO negotiations, highlighting that all trade talks should be concluded in the WTO framework (Interviewees 11 and 17, Diplomats from Mercosur countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively).

An agreement was eventually achieved, the Council gave a mandate and the Commission started the negotiations only on non – tariff barriers in 1999 (Santander, 2005), approach which was seen as a very limited one by the Mercosur counterparts. The EU did not appear as fully committed to liberalise what was mainly at stake for the Southern Cone¹⁸: the agriculture sector. The Europeans were interested in getting access to public procurement and services on the Mercosur market. However, because of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), the Commission had only limited capacity to negotiate or to change the agricultural subsidies policy that Mercosur countries put as a condition to liberalise the sectors that were of interest for the EU.

Since 1999 there were few episodes of relative optimism that a final agreement could be reached, but also milestones that seemed impossible to overcome. Besides the vested interests in the opposing sectors, another reason that was invoked on a permanent basis was that the European Commission had as interlocutor only a ‘virtual region’ (Hardacre, 2010, 217), highlighting the limitations and decreasing Mercosur will to consolidate its internal integration process. The negotiations became ‘the EU’s decade – long search for a more sustained partnership with Mercosur, a regional integration organisation set up in part

¹⁸ Mercosur is also called this way because of the geographic position of its Member States.

on the basis of the example provided by the EU itself, but one which has been prevented from moving forward both by its own internal divisions and by the thus far insurmountable obstacle of agricultural trade in relations with the EU' (Hardacre and Smith, 2014, 96). What appears to be less present in the research undertaken on Mercosur relates to the opportunities that the EU missed because of internal fractures (as example, over agriculture subsidies) and limited capacity to adapt to a changing reality in the Mercosur region, including post – hegemonic regionalism and creating also normative friction between the two regional groups. These factors can be seen from a norm entrepreneurship perspective as causes for missing the opportunity to couple the three streams and open a window of opportunity. It also translated in the impossibility to reach an agreement.

While benefiting from the lobby of a Mercosur – European Business Forum (MEBF) since 1999 (Grugel, 2004), supported also by the European Commission, and while Argentina and Brazil accounted for more than 50 per cent of the European FDI in Latin America at the end of the 1990s (ECLAC, 2000) (so an increased interest in the region should have arisen as well), in October 2004 the negotiations were suspended. Big differences between big countries (Brazil and Argentina) and small countries (Uruguay, Paraguay) could be noticed from the beginning, with smaller countries being more prone to achieve an agreement with the EU in the three sectors. Differences could also be seen between the three sectors that were being negotiated. The region – to – region negotiations were more advanced and ready to be resumed in cooperation for development and political dialogue. The sector that was dominated by thorny issues was trade.

Even if the failure of the WTO Doha Round in 2006 was expected to favour the relaunch of the trade negotiations, this was not the case for the EU negotiations with Mercosur. It is

in opposition with what happened in the case of Central America, where the failure of the Doha Round was seen as a main factor by Central American diplomats helping in the politics stream to increase EU interest for a region – to – region agreement and to conclude the negotiations with the European Commission.

2.3. Cooperation for development strategies

During the same period, two strategies were published by the Commission: the 2002 – 2006 and the 2007 – 2013 EU Strategies with Mercosur. While common elements can be found in both strategies, what makes the second document more interesting is the emergence of a self – reflexive attitude of the Commission, recognising the fact that its success in supporting regional integration in Mercosur was limited. This can also connect the negotiations of an interregional agreement to the limited success of norm diffusion in regional integration.

In the 2002 – 2006 Strategy (European Commission, 2002a), the EU objectives were the support to complete the Mercosur internal market, the Mercosur institutionalisation (which was seen as weaker than the one achieved by Central America for example) and its integration in the regional and international context, along with a special emphasis on the role of civil society and the need to strengthen its capacity to play an active role. The European Commission states in this document that

‘the EU strategy must be in line with the EC general cooperation objectives, which are in general to consolidate democracy in Mercosur, to enhance economic development and reduce poverty. *Cooperation funds should be used whenever possible as an instrument to implement or support the implementation of specific*

issues foreseen in the Political and Economic Association Agreement negotiated with Mercosur' (emphasis added) (European Commission, 2002a, 22).

The main achievements of the EU initiatives were the EU support to the Mercosur Secretariat, ensuring its transition from an administrative unit to a technical office; the support given to the Arbitration and Dispute Resolution System of Mercosur and the support to the Mercosur Joint Parliamentary Committee (CPC) through the 'drafting of the interinstitutional agreement providing for the CPC [advice] on [how to] draft Mercosur legislation. The project helped improve the CPC's effectiveness and enhance its role in forming a Mercosur Parliament' (European Commission, 2007e, 18). There were other successes related to updating customs procedures, statistics, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, which were seen as important achievements (Buck, 2010). However, the Commission highlights also the limits of its cooperation:

'Mercosur cooperation has suffered from a low level of ownership and from a lack of political involvement. [The EU] need[s] to improve [its] dialogue with partners and key stakeholders in the identification and formulation phases' (European Commission, 2007e, 19).

These are similar limitations to the ones identified in the Central American case. The common issue that appears in both cases is related to a limited understanding of the needs of the EU counterparts, resulting in institutional solutions that received little political support from the Mercosur side. Nevertheless, the EU success in supporting a stronger parliamentary cooperation and its institutionalisation in the Southern Cone is a positive example of how the EU managed to diffuse its regional model (Interviewee 14, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels). This can be explained from the norm

entrepreneurship perspective as a successful initiative because of the desire from the Mercosur side to use the European model and of its appropriation of the idea that a stronger institutional structure would benefit Mercosur countries. It allowed a coupling of streams and the opening of a window of opportunity mainly due to the politics stream. It also meant a normative encounter happened in the sense that norm adoption and adaptation allowed the EU to socialise the norm interpreter using its normative vision on regional integration and to create a region – to – region dialogue through the strengthening of the Mercosur parliamentary cooperation.

The EU Strategy with Mercosur for 2007 – 2013 focuses on similar priorities (from the 50 million euro – strengthening Mercosur institutions – 10%, supporting the implementation of the future Association Agreement – 70%, and fostering the participation of civil society – 20%) (European Commission, 2007e, 5). The document makes emphasis on the importance of consolidating the institutional structure of Mercosur with a permanent Parliament and Review Tribunal, and a Secretariat, while fostering regional integration and reducing non – tariff barriers (European Commission, 2007e, 28). These two strategies exemplify the interest that the EU showed in consolidating regional integration in Mercosur, and as seen previously, even if not all initiatives were concretised in policies, at least the parliamentary dimension involved norm adoption and adaptation with positive outcomes, differently from what happened with most regional programmes in Central America.

2.4. Getting back to the negotiations of an agreement

It was during this period (2007 – 2013), while counting with the Spanish Presidency (a constant element that made the politics stream likely to facilitate a coupling of streams and

the opening of a window of opportunity) that at the Madrid Summit in 2010 the negotiations with Mercosur were relaunched. Even if there was a clear political will to conclude the agreement and this message was passed by the two regions at the Summit (European Union and Mercosur, 2010), issues like phytosanitary measures, agricultural subsidies on the EU side and limiting the access to the manufactured goods market (here included the car market) on the Mercosur side made it difficult to advance with the interregional negotiations (Interviewee 11, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels). Not even the review of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which begun in 2009 and involved a decrease in protectionism and EU agricultural subsidies could facilitate a coupling of streams to allow the signature of an agreement (Interviewee 33, European Commission official in DG TRADE in Brussels).

In the period following the 2010 Summit, a second solution started to be framed mainly by the EU: a two – speed approach, allowing the signature of an agreement between the EU and individual Mercosur countries that were ready to finalise the negotiations, marking a clear fracture with countries like Argentina that began to be seen as the main impediment in achieving an interregional agreement. This solution was also meant to ensure an equitable agreement considering the economic and market size differences between Brazil and Argentina, on one side, and Paraguay and Uruguay, on the other side. However, it was seen with suspicion by the main actors of Mercosur (here included countries like Brazil) and was never really followed up during official meetings with Mercosur countries (Interviewee 16, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid).

From the Mercosur side and in opposition with the two – speed approach, Brazil consolidated and promoted the idea of the *strategic patience* as a foreign policy strategy

(called in one interview the 'infinite patience', Interviewee 12, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels), referring to the relation with Argentina and the protection of its interests in the agriculture sector. This highlights at the same time the importance given to regional integration in the Mercosur region and was seen by Brazilian policy makers as a proof of recognition to the strategic importance given to Argentina and to the dialogue between the two regional powers. It meant that Brazil would not sign an agreement with the EU, and would not leave behind the other Mercosur countries, and especially Argentina.

Between the EU institutions, the Commission was the one supporting an approach in which a two – speed agreement could be considered. Once more, while being the main defender of interregionalism, the Commission did not fully apply this to its policy proposals. This vision was not shared by other EU institutions, at least at a discursive level, preventing a coupling of streams in the politics stream. The European Parliament motion from January 2013 shows that MEPs were concerned by the way in which the Commission started to frame its discourse in relation to the negotiations with Mercosur. The Parliament called 'on the Commission to support the process of integration [in] Latin America and to refrain from any initiative that could lead to the splitting up of the Mercosur bloc' (European Parliament, 2013, online).

During interviews in the European Parliament, it became clear that within the Parliament there was a strong belief that the two – speed approach and 'a possible Association Agreement between the EU and Brazil would mean the end of Mercosur, and this was not what the EU wanted, nor an acceptable result' (Interviewee 36, European Parliament Official in Brussels). This position of the Parliament can be also justified by the fact that the EU already established a strategic partnership with Brazil in 2007 and any

further step towards a more bilateral relation with the biggest Mercosur country would jeopardise the EU support for regional integration in the Southern Cone.

At this point we need to underline the importance that the European Parliament had in promoting and helping to make successful several EU proposals aimed at stimulating and consolidating regional integration in Mercosur. The Mercosur Parliament – Parlasur – is one of the most important initiatives that can be highlighted in this framework. The European Parliament dedicated a Parliamentary Delegation with Latin America that since 1996 became the *Delegation for relations with South America and Mercosur*. In 2004, a delegation dedicated to Mercosur was created, and, in 2006, the role of the European Parliament in the institutionalisation of Parlasur was recognised by both European MEPs and Parlasur parliamentarians. Surveys with Parlasur representatives showed that 90% of them saw the EU as an important source of inspiration and influence in the Mercosur institutionalisation: ‘the European Parliament has been a model for the Mercosur Parliament’ (Costa and Dri, 2014, 143).

However, what contradicts this position and weakens the European Parliament desire to protect the region – to – region approach with Mercosur is the fact that a Parliamentary Delegation was established with Brazil in July 2014, highlighting the Parliament’s interest in promoting a stronger and strategic relation with the country. According to the European Parliament, this Delegation has as aim ‘the monitoring of the Strategic Partnership between Brazil and the European Union which was established during the 1st EU – Brazil Summit in April 2007. In this context, the Delegation should implement actions related to the relations

between its Members and the counterpart Members of the Brazilian Congress¹⁹. This episode shows a Parliament that is much closer to the Commission in its differentiated approach with Brazil, creating a contradiction with its interregional discourse cited previously.

Even if this two – speed approach was not put into practice through a potential multiparty agreement, it did mark a detachment of the European Commission from its interregional strategy. The issues inside the Commission (and the opposition to the Agreement with Mercosur of some Commissioners as mentioned previously), the complex dialogue and the inherent contradictions with the Parliament, but also the Mercosur desire to continue negotiate on a region – to – region basis prevented a normative encounter from happening in the short term since no policy solution was found. However, this holds the potential of becoming a normative encounter if an interregional agreement is achieved, reinforcing at the same time the Mercosur regional integration process.

2.5. Latest evolutions of the negotiation process

The latest evolution in the negotiations for an Association Agreement includes the exchange of trade offers on 11th May 2016, the first exchange since 2010 when the negotiations were relaunched. A first negotiation round took place in October 2016 and a second one in March 2017²⁰. The change of the Argentina president and the fact that the right – wing president Macri is now in power seems to give political momentum to the EU – Mercosur negotiations for a trade deal.

¹⁹ According to http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-br/home.html#delegation_menu, last accessed on 10th February 2017.

²⁰ For more information: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/mercosur/>, last accessed on 15th May 2017.

How can we understand from the perspective of this thesis the evolution of the Mercosur – EU negotiations? Similar to Central America, the political and cooperation for development components did not face strong opposition and an agreement was achieved, while the trade component was the one delaying and postponing the signature of an Association Agreement. If in the case of Central America, it was the failure of the Doha Round that favoured the opening of a window of opportunity, and Central America was the one playing the role of entrepreneur by coupling the three streams and building a coalition of actors strong enough to make possible the signature, in the case of Mercosur we notice the opposite.

In Mercosur, the promotion of norms relating to regional integration (as an example the institutionalisation of Parlasur) did not face an especially unfavourable environment, and the diffusion can be considered successful, even if with some limits. Nevertheless, the region – to – region negotiations did not advance at the same speed. While adopting a European Parliamentary model and adapting the norms to their context, due to division over trade, the Mercosur countries did not have the same political will to conclude the negotiations of an Association Agreement with the EU, and this can be considered the main reason why this region – to – region dialogue had a different fate from the one with Central America. Once more, the EU was not able to find neither the political momentum, nor the opportunity to couple the politics, policy and problem streams, and to push for an interregional agreement supported by the right coalition of actors. In the politics stream, internal contradictions between the different EU institutions and external changes in the Mercosur way of conceiving regional integration and interregionalism made impossible the opening of a window of opportunity. Due to this, the need to develop a fully – fledged

interregional framework involving the three dimensions – trade, political dialogue and cooperation for development – in the problem stream could not be exploited, and the Association Agreement in the policy stream was not concluded. Therefore, this prevented a normative encounter over the importance of interregionalism.

Countries such as Argentina and its position on agriculture negotiations compromised the fate of these negotiations. The internal fractures of Mercosur as a regional organisation and the fact that the relation between Brazil and Argentina took the frontline of the whole negotiation process made the process vulnerable to political development in both countries. While *strategic patience* as a foreign policy instrument can be seen as a sign of benevolence from Brazil, in the over two decades of negotiations with the EU there were moments in which ‘as time went by, both countries stepped back from their mutual understanding, giving way to increasing suspicion and decreasing cooperation’ (Malamud, 2005, 426).

The regional integration achievements were not as ambitious as the EU would have wanted. In the words of the Commission, ‘the list of incremental steps is impressive. However, the economic integration process is still far from complete and trade disputes are endemic — not to mention the bloc’s demographic, geographic, industrial and economic asymmetries’ (European Commission, 2007e, 7). Examples include unilateral trade measures which have been adopted by individual countries without having consulted the other members. This can be seen as disillusion within the bloc, ‘despite the affinity among the moderate left – wing parties [that were] in power in three of the four Mercosur states’ (European Commission, 2007e, 7).

We can say that the juncture of the bilateral relations, sometimes benevolent, sometimes based on mistrust, and the limited achievements of the regional integration

process can be overcome when there is consensus that the region would benefit from a particular agreement, as we saw in the case of the Central America Association Agreement with the EU, which was signed while at the same time continuing to consolidate an interregional dialogue. However, concerning Mercosur, even if it is a priority on the EU agenda (recognised as such during all interviews with diplomats from Mercosur countries, Interviewees 11 – 20, Brussels and Madrid) and even if it has a developing structure in terms of institutional architecture, the Agreement did not materialise. This was because the EU was not able to convince a critical coalition of actors by highlighting the advantages of such agreement for both sides. It combined with the fact that big countries, as Argentina, faced political changes with left – wing presidents (Cristina Fernández de Kirchner) that adopted a much more protectionist approach than it was the case in the 1990s when the negotiations started. In addition, the different views on regional integration (EU vision versus the post – hegemonic view of Mercosur countries) proved to be main normative limitations.

3. The EU – CAN interregional negotiations and the failure of the region – to – region approach

The Andean Community (CAN) is an even older regional organisation, with even more history than Mercosur. As one of the oldest regional organisations in Latin America, it was based on the Cartagena Agreement of 1969, when the ‘Andean Pact’ was created. Chile, an original member of this Pact left it in 1976. Venezuela joined in 1973, but left the organisation in 2006. The current members are Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru and their regional dialogue is based on the Trujillo Protocol of 1996²¹. Similar to Mercosur, its evolution is complex. It is currently facing an internal crisis with opposing visions concerning

²¹ For more information: <http://www.comunidadandina.org/>, last accessed on 17th November 2016.

the role of trade within the regional integration process (with Colombia and Peru focusing on free trade, and Ecuador and Bolivia being less prone to sign free trade agreements).

3.1. The evolution of the EU – CAN dialogue

The European Union cooperation with the Andean Community started formally in the 1970s. However, at that moment the dialogue was limited and included only few European initiatives in the EU framework for development cooperation. The main topics were specific policies like environment and energy, and the support to the Andean integration process in the form of technical assistance and institution – building projects. As for the beneficiaries, they were predominately the Andean regional institutions, such as the CAN General Secretariat and the Andean Court of Justice (European Commission, 2007a). The creation of the Andean Court of Justice in 1979 was actually seen as a clear case of emulation, adopting the model of the European Court of Justice through the cooperation of ‘networks of Andean and EU experts in the legal realms, which served as settings for learning and persuasion, [and] played a key role in the aforementioned institution’s establishment’ (Lenz and Burilkov, 2016, 6).

The first EU – CAN Cooperation Agreement was concluded in 1983, while the second one was a ‘third – generation’ Agreement dating from 1993, with mainly development cooperation components, including also the most – favoured – nation clause. Even if it did not include trade provisions, the Agreement was meant to support the creation of an enabling environment for achieving an Association Agreement with the three components (trade, development, political dialogue) following the outcomes of the Doha Round. An EU – CAN High Level Specialised Dialogue on Drugs was established, and in 1996, the Rome

Declaration aimed to develop the political dialogue, institutionalising the cooperation in this field and establishing the level of the periodical meetings (meetings at both presidents' and ministerial level). The last Agreement signed between the two regions is the Political dialogue and Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and CAN (2003)²² that did not enter into force, mainly because of low political will in the Andean countries that never submitted it for ratification.

Following these Agreements, since 2002, the EU published two regional strategies with the Andean Community: one for the period between 2002 and 2006, and another one for 2007 – 2013. For the period 2002 – 2006, the main objectives were to support Andean integration process and to support a 'Andean zone of peace'. In addition, the Commission highlights the originality of its interregional approach with the Andean Community, affirming that

[some] bodies which used to support Andean regional projects have abandoned them in favour of national projects, since there seems to be a higher degree of beneficiary involvement in national projects, or have opted for projects covering the whole subcontinent, which are easier to administer and permit economies of scale, whereas the EU Member States are thinking of adopting a subregional approach in the Andean countries' (European Commission, 2002c, 21).

For the 2007 – 2013 period, while allocating 50 million euro, the three priorities follow the same logic from the previous strategy: regional economic integration (40%), social and economic cohesion (40%) and fighting against illicit drugs (20%) (European Commission,

²² More information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=2341>, last accessed on 20th November 2016.

2007a). The European Parliament also established a delegation with the Andean Community based on exchanges of yearly visits of parliamentarians from both regions.

3.2. Towards an interregional Association Agreement

Concerning the Association Agreement, the negotiations were officially launched in 2006 at the fourth UE – Latin America Summit in Vienna. The first three rounds of negotiations were conducted under the principle of single undertaking (in 2007 – 2008, meaning that an agreement needed to be achieved in the three fields before a final document could be signed, similar to Mercosur and Central America). This principle was abandoned in Quito in 2008. ‘The main areas of disagreement were trade, sustainable development, intellectual property, and asymmetries’ (Dominguez, 2015, 139). By the end of 2008, the approach adopted by both the European Commission and the Andean countries was to divide the topics: while the pillars of political dialogue and cooperation would continue to be negotiated under an interregional approach, the European Commission proceeded to negotiate the trade component with those Andean nations willing to achieve such agreement.

These multiparty trade negotiations were launched in February 2009 and were concluded successfully in 2010 with Peru and Colombia; in 2012 an Association Agreement was signed with these two countries, coming into force in 2013. Ecuador took part at the first stages of the multiparty agreement negotiations, but retired in July 2009. However, it concluded the negotiations in 2014, and signed its adhesion in November 2016. This was mainly motivated by the business fears related to the end of the GSP scheme. They translated in the perception that ‘the related changes and uncertainties would jeopardise

the country's economy' (Interviewee 21, Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels). As for Bolivia, while it can show its interest in joining the Agreement at any moment since it remains open to the whole Andean region, the country did not take any steps for initiating such negotiations. The missing interest can also be motivated by the fact that 'the economic motivations that Bolivia has in the EU are smaller than the ones of Ecuador for example' (Interviewee 22, Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels), so the problem stream is not a favourable one. In addition, Bolivia can also be seen as adopting rather post – hegemonic visions on regional integration, and so placing itself in normative friction with the EU. On the other side, for the EU, it was important to get access to raw materials and natural and energy resources, to the Andean services market, and, at the same time, to limit the space for regulating European corporations in the Andean states (Latimer, 2012). As a result, while only achieving an agreement with three out of the four countries, this is still a positive policy output for the European Commission.

How can we understand this changing strategy from a region – to – region approach to a multiparty agreement? Between the topics of disagreement, trade is a recurrent topic. In the Mercosur negotiations it was due to the lack of will from the EU side to compromise its agriculture sector. From the Southern Cone side, actors did not want to give the EU access to the services and manufactured goods markets, and at the same time made a bet on continuing negotiating at interregional level. However, sustainable development was not the most important issue in the EU negotiations with other regions. In the case of the EU negotiations with the Andean Community, this was however a topic of intensive debate, not only at the government and official levels, but also between media, civil society and social

media actors. For example, numerous articles show the importance of the impact that such agreement would have for the small enterprises and farmers²³.

Why did the EU face these differences in a field in which it did not normally encounter big difficulties? The answer resides in the different ways of looking at sustainable development solutions and norms. From the Andean side, the *living well* norm (Monni and Pallottino, 2015a) is a different approach that was developed and gradually included in the public policies of different Andean countries (mainly Ecuador and Bolivia, and to a limited extent Peru). It can be considered a typical case of norm subsidiarity, in which the Andean countries built a different way of confronting the sustainable development challenges. While having this topic on the agenda of cooperation with the European Union (references to sustainable development are made in both the 2002 – 2006 and 2007 – 2013 strategies of the European Commission), the Andean Community developed a different approach.

The *living well* norm, *Sumak kawsay* (in Quechua, a local language in the Andes) or *buen vivir* (in Spanish), was included in the Ecuadorian constitution in 2008: 'Hereby [...] to build a new form of peaceful coexistence in diversity and in harmony with nature, to achieve the good way of living, *sumak kawsay*. [...] [To build a] society that respects, in all its dimensions, the dignity of individuals and communities'²⁴. This new approach to sustainable development includes references to Pacha – mama (Mother Earth) and its right to be preserved, a fact that human development and economic activities should respect (Monni and Pallottino, 2015a). And while it was developed mainly in the Andean context, it is

²³ Example: <https://lalineadefuego.info/2012/04/30/no-se-puede-abandonar-a-los-pequenos-productores-campesinos-e-indigenas-por-gerard-coffey/>, last accessed on 1st February 2016.

²⁴ Information from: <http://therightsofnature.org/ecuador-culture-living-well/>, last accessed on 23rd February 2017.

starting to be applied in the more general Latin American context, as for example in the Venezuelan – Brazilian bilateral cooperation.

A short mention to the *living well* norm was made in the final declaration of the first Summit between the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in 2013:

‘We recognise that planet Earth and its ecosystems are our home and that *Mother Earth* is a common expression in a number of countries and regions and we note that some countries recognise the rights of nature in the context of the promotion of sustainable development. We are convinced that in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature’ (emphasis added) (European Union and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, 2013b, 13).

While recognising through this declaration a different way of looking at sustainable development, the European Union is still a proponent of a model of sustainable development that even if not in complete opposition with the *living well* approach, does not focus on the rights of nature, nor on the role of community, understood as its ‘centrality [...] over the fact of *doing things*’ (emphasis added) (Monni and Pallottino, 2015b, 55) and human development beyond economic development to the same extent as *buen vivir*. ‘This creates a rupture and challenges the way to look at future international development and economic cooperation in the relation between the European Union and the Andean region’ (Interviewee 26, Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid).

In terms of implications that this normative subsidiarity process can have, we can conclude that the Andean region is evolving in a direction in which not only trade will be a subject in which more topics of confrontation can be foreseen, but also topics related to political and international cooperation for development dialogue can evolve towards less mutual understanding and more normative rejection. It is important to underline that norms like *living well* in the field of sustainable development are not equally spread in all Andean countries. On one side we have countries like Ecuador and Bolivia where this new way of planning the future of sustainable development has received constitutional recognition (Ecuador) or is part of the common political discourse (Bolivia), while on the other side we have countries like Peru where this discourse is less present, and Colombia, a country that 'seems closer to the European way of seeing sustainable development' (Interviewee 43, EU Official in the EEAS HQ). It means that we can expect the European Union to find easier and multiple venues of dialogue with Peru and Colombia, while with Ecuador and Bolivia the EU will need to prove a stronger capacity to adapt to local contexts and norms, ways of doing and understanding these policy areas.

3.3. Comparing CAN and Mercosur negotiations

The EU dialogue and negotiations with the Andean Community are similar to the ones with Mercosur in the sense that no region – to – region Association Agreement was achieved. However, different from the Mercosur region, the EU signed a multiparty agreement with three of the four CAN countries, 'having an obvious contribution to weakening this regional integration process' (Interviewees 24 and 25, Diplomats from Andean countries in Brussels). Even if leaving the option to join this agreement to all Andean countries, for diplomats

coming from the Andean region the term 'pragmatism' (term that appears in practically all interviews with this group of countries) was the main characteristic of the European approach towards CAN. This left the normative part of the dialogue aside, betting for a policy solution easier to be achieved, but preventing a normative encounter since there is only a policy part in this interaction.

It marks a normative shift, rejecting the interregional approach and strengthening the bilateral relations. In this context, it is essential to look at if the European Union became more of a pragmatic entrepreneur and less of a normative entrepreneur in its negotiation with CAN, differently from the negotiations with Mercosur. And, how did the EU use the politics, policy and problem streams to find windows of opportunity for its policies in the Andean region?

The pragmatism in deciding to continue negotiating with a like – minded group of countries in topics of trade and economic cooperation is motivated by the international context and by the fact that differently from Mercosur, in the CAN region it was first Colombia and Peru, and after that, Ecuador, that were willing to sign an Association Agreement on a bilateral basis, instead of a regional one. If we put together this information and the way in which the EU negotiations with Mercosur evolved, we can say that it was not the European Union who had a different approach, more normative with the Mercosur region and more pragmatic with CAN; it was rather the determination of the *other* (Mercosur and CAN) to not abandon the region – to – region negotiations (in the case of Mercosur) or on the contrary to follow a two – speed approach in which countries ready to sign an agreement would do so, while the others will have this option in the future (in the case of the CAN countries). The European Union was normative and pragmatic at the same

time in both negotiations and this is well captured by a quote from an interview with an EEAS official. When referring to the negotiations with CAN, he says: 'it was not a shift in strategy on our side, it was their (CAN) shift' (Interviewee 42, EU Official in the EEAS HQ), recognising the agency of the Andean countries, both as individual actors and as regional organisation.

As for the way in which the European Union used the three streams in opening windows of opportunity that would allow and encourage new policies as a consequence of normative change or continuity: interregionalism was abandoned since in the policy stream the European Union was not able to build a solution appealing to all CAN countries, and this prevented the coupling of streams. On their side, the CAN countries, and this is mainly the case of Ecuador, were only able to couple the three streams when an agreement was achieved in the politics stream that the policy proposal of the EU and agreed with Colombia and Peru was the only viable solution.

The business sector lobby played a significant role in the case of Ecuador. Confronting the pressure of getting closer to the end of the GSP period was a key factor in convincing political actors that even if sustainable development concerns were valid (non – governmental organisations like the *Acción Ecológica* Group²⁵ and *Ecuador Decide*²⁶ played an important role in making this information available to the public opinion), a post – GSP trade relation would be disadvantageous for Ecuador. In this sense, the Vice – Minister of

²⁵ More information at: <http://www.accionecologica.org/iquienes-somos>, last accessed on 15th May 2017. The group is important because of its active participation in the debate on key subjects related to social and environmental topics in Ecuador. Its representatives were present at high level meetings and got media coverage concerning the negative environmental effects of an EU – Ecuador Agreement.

²⁶ More information at: <http://ecuadordecidenotlc.blogspot.com.es/2014/12/paulina-munoz-tlc-de-ecuador-con-la.html>, last accessed 11th April 2017. This organisation is important because of its consistent campaign against the Association Agreement with the EU and its complaints concerning the limited role of the civil society in these negotiations.

Trade from the government of Ecuador had a crucial contribution towards making possible the relaunch of the dialogue with the European Commission (Interviewee 27, Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid), showing again how the interplay between organisational and individual entrepreneurship favours the opening of a window of opportunity. It was an individual entrepreneur who took the initiative, but he was supported by his organisational structure in making possible the implementation of his policy solution and showing how the concerns related to sustainable development were to be addressed.

A last point to conclude on the lessons learnt from this episode of the EU negotiations with this Latin American sub – region, normative adoption and adaptation were present in the case of the Andean region, and the example of the Andean Court of Justice was an example of norm emulation or adoption, but this did not favour the agreement on the broader normative context. It was rather an isolated area. On the other side, norm subsidiarity conditioned and limited normative encounters and the possibilities of success for a potential agreement that became even more difficult in areas which traditionally did not pose any particular problem, like sustainable development, compared to areas like trade (with significant contradictions in the agriculture and services sectors), where normative resistance was more present in all EU negotiations. The EU and Latin American actors switched once more the role of entrepreneur and interpreter, but their normative encounters remained limited.

The link between interests (trade) and norms (interregionalism) is a controversial and complex one in the case of both Mercosur and CAN, as it was the case also of the negotiations with Central America, that while keeping an interregional approach (and agreeing with the EU over the importance of a region – to – region), proved to have

important economic limitations and constraints. However, different from Central America, these regional groups have visions closer to post – hegemonic regionalism, and the example of the *living well* norm is an important one, showing how norm subsidiarity can prevent normative encounters. In the case of Argentina and Brazil, there were important economic interests that were to be defended through the Association Agreement. While convenience would have dictated that Brazil achieved a deal with the EU on its own, the desire to keep the regional integration efforts alive made the *strategic patience* a better policy option for dealing with Argentina.

4. Theoretical implications and conclusions

How useful is the distinction between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter? How do they interact and switch roles? And how do the different reactions to norm diffusion – adoption, adaptation, resistance and rejection – combine in the different cases of negotiation between the EU and regional organisations in South America? Lastly, which are the similarities and differences between the three cases (Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community) and which was the role of the different actors, here included external actors like the United States?

As in the case of Central America, we can conclude that both Mercosur and the Andean Community were active actors, showing agency and challenging the EU approach in the negotiation of an Association Agreement. This meant that the EU was conditioned at every step by the way in which it framed its proposal in the three streams and the way in which this was perceived by its counterparts. This agency was shown through the way in which Mercosur refused the two – speed approach in the policy stream, but also through the way

in which the Andean region created its own norms to fight climate change and achieve sustainable development.

When thinking about the broader context of the EU negotiations with Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community, we can notice both similarities and differences. In all these three cases we can conclude that the roles between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter were switched at specific points in time, to different extents and with different outcomes. Central America was the one managing to couple the three streams, to push for a region – to – region agreement in the policy stream and to build a coalition that was strong enough to get the Association Agreement signed with support from individual European entrepreneurs like Benita Ferrero – Waldner and Ignacio Salafranca in the politics stream. Mercosur replied to the two – speed approach with the Brazilian *strategic patience* towards Argentina. In the Andean region, the *living well* norm is a challenge to European norms or ways of building answers to sustainable development dilemmas.

There were also major differences between the negotiations and dialogue with Mercosur and the Andean Community, on one hand, and what happened in the case of the EU Association Agreement with Central America and its negotiation process, on the other hand. In the case of Central America, the way of coupling the streams was related to achieving a region – to – region agreement in the trade component of the negotiations. While the interregional dimension gives normative content to this intervention or reaction from the Central America side, the norms proposed and defended by Mercosur and the Andean Community are closer to norm subsidiarity, to the creation of a distinct normative framework that challenges the EU proposal and approach towards a region – to – region Association Agreement. It means this new content needed to be incorporated in the

problem stream by the EU or otherwise its solutions were not to be seen as viable in the policy stream. Norm subsidiarity helps in this case in elucidating the relation between structural and ideational power, between the EU as normative power and the EU as trade power. The creation of new norms by its interpreters makes economic interests to be subordinated to norms related to sustainable development, showing how norms inform interests and the other way around. On a different note, norm subsidiarity represents a challenge for the EU attempts to create relevant coalitions of actors that would support its norms (the second proposition) and at the same time creates a higher pressure for a more horizontal cooperation (the third proposition).

Another point is related to the regional cohesion or degree of regional integration of the EU counterpart. Here differences can be noted between Central America and Mercosur – both regions were continuing to negotiate with the EU as regions despite internal fractures and big difficulties encountered at different stages, while the Andean Community decided to advance at a different speed on a bilateral basis in the negotiations with the EU. The EU was conditioned by this reaction that the different regional organisations had and by their desire to jeopardise their regional integration process to achieve an agreement with the European Union (CAN) or the opposite – to protect both their economic interests and their regional project by keeping the integration process ‘alive’ (Mercosur) (Interviewee 18, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid).

Differences and similarities can also be noticed on the EU side in its negotiation with the three regional organisations. The common approach was the mix between pragmatic and normative behaviour. What made the difference was the importance given to the trade component in the three cases. With Central America, the EU had a limited interest in a trade

agreement and focused more on the regional integration support. With Mercosur, while the trade component was of higher importance on the EU agenda, the European Union did not find sufficient incentive from inside to be able to present a coherent position and convince its counterparts. When the negotiations were relaunched in 2010, France, Ireland, Italy and 13 additional Member States opposed it. 'This unprecedented show of hostility to a trade negotiation almost [doomed] it to failure before it [began], but it highlights that the economic realism of the Council [trumped the] Commission strategy' (Hardacre and Smith, 2014, 101). This policy failure can be explained as being due on one side to Mercosur normative behaviour which made impossible an agreement with the EU on a bilateral basis, and on the other side, in the case of the EU, it was the detachment from interregionalism that marked this failure. An intermediate position was adopted with CAN, and in a pragmatic approach, bilateral agreements were signed.

Did the 'EU play [the] role [of] an *external federator* for new regional experiences through its interregionalist projects'? (emphasis added) (Santander, 2005, 285) making in this way possible normative encounters? Normative encounters refer here to the first dynamic presented in Chapter 2: the entrepreneur diffuses norms; the interpreter can have different normative reactions and sometimes norms get embedded in concrete policies. The answer should contain some nuances. While we can notice a combination of all types of reactions from the norm interpreter side (from adoption with the cases of Parlasur and the CAN Court of Justice to norm subsidiarity with the *living well* norm), what is interesting is that there is no correlation between the reactions that norm interpreters can have to the EU norm diffusion attempts on regional integration and achieving a region – to – region agreement. Central America found ways of creating 'formal trappings of European

institutions and policies to give a first *impression* of adoption or adaptation' (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015b, 4), rejecting in this way many EU norms, but finally signed an Agreement with the EU on an interregional basis. On the CAN and Mercosur side, there was at least at the beginning a consensus that the EU experience in regional integration was a great source of inspiration for their own desire to create a stronger region (this was more the case of Mercosur, and less of the Andean Community), but this worked actually against the EU in the case of Mercosur, where this desire to consolidate regional integration in the problem stream made it impossible to continue the dialogue with the EU using the two – speed approach in the policy stream.

In addition, in all cases we can see how the idea that interregionalism had *centrality* for the EU normative vision was not reflected in its norm diffusion processes. We would expect that interregionalism would become a norm applied in the policy stream through different proposals like the Association Agreements and the cooperation for development strategies and programmes. However, it was not the case. It was Central America who pushed for an interregional agreement, it was Mercosur refusing to sign agreements on a bilateral basis, and when Colombia and Peru agreed to it, a multiparty agreement was signed, abandoning the interregional approach.

A final important aspect of these negotiations is the role of external actors, actors having an influence over the results of the EU dialogue with the regional organisations in Latin America, without being part of these regional organisations negotiating a region – to – region agreement. This idea needs to consider mainly the case of the USA. The fact that similar agreements were achieved by the United States with Colombia (entered into force in 2012), Peru (entered into force in 2009) and Central America (starting to be implemented

since 2006 – 2007 when the Agreement was still being negotiated with the EU) shows that even in the cases where the EU managed to sign agreements, it was at the same time or after the USA. This makes the EU a 'passive' norm entrepreneur that used the window of opportunity opened by the USA and a coalition of actors already favourable to this type of agreement. In the other cases, as with Mercosur, the EU was unable to open its own window of opportunity and take the step of signing an agreement before the USA. However, the new protectionism wave in the USA may offer the EU and Mercosur additional incentives in the politics and problem streams for achieving a policy agreement.

CHAPTER 6. LATIN AMERICA AND NORM SUBSIDIARITY. THE CASE OF THE SOUTH – SOUTH COOPERATION

1. Introduction

The previous two chapters have looked at how Association Agreements and cooperation for development strategies and programmes were used by the European Union as support tools for regional integration in Latin America (Sanahuja, 2012, 72) and for creating a stronger interregional partnership. A wide range of normative reactions were identified from the different regional groups – Central America, the Andean Community and Mercosur – including not only norm adoption and adaptation, but even more cases of norm resistance and rejection, and norm subsidiarity as it was the case of the *living well* norm (Monni and Pallottino, 2015a, Monni and Pallottino, 2015b). Examples presented also cases in which the roles of entrepreneur and interpreter were switched between the European and Latin American actors, and factors that conditioned norm diffusion were identified in both the cases of the Association Agreements negotiations, and the EU cooperation for development strategies translated into concrete regional programmes.

While different aspects of the norm diffusion process between the two regions were analysed, a focus was placed on recognising the normative contribution of different Latin American regional and sub – regional organisations (Central America, the Andean Community and Mercosur). Through this, Chapters 4 and 5 exemplified possible reactions that the norm interpreter, in this case Latin America, can have as a reply to norm diffusion

initiatives by the European Union in the framework of the region – to – region dialogue – adoption, adaptation, resistance and rejection, as part of the first dynamic related to normative encounters as described in Chapter 2. In this dynamic, the norm entrepreneur, i.e. the EU, wants to diffuse its norms of regional integration and interregionalism and the potential normative encounter is conditioned by normative reactions from the interpreter side together with the three streams in the policy part. In addition, the research looks at how and if Latin America had any normative initiative contributing to the interregional normative framework and conditioning the EU normative and policy vision. This has been termed as *norm subsidiarity* (Acharya, 2004, Acharya, 2011) and it is the topic of the current chapter. This is part of the second dynamic in which normative encounters start with norm subsidiarity on the interpreter side, and the new norms create constraints on the initial norm entrepreneur side that need to be addressed through renewed norms embedded in concrete policies.

While previous chapters have touched upon this type of normative reaction – norm subsidiarity (such as the case of the *living well* norm and its role in the negotiations between the European Union and the Andean Community), this has been done only on a limited basis in the context of negotiations between the EU and Latin American organisations at a sub – regional level. The current chapter looks at norm subsidiarity in the whole Latin American region and at the way in which this conditioned the European Union in its various forms of dialogue, cooperation and negotiations with Latin America. The norm around which this chapter is built is the South – South cooperation and the changes it brings for traditional actors, as the EU, in the field of cooperation for development.

The argument is not that this norm is being applied to the same extent by all actors in Latin America (the same was seen in the case of the *living well* norm in the Andean region, where Ecuador and Bolivia use it to a larger extent than Peru and Colombia), and the chapter does not argue that Latin America is the only relevant player in the South – South cooperation area. References will actually be made to other important actors in the field like China and emerging powers. The next sections present this normative initiative in a more global perspective, in which Latin America is one of the proponents and defenders of this new form of regional and region – to – region dialogue, with a privileged and leading position in applying the norm and redesigning and adapting it to its regional reality.

In this context, the aim of the chapter is to understand norm subsidiarity in the Latin American context. Firstly, this includes defining and understanding South – South cooperation and the way in which it has been used in both scholar and policy terms. Secondly, it means analysing its importance and role, and looking at how different this norm is from the way in which the EU has normally envisaged its cooperation for development policies. The final aim is to analyse how and if this has had an influence on the EU attempt to promote interregionalism and regional integration in Latin America and to start addressing the first proposition formulated in Chapter 1 – related to how the EU reacts and adapts its norms depending on its counterparts. It means also looking at how the centrality of a norm, in this case the South – South cooperation in the Latin American context, has affected the EU normative attempts in the region.

The second part of the chapter defines norm subsidiarity and looks at South – South cooperation in Latin America, its successes and limitations. The third part analyses the overall contribution and meaning of Latin American norm subsidiarity through the South –

South cooperation in aspects related to regional integration and region – to – region dialogue. This will be placed in the context of the dialogue with the EU, while looking at how this has conditioned the European Union norm diffusion attempts. The last section presents the concluding remarks on the overall image of norm subsidiarity and how it limits or enables norm entrepreneurship in questions related to interregionalism and regional integration.

2. Understanding norm subsidiarity in the Latin American context and the South – South cooperation

2.1. Norm subsidiarity

In the words of Acharya, norm subsidiarity ‘concerns the process whereby local actors develop new rules, offer new understandings of global rules or reaffirm global rules in the regional context’ (Acharya, 2011, 96). Acharya (2011) makes a clear difference between localisation and norm subsidiarity. The main point resides in the fact that localisation implies changing a foreign norm in order to make it work in a local reality, while norm subsidiarity includes both rejection of foreign norms and the development of new ones.

However, in the current chapter norm subsidiarity is understood only as the creation of new norms, while rejection is seen as a different type of reaction. This is mainly due to the fact that rejecting norms does not always involve the second step, the creation of a different / new norm, and while rejecting a norm is a normative contribution *per se*, the aim is to go further and look at cases where Latin America started using its own norms in topics that were of mutual interest in the dialogue with the European Union. This is a theoretical and

empirical contribution towards making the concept of norm subsidiarity more incisive and precise for scholarly uses.

As the only form of norm subsidiarity, the creation of new norms is a process in which countries and regions that were traditionally seen as norm interpreters decide to create their own norms. These norms are better suited to their reality and may contradict norms promoted by traditional norm entrepreneurs such as the European Union. As a response to this, traditional norm entrepreneurs (the EU) may create new norms that will be better adapted to this new normative context in which norm interpreters have their own normative contributions. This is how the second dynamic can lead to a normative encounter linking entrepreneur, interpreter, norm diffusion and policies, factors that determine and condition this potential encounter.

2.2. Defining the South – South cooperation

Latin American norm subsidiarity is analysed here through the example of the South – South cooperation (SSC). It has been defined as ‘a broad framework for collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains. Involving two or more developing countries, it can take place on a bilateral, regional, subregional or interregional basis. Developing countries share knowledge, skills, expertise and resources to meet their development goals through concerted efforts’ (UNOSSC²⁷).

As a reply to a changing international reality in which middle income countries are becoming more and more important actors, the South – South cooperation becomes a

²⁷ For more information: <http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/about/fag.html>, last accessed on 15th May 2017.

normative tool and a political strategy or choice in which countries with similar problems in the Global South decide to cooperate with each other and find common answers to similar challenges. This was explained mainly by the need ‘leading to a significant re – examination of the fundamental assumptions regarding voice, domain and the agency of global economic governance’ (Roy and Andrade, online, 2) and was linked to a greater involvement of these countries in development cooperation.

The South – South cooperation has its origins in the 1950s – 1960s with the tri – continental movements, involving Africa, Asia and Latin America in the context of the Cold War and the conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States. Its norms were drafted at the Bandung Conference, in Indonesia, in 1955, at the first Asian – African Conference. These norms are detailed in the table below.

Table 3 – The 10 Bandung Norms

1. Respect of fundamental human rights and of the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality among all races and of the equality among all nations, both large and small.
4. Non – intervention or non – interference into the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect of the right of every nation to defend itself, either individually or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
6. Non – use of collective defence pacts to benefit the specific interests of any of the great powers.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression and use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country. Non – use of pressures by any country against other countries.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement as well as other peaceful means of the parties’ own choice, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
9. Promotion of mutual interest and cooperation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

(Source: Timossi, 2015)

The fact that these norms started receiving more attention and being used as part of the Latin American foreign policy explains some of the issues that were identified in previous chapters as important limitation of the EU normative presence in the region. The idea of the non – interference into the internal affairs of another country made the intervention of the European Parliament in the Venezuelan case to be seen as illegitimate and prevented the coupling in the politics stream and the issuing of a common EuroLat Declaration to the EU – CELAC Heads of State and Government in Brussels (2015). This also prevented promoting interregionalism as a norm and giving content to the region – to – region dialogue. Following these norms, regional issues are to be solved by regional actors and addressed using local input.

The most important groups of countries that emerged following these norms were the Non – Aligned Movement (established at the Belgrade Conference, in 1961) and the G – 77 (established in 1964), a group of developing countries in the United Nations having as objective to undermine the existing economic order and to push it towards a system in which these ex – colonies could develop independently from the two super – powers at that moment: the Soviet Union and the United States. One of the most important successes of the G – 77 group was the establishment of the GSP (Generalised System of Preferences) through which developed countries granted trade preferences to developing countries on a non – reciprocal basis (Cheru, 2011, 44). This has played a crucial role for the trade relations between the EU and Central America, CAN and Mercosur, as shown in previous chapters.

While economic motivations determined developing countries to group and search common solutions to trade issues and the limited success of the WTO negotiations, their dialogue was not limited to the economic dimension (Muhr, 2016). It touched upon topics

like the need to build an international development dialogue based more on horizontal perspectives and less on developed countries conditionality. In 1984, a UN Special Unit for South – South cooperation was established, having as mandate to ‘promote, coordinate and support South – South and triangular cooperation on a Global and United Nations systems – wide basis’ (UNOSSC²⁸).

In this way, the South – South cooperation has its roots in the necessity to adapt the traditional ODA (Official Development Assistance) and to answer common challenges, becoming in Latin America and elsewhere the new norm of applying solutions that were successfully tested by other countries with similar levels of development. As Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan stated in the *Group of 77 and China*:

‘For the large part, the development assistance offered is not responsive to national policies and plans, since it is mostly earmarked to donor determined sectors and projects. Moreover, such development financing is often accompanied by conditionalities; it is tied to procurement from the donor country and often expended on expensive consultants and experts from UN agencies or donor organisations’ (Simplicio, 2011, 28).

On the contrary, the South – South cooperation is based on ‘empathy’ and ‘realistic’ solutions to shared problems (Mohan, 2016, 284). This is how it finds answers and solutions that were not possible in the framework of the North – South cooperation. South – South cooperation insisted from its beginnings to differentiate itself from the traditional development cooperation. While based on the need for development, it is not aid. ‘Financial contributions from the more advanced developing countries should not be seen as ODA

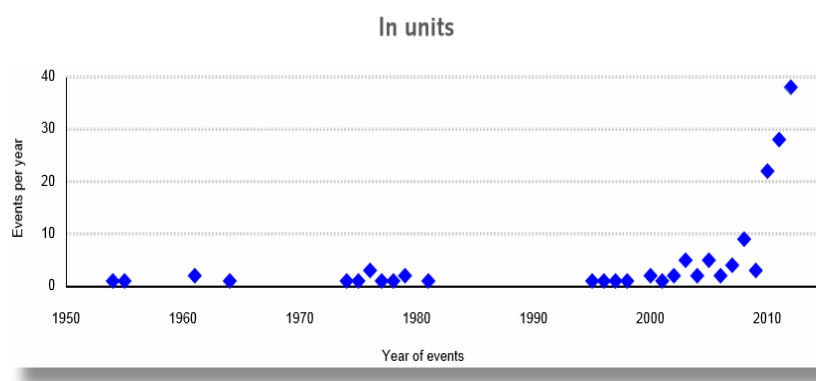
²⁸ For more information: <http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/about/faq.html>, last accessed on 15th May 2017.

from these countries to other countries of the South’. They are ‘expressions of solidarity and cooperation born out of shared experience and sympathies’ (Simplicio, 2011, 21). In this way, South – South cooperation ‘complies with the principle of horizontality, [...] reciprocity, and mutual benefit’ (Bergamaschi and Tickner, 2017, 7).

In addition, key South – South cooperation providers do not want to be seen as ‘emerging donors’. This is because they do not want to apply norms and terms that have been established in the traditional development cooperation framework that are not appropriate, nor accepted in this new approach. ‘Giving recipient countries room to determine their own development priorities, South – South cooperation [will become] what it should be: a complement, not an add – on, to North – South cooperation’ (Simplicio, 2011, 28). The recent boom of South – South initiatives, forums and events shows the increasing interest in this type of dialogue and cooperation. It is also shown in the graphic below highlighting that 2010 was a key moment for South – South cooperation and its international spread.

Figure 3:

EVOLUTION OF NUMBER OF ANNUAL EVENTS CONTRIBUTING TO SSC DEBATE (1954-2012)



(Source: Xalma, 2013, 26)

In this framework, the South – South cooperation is closely linked to regional and sub – regional integration as well as to interregional cooperation (Simplicio, 2011, 27 and Interviewees 16 and 18, Diplomats from Mercosur countries in Madrid). A crucial aim of the South – South cooperation becomes that of reinforcing intra – and interregional dialogue and in this way it wants to create stronger regions able to act as independent entities and to interact on this basis with other similar actors. South – South cooperation emerged as a regional and interregional initiative and builds its logic in these frameworks. By developing more coherent regional entities, the South – South cooperation is supplying its actors with the strength needed in order to have a more horizontal cooperation with traditional providers of ODA. While regional and interregional cooperation appear as important norms that differentiate organisations like the EU on the international scene, these same norms become important sources that provide stronger presence to newer players in the international development field as the regional entities in Latin America.

2.3. South – South Cooperation in Latin America

Latin America, as one of the main actors in promoting the new approach of international cooperation, became a leader in creating a more adapted and realistic South – South way of cooperating for achieving a higher degree of development. Based on the Paris and Accra aid effectiveness principles, on a more horizontal approach and the leadership of beneficiary countries, the South – South cooperation was promoted by Latin America and the broader region (including the Caribbean) as an intra – regional development norm, but also as a norm that constitutes the basis of exchanging knowledge and development programmes with other emerging regions like Africa and Asia.

A marking point in the Latin American South – South cooperation can be identified around the year 2000. While this type of cooperation and its start can be placed well before (as seen previously), it is in this period that due to profound changes in the structure and distribution of the Official Development Assistance (ODA), the South – South cooperation became both more necessary and more adapted to the Latin American reality. The ODA in the region decreased from 9% of the total ODA flow in 2001 to 4.2% in the period from 2007 to 2010 (Xalma, 2013, 28). At the same time ‘Latin American countries became aware of the new role that they were playing in the International Development field’ (Interviewee 61, Diplomat from a Central American country in the Representation to the United Nations, New York).

Different spaces were identified and exploited for developing this more horizontal approach to international cooperation, but at the intra – regional level it was the Ibero – American one that became the institutional framework in which Latin America started building its leadership in South – South cooperation. Including countries outside the Latin American region (Spain and Portugal), the Ibero – American dialogue on South – South cooperation was developed by the Ibero – American General Secretariat (SEGIB). The most important contributions brought by the Ibero – American vision to the South – South cooperation were the *Report on South – South Cooperation in Latin America* and the PIFCSS – the Ibero – American Programme for strengthening the South – South cooperation. The main novelty towards developing this new norm in the international cooperation framework was the fact that for the first time the South – South cooperation was measured by the Latin American governments and a common regional discourse and vision were captured in an official approach.

Defined as 'a horizontal intergovernmental exercise in systematising South – South Cooperation in the region' (Xalma, 2013, 5), the Report is far more than a yearly descriptive document of the South – South initiatives in the region. It is a common exercise having as aims achieving 'the conceptualisation of SSC; the definition of a methodology for measurement and recording; the creation of indicators for improved identification, planning, and evaluation; tools for data collection and processing; [while] the discourse and position [are] maintained where this modality is concerned' (Xalma, 2013, pp. 28 - 29). Differently from ODA programmes and projects, the content of the South – South initiatives developed in this framework concern 'capacity building [and] knowledge, qualifications, resources, and knowhow exchanges' between equivalent sectors and ministries in the different countries in the region (SEGIB, 2008, 16).

Three main points were identified as analytical contributions of the Report. On one side, it is an opportunity for reflection on the broader cooperation for development evolutions in the international context and the place of Latin America in this landscape. On the other side, it is also important for introspection, looking at how South – South initiatives are developed, and if they achieve their proposed aims or not. This is mainly due to the Ibero – American Program to Strengthen South – South Cooperation (PIFCSS, 2012, pp. 15 - 17). In addition, since 2009, the Report includes a common political stand of all Heads of Cooperation of Ibero – American countries (SEGIB, 2009). Summarising, the Report 'has favoured the articulation of an [Ibero – American] bloc position regarding SSC, as well as this position's gradual penetration of the international agenda and debate' (Xalma, 2013, 29). The Ibero – American contribution to developing conceptually and empirically the South – South cooperation gave 'leverage to Latin America as an international actor and promoter

of new ways of doing things on the international scene [i.e. promoting new norms]’ (Interviewee 64, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in the Representation to the United Nations, New York).

Examples of how Latin America won a distinct position on the international scene and how regional consensus increased its ability to influence international events include Latin American interventions presenting a common position on South – South cooperation. In 2009, the Ibero – American countries presented their first common position on the South – South cooperation at the High Level United Nations Conference on South – South Cooperation in Nairobi, highlighting their crucial contribution and regional work in ensuring that SSC was ‘duly addressed in the discussions and final declaration that emerged from the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF – 3) in Accra’ (Xalma, 2013, 36). Besides the events in Accra, with their symbolic and practical importance for the evolution of the cooperation for development norms, a common position was also presented in 2011, at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF – 4) in Busan (PIFCSS, 2011). In this context, Latin American countries became ‘new *cooperators* [that] demand the recognition of SSC and Triangular Cooperation [by traditional donors] as mechanisms for institutional strengthening, capacity building, and promoting regional integration’ (Xalma, 2013).

In addition, the last South – South cooperation Report (published in 2016) highlights the aim of this new type of cooperation as being development and regional integration (SEGIB, 2016, 180). In 2014, the regional programmes of South – South cooperation were mainly developed following the sub – regional criteria (within Central America, the Andean region, and South America), but also in the whole Latin American region, including Chile and Mexico, and also Cuba and the Dominican Republic. While strengthening regional groups

like Mercosur (as an example Argentina had as partner Brazil in almost 90% of its South – South cooperation projects and Paraguay and Uruguay in more than 60% of its projects), the SSC also contributed to a broader sense of regionalism, here including countries outside the Latin American region, to count with countries in the Caribbean region. During this period, the topics that dominated the agenda were mainly social (health, social policy and education) (27.6%), infrastructure and economic services (24.5%) and institutional strengthening (15.3%) (SEGIB, 2016, 190). However, South – South cooperation topics are wider and include ‘agriculture, culture, economy, education, energy, environment, finance, food, health, infrastructure, knowledge, law, military, production (value adding capacities), social protection, technology and humanitarian issues’ (Muhr, 2016, 634).

We need to highlight that the Ibero – American space is just an example of space where the South – South cooperation is being discussed and developed in Latin America. It is a space in which even if traditional actors in international cooperation such as Spain and Portugal are present, at the same time, in all initiatives, there is a clear Latin American leadership’ (Interviewee 59, Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid). Examples of other spaces where Latin America is developing its leadership in South – South cooperation include regional organisations like the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), which started having its own Group of High Authorities of the *Sur – Sur* (South – South) Cooperation²⁹. In addition, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples’ Trade Agreement (ALBA – TCP) and its corresponding sub – regional initiative Petrocaribe, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Mercosur are all developing similar initiatives and are placing South – South cooperation at the core of their

²⁹ As an example of concrete coordinated action among the UNASUR members, we have the case of the humanitarian aid initiatives after the earthquake in Ecuador. More information: <http://www.unasursg.org/en/node/680>, last accessed on 30th April 2017.

activity (Muhr, 2016, 631). This shows the potential and the multiplicity of spaces where this topic is being discussed and concrete proposals are developed. In the way it was defined by Latin American diplomats and policy makers, *flexible* regionalism favours this new norm in the sense that it allows the development of South – South initiatives in numerous spaces and within intersecting regional organisations (as examples: Interviewees 13, 15, 17, 18, 23, 29, Diplomats from Mercosur and Andean countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively). Flexible regionalism was presented in Chapter 3 as a relevant factor in the politics stream and it was seen in this way by the interviewees in the case of the South – South cooperation.

In addition, another important point that this analysis needs to take into account is the fact that the South – South cooperation in the Ibero – American and Latin American spaces has limitations in terms of equal distribution – eight countries of the region offer 90% of the projects in the region (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Uruguay, Cuba, Colombia and Costa Rica). Argentina is the clear leader, being the initiator of a quarter of the SSC projects developed in the region and presented in the Report published by SEGIB. El Salvador, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Peru and Uruguay are the most important recipients from the 19 countries in the region³⁰. Nevertheless, this does not undermine the horizontality as the main characteristic of the SSC initiatives, but it creates a clear image of the different levels of development in the region and it poses an additional challenge for future projects in finding an equilibrium between the different Latin American countries, taking into account what they can offer to others and what they would need from the SSC programmes.

³⁰ For more information: <http://segib.org/iberoamerica-lider-mundial-en-cooperacion-sur-sur/>, last accessed on 20th May 2017.

Additional challenges are related to the fact that South – South cooperation is still a new norm, offering the possibility of a horizontal cooperation, but also needing more definition and planning. This is at the same time an opportunity for the Ibero – American region to show leadership in an area in which it is already recognised internationally as a pioneer.

2.4. Latin America, interregionalism and the South – South cooperation

South – South cooperation goes beyond the bounds of geographical and regional organisations limits, ‘redesigns frontiers and communities in Latin American and offers a legitimate³¹ and horizontal framework to interact in order to solve similar problems and apply solutions already tested by countries with similar levels of development’ (Interviewee 11, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels). In addition, by strengthening the levels of ‘regionness’ (Hettne, 2004, Hettne, 2014, Hettne and Söderbaum, 2000) and redefining its content, it helps Latin America to interact on a region – to – region basis with other regions. Keeping a focus on the Caribbean region, the South – South cooperation of the Ibero – American space contributed to initiatives and dialogues with other regions beyond the American continent. The examples of Africa and Asia as the other two emerging regions are the most important ones in this context. Projects like the Second Route of Learning for Youth Entrepreneurship (with Argelia, Botswana, Egypt, Ghana, Kenia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia) and the Network for Scientific – Technological Convergence, with India and Myanmar, and with the support of FOCALAE (the Forum for Cooperation in Latin America and East Asia promoted since 1999 by Chile and

³¹ I.e. accepted by all countries in the region.

Singapore) are just two examples from 2014 concerning South – South cooperation (SEGIB, 2016).

Not only that South – South cooperation provides a new framework for interaction between Latin America and other regions, but it also gives an appropriate tool for a more balanced relation between Latin America and other regions like Asia and within Asia mainly China, that were seen mainly as international cooperation providers and not partners.

‘SSC is an area that will contribute to more balanced relations between Asia and LAC. Unlike typical Asia – LAC development cooperation of channelling Asian resources and experiences to LAC, equally rich experience and development practices of the latter must be viewed as critical resources for Asian developing countries, especially in such sectors as agriculture, natural resources, and climate change’ (Kwak, 2013, 50).

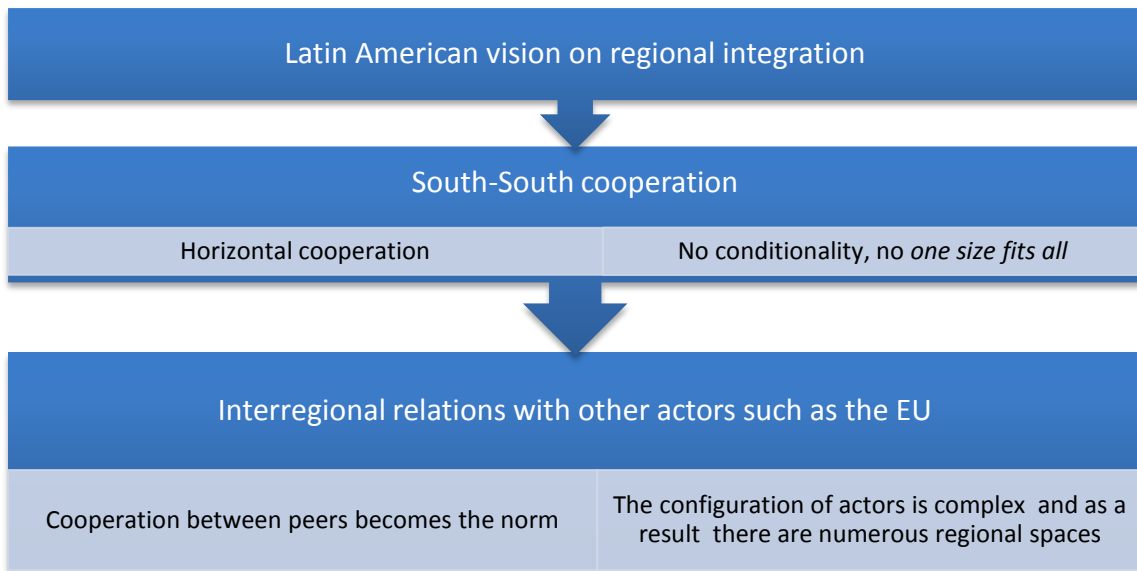
In this context, the South – South cooperation starts to be seen as a common norm in cooperation for development (a term that is being gradually replaced by *international cooperation* as a concept that captures better the idea that a recipient can become a donor and the other way around, and a term that was predominantly used during interviews by Latin American diplomats as being the concept used by their governments). At the intersection between this norm and its related visions on how regional integration and region – to – region dialogue should evolve, the Latin American reality becomes a challenging one for the European Union and its norms on interregionalism and regionalism.

Increasing competition from China needs to be added to an already complicated reality for the EU. China is gaining an especially relevant place in the context of South – South

cooperation. Besides its rising foreign direct investment (competing in this way with the European Union), it offers a new way of conceiving international cooperation, different from the North – South approach to which Latin America got used in its dialogue with the EU. The fact that no conditionality is attached to its South – South cooperation (Bergamaschi and Tickner, 2017, 5) became the most important difference and advantage of Chinese cooperation with Latin America. This changing reality is also reflected by examples such as the fact that ‘Ecuador’s President Rafael Correa receives advice from Ha – Joon Chang, [...] whose academic work is mostly inspired by the experiences of late industrialisation in East Asia’ (Bergamaschi and Tickner, 2017, 5). Ecuador as an example of actor with which the EU had issues in negotiating an Association Agreement is once more an example of actors in the region that got closer to China and emerging powers than to the EU as a traditional aid for development provider.

The figure below captures in a graphic way how the South – South cooperation has redesigned Latin American vision on regional integration and how this may affect its cooperation with other actors.

Figure 4 – Latin American regionalism and the South – South cooperation (own summary)



In this context, the next section of the chapter looks in more detail at how the proliferation of the South – South cooperation and its increased importance for Latin America have challenged the European Union in its attempts to diffuse its own norms on regional integration and interregionalism. It means finding common challenges that these Latin American evolutions posed to the European Union normative presence in the region, and normative resistance and rejection. Examples will be used building on the interregional negotiations that were presented in previous chapters, with a focus on the differences between the European Union cooperation for development and the South – South cooperation.

3. Latin America Norm Subsidiarity, South – South cooperation and interregional cooperation with the EU

This section of the chapter is based on an analysis of how normative differences between the two actors in cooperation for development or international cooperation³² were accommodated by different European Union actors and institutions. The cooperation for development of the European Union with Latin America started as early as the 1980s – 1990s.

EU Regional programmes with the whole region were launched at the beginning of 1990s. The fields that were mainly addressed at that time were Higher Education, Local Urban development and support to SMEs (Small and Medium – sized Enterprises), supporting the exchange of best practices between the actors involved. With the institutionalisation of the European Union – Latin America Summits at a region – to – region level, an opportunity arose for common declarations and priorities which were to be addressed through concrete programmes of cooperation for development³³.

3.1. Traditional North – South cooperation in the European Union – Latin America context

The EU – Latin America cooperation was based from its beginnings on ‘a vertical approach, in which the European Union used conditionality related to human rights, the rule of law and democracy’ in all its negotiations with third actors (Interviewee 14, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels). This limited the success of EU proposals like the Association

³² The latter was the term preferred by Latin American diplomats and policy makers during the interviews.

³³ For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/latin-america-regional-programmes-eu-funding_en, last accessed on 20th March 2017.

Agreements making the Latin American side look at these initiatives as closer to the USA vision based on economic conditionality and trade interests and less on developing a complex real dialogue involving international cooperation and politics. Even if the EU included these dimensions in its proposals, the fact that they went hand in hand with conditions related to how to redesign Latin American political systems in order to build a more European style of democracy questioned the extent to which these initiatives were different from the USA ones (Interviewee 68, Latin American NGO representative). And once again the Venezuelan case is a good example of how the Latin American countries, even if aware that democratic elections were important, did not accept the European Parliament statements and did not agree to include the European vision in a final common declaration. It explains cases of norm resistance and rejection and the fact that no concrete policies could be promoted preventing a normative encounter from being achieved.

It goes in clear contradiction with the South – South cooperation approach in which the horizontality of the negotiations and programmes is the main characteristic. In addition, the importance of country or regional ownership that is central to the South – South cooperation is present only to a smaller extent in the EU interregional approach towards Latin America, being mentioned by almost all interviewees coming from South American countries as an important issue (especially countries that are members of the Andean Community and of Mercosur with visions different from the EU perspectives on regional integration), but without being considered a real concern in Central America. This can be understood from the perspective of a closer vision on interregionalism between the EU and Central American, different from the Andean Community and Mercosur. In this context, the argument in the current chapter is that these normative differences affected the

interregional approach of the European Union and its ability to be a normative entrepreneur on topics of interregionalism and regional integration. A term that is useful to get back to in order to describe these contradictions is *friction* (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015b). It is a helpful concept to understand how the differences between vertical and horizontal cooperation, between dialogue and cooperation among peers versus aid based on conditionality play in concrete cases of cooperation between developed and developing regions. Friction means in this case differences related to both principles guiding the new type of cooperation (horizontal no longer vertical) and practices associated to its programmes (joint programming, common debate, programmes are no longer proposed by outside actors).

‘Friction is a notion that highlights vertical and asymmetrical relations between the norm – maker and the norm – taker. It reminds us, however, that, despite structural constraints such as asymmetries of economic and political power, norm – takers exercise agency’ (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015b, 5).

Using the metaphor of ‘[r]ubbing two sticks [that] together produce heat and light, [while] one stick alone is just a stick’ (Björkdahl and Höglund, 2013, 292), Björkdahl and Höglund consider that ‘at times frictional interplays can be moderated by certain actors that take on the role as *translators*’ (Björkdahl and Höglund, 2013, 295). Even if the concept used in the current research is not norm – taker, but norm interpreter, the part related to *translating* is important also from a norm entrepreneurship perspective.

Translators, as they are described by the public policy literature (Stone, 2012, 173, Prince, 2009), are actors that will act in similar way to norm entrepreneurs. *Translators* become entrepreneurs and the aim here is to analyse if they can be encountered within the

wide range of European Union actors. Translating and adapting this new approach to the European norms and policies require an even bigger effort than promoting norms through policies in the relation with the outside world. This is because it implies changes within the European way of approaching cooperation for development, a field that has traditionally had a high importance on the European external agenda and that can be expected to be resistant to change. Translators are here institutional actors that start building a discourse in which the more horizontal cooperation is gaining a crucial place.

3.2. EU attempts to adapt to the South – South cooperation

Trying to *translate* or at least to put the South – South cooperation norm on the EU agenda and adapt its vision on a horizontal cooperation for achieving regional integration and establishing region – to – region dialogues, a number of European Union institutions played an active role. They were confronted in this attempt with limitations and opportunities related to the three streams. While intending to address in the problem stream these normative differences in the approaches of the two regions, the EU institutions were proposing in the policy stream an adapted strategy for cooperation for development, more horizontal and in congruence with an international reality where actors have different levels of development. The main actors that were involved in adapting the European policy were coming from the EU Council, the European Parliament, the European Commission (mainly DG DEVCO), the European External Action Service and the EU Representation to the United Nations (where an Office for South – South cooperation has been established since 1974).

The politics stream was both particularly challenging and enabling in promoting a more adapted approach, avoiding normative friction. This has been especially relevant at the level

of the interinstitutional relations between the Council, Commission and the Parliament. As for the EU Council, it was one of the first EU institutions recognising the importance of the South – South cooperation. On 17 November 2009, it endorsed the ‘Conclusions on an Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness’, asking Member States to look into options for South – South cooperation in the context of the High Level Forum in Seoul (2011). Hence, the Council considered the South – South cooperation as bringing added value as a subject to be discussed during the Forum, together with triangular cooperation between the EU, developing countries and emerging donors. It also saw the respect to the ownership principle as a crucial dimension in these new forms of cooperation (Council of the European Union, 2009, 2).

On 22 March 2010, the Council endorsed the conclusions related to the ‘EU contribution to the HLE [High Level Event] on South – South Cooperation and Capacity Development’ organised by Colombia. ‘The EU, in line with its commitment to the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, recognises the need to have a clearer conceptual framework for these forms of cooperation [triangular and South – South cooperation] and for a better understanding of them’, stressing ‘the importance to continue reflecting on cooperation between developing countries and / or emerging economies and on possible initiatives in support of this cooperation’ (Council of the European Union, 2010, 3).

The European Parliament in its Plenary Session in Strasbourg, and the European Commission, through DG DEVCO, published similar positions on the South – South cooperation on the same day, 22nd November 2016. For the European Parliament, it is important that ‘the Commission and the Member States [...] develop new initiatives to

enhance South – South and triangular cooperation flagship projects’ (European Parliament, 2016, 10). Due to its limited role in establishing the EU cooperation for development strategy (budget responsibilities only), the Parliament cannot go beyond pure discursive interventions through its resolutions. However, its intervention can be of symbolic relevance and can ease Commission’s changes or attempts of coupling the streams and opening a window of opportunity. This has been the case of a number of initiatives like the new European Consensus on Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The European Commission used its prominent role through DG DEVCO and exploited the political opportunity of publishing a new Consensus, as a common EU position on how cooperation for development should be adapted to the new international agenda, including the SDGs. In this official document (recently signed by all EU institutions and approved at the Development days in Brussels in June 2017), the Commission looks at South – South initiatives as

‘new partnerships [that] will promote best practice, technical assistance and knowledge sharing. In addition, the EU and its Member States will engage in cooperation and dialogue with those Middle Income Countries which are becoming emerging donors to exchange best practices, promote South – South and triangular cooperation and work together to support less advanced countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda’ (European Commission, 2016b, 23).

In May 2016, Antonio Parenti, representing the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations at the High Level Committee on South – South Cooperation, talked about the European Union position on South – South cooperation and its role in a priority area of the international agenda – the Sustainable Development Goals:

‘The fast – changing international development landscape means that we need to move beyond traditional development. We need to be open to exchanging information on lessons learned from different development cooperation models, build further the understanding of the respective advantages, complementarities and synergies, as well as on the contributions that South – South cooperation and Triangular cooperation can make towards the achievement of development outcomes in areas such as technical assistance, capacity building and financing for development’ (Parenti, 2016, online).

All evolutions related to South – South cooperation as a norm enabling regional integration and interregionalism can be considered to have consequences on the EU relation with Latin America. In addition to the changes regarding the South – South cooperation and the European Union role in this new context, it is important to highlight the changing EU approach in its relation with Latin America. At the same time and following the logic of a more horizontal relation, the European External Action Service through its High Representative Federica Mogherini recognised the whole Latin American region as a strategic partner, together with more traditional strategic partners in the Americas such as the USA, Brazil and Mexico³⁴. In this way a more realistic implication of the European Union in South – South cooperation programmes can be envisaged, a type of cooperation based on partnership.

Friction between the horizontal South – South cooperation and the traditional cooperation for development seems to be overcome in this type of declarations. However, several interviewees (from almost all Latin American countries) questioned the real content

³⁴ For more information on the speech: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/6195/speech-hrvp-federica-mogherini-celac-summit_en, last accessed on 10th May 2017.

of this EU normative change. The argument was that the 'European Union is still searching for a real programme and strategy for being part of the challenging international reality where the panorama of actors is more complex than ever before' (Interviewee 56, Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid).

The mix between actors with different levels of development appears as a challenging reality for the European Union, used to the *one size fits all* paradigm that is no longer possible when taking into account that countries that used to be the target of these strategies are now middle income countries. 'These facts limit the EU leverage in cooperation for development, a field in which the European Union used to be especially active in promoting regional integration in Latin America' (Interviewee 17, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid), as well as the region – to – region dialogue with different Latin American regional and sub – regional groups.

This indicates that few attempts were made by the European Union institutions to adapt to a new reality in which Latin America developed the norm of the South – South cooperation as a horizontal process. However, the EU legitimacy on this topic is still limited between actors in the LAC region. As previously mentioned, the politics stream is particularly challenging in this context. The international environment and the way in which the EU strategy was perceived by its counterparts in Latin America meant the European Union was seen only on a limited basis as a viable interlocutor in a changing normative framework, and even to a smaller extent as a normative entrepreneur. Regions like Asia used the advantage of being an emergent region as an important coupling factor in the politics stream and built a more horizontal approach with Latin America. For the European Union, this is still a difficult task and a challenge in the near future.

4. Conclusions

Summarising the points presented in this chapter, norm subsidiarity became a challenge for the EU attempts to promote its norms on regional integration and interregionalism. Creating and consolidating regional institutions was important for the EU normative presence in the three regions analysed in previous chapters (Central America, the Andean Community and Mercosur). However, this different South – South and more horizontal approach can motivate the lack of regional ownership in Latin America in disseminating a European model and in following up on the EU initiatives aiming to deepen regional integration through institutional arrangements. What became relevant in a Latin America context dominated by new forms of regionalism and the South – South cooperation was the horizontality of the dialogue and the importance of regional initiatives in the policy stream in solving the most pressing issues that were seen as such by Latin American actors in the problem stream. In this sense, it appears that the official aid assistance coming from the European side becomes an ‘add – on’ to the South – South cooperation and not the other way around as it is argued at the official level.

Concerning how the centrality of a norm plays out and how it may condition normative reactions and norm use through concrete policies, the South – South cooperation becomes a norm central to the Latin American imaginary that conditions and limits attempts by third actors, in this case the European Union, to develop cooperation programmes following a vertical approach. A monologue in which the EU proposes a model of regional integration that Latin American actors need to adopt or adapt is no longer an attempt that may achieve its intended results. The same happens in the case of the Association Agreements, where interregionalism as proposed by the European Union (including conditionality) is no longer

the model preferred and used by Latin American actors in their relations with other emerging powers, here included China.

Concerning the first proposition formulated in Chapter 1, Latin America norm subsidiarity proved to be an important challenger for the European Union attempts to diffuse its norms on regional integration and promote interregionalism. Despite the official EU discourse, interviews showed that normative friction can be seen as having prevented potential normative encounters. Concerning the third proposition, this friction can be observed in terms of both principles (horizontal compared to vertical cooperation) and practices (joint versus unilateral planning).

This chapter looked not only into normative initiatives of Latin America, but the analysis took also into account the way in which this limited EU normative presence in the region. The previous section presented the framework and differences between the two regions that the EU needed to consider in order to develop a new approach. The next step is to analyse if the European Union developed norms on its own addressing this new international reality, besides the attempts to reply directly to the South – South framework of cooperation in Latin America. It means analysing those norms that were not traditionally part of the EU norm diffusion attempts on interregionalism and regional integration, and that were gradually developed in the EU external relations as a response to norm subsidiarity of regions like Latin America. This is the mission of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7. EUROPEAN UNION NORMATIVE RESPONSES TO NORM SUBSIDIARITY. DELEGATED AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

1. Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the Latin American contribution to the normative framework in which region – to – region dialogues and negotiations were established with the European Union. The chapter highlighted the role of the South – South cooperation in conditioning the EU normative attempts of diffusion in topics related to interregionalism and regional integration. The EU made some limited attempts to respond to the South – South cooperation, and few programmes on this topic were established. Examples were the projects with Chile, Argentina and Uruguay; projects that respond ‘to the requests expressed by Latin American countries to enter into a new policy framework of diversified and modernised partnerships’³⁵.

In the context of the current study, it means that the norm interpreter (Latin America) created independent norms (the South – South cooperation) and this constrained the way in which the initial norm entrepreneur, the European Union, was able to interact with actors in the region in the concerned policy field – international cooperation. This is the second dynamic as highlighted in Chapter 2, in which the initial norm entrepreneur needs to respond to norm interpreter norm subsidiarity and make this visible through policies following a renewed normative content.

³⁵ For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/new-contracts-signed-south-south-cooperation-chile-argentina-and-uruguay-under_en, last accessed on 15th March 2017.

The argument of this chapter is that the European Union did not limit its reaction to responding to Latin American norm subsidiarity, but started using new norms in order to address the new reality of South – South cooperation, norms that were more congruent with its status of traditional provider of ODA. These new norms gave new content to the role of the European Union as an adapted player in the field of the new international development policies. It is important to look at how the European Union, as a normative actor, whose behaviour on the international scene was largely recognised as being based on norms (Lucarelli and Manners, 2006) finds ways to keep its normative entrepreneurship in a context of norm subsidiarity. Previous research has looked at the European Union as a norm entrepreneur, a promoter of region – to – region dialogues and regional integration. However, these analyses focused always on the EU normative nature, something inherent in the EU identity and history (Cerutti and Lucarelli, 2008, Diez, 2013, Jetschke and Lenz, 2013, Lenz, 2013, Lucarelli and Manners, 2006, Manners, 2002, Manners, 2013, Merlingen, 2007). On the contrary, the distinctiveness of the current chapter is that the EU norm entrepreneurship behaviour is analysed as having its starting point in the need to adapt to a new international context. Norm entrepreneurship becomes a reaction to norm subsidiarity and makes it imperative for the European Union to use new norms if it is to keep its normative identity.

The empirical cases that will be analysed here are related to delegated and triangular cooperation. These normative approaches became more present in the European Union relation with Latin America and facilitated the interregional relations with the different regional groups. They are seen as normative reactions of adaptation that the European Union started developing in a context of South – South and horizontal cooperation.

Triangular cooperation allows the participation of the European Union in South – South cooperation programmes, combining contributions from both traditional ODA (Official Development Assistance) providers as the European Union, and from emerging actors as regional groups and countries in Latin America. Delegated cooperation allows the more direct participation of the beneficiaries such as Latin American actors in EU funded projects through indirect management of the EU delegating the administration of its cooperation for development programmes to other entities in Europe, Latin America or elsewhere. The argument here is similar to the one in chapter 6: while these normative initiatives were not developed exclusively in the context of the European Union – Latin America interregional relations, they played an important role and conditioned the way in which the interregional dialogue evolved between the two regions.

The next section of the chapter analyses why the European Union needed to create more adapted norms in its interregional relations with Latin America. The third part analyses triangular cooperation as a new norm and an EU response to the South – South cooperation. It also poses the question if triangular cooperation is a genuine example of EU norm entrepreneurship or if it is simply a normative adaptation to the European Union context and reality of similar norms used in Latin America and other regions developing South – South cooperation initiatives. The fourth part presents delegated cooperation and develops an argument on how this helped or challenged the European Union in keeping an interregional approach in its relation with Latin America. The fifth and final part analyses the contributions of these normative initiatives and looks at how the European Union evolved from a normative entrepreneurship perspective taking into account the first proposition formulated in Chapter 1, related to how the EU adapts depending on other actors' norms.

2. Why did the European Union need triangular and delegated cooperation?

Chapter 6 presented the limitations that the European Union encountered in its interregional relations with Latin America due to the development and importance of South – South cooperation. While few initiatives and almost all EU institutions (the Parliament, the Commission, the Council and the European External Action Service through the EU Delegation) tried to link EU external policies to the South – South cooperation and to recognise its importance, the EU legitimacy and presence in such initiatives could only be limited. By legitimacy we understand that the counterpart, in this case Latin America, recognises EU agency. Limited legitimacy translates into normative friction and, as a consequence, in failed normative encounters. This is due to the SSC nature: a horizontal, peer – to – peer cooperation between developing countries that face similar problems and can share similar solutions. It was not possible for the European Union to become a relevant actor in the South – South cooperation, and the scarce presence of the concept in European Union official documents is an argument for how difficult it was for EU institutions to introduce such concept in the debate on the future of EU cooperation for development. South – South cooperation is actually absent as a term from the Lisbon Treaty and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

From a policy entrepreneurship perspective, the politics stream was once more not particularly enabling. From an EU internal perspective, it meant that interinstitutional cooperation within the EU did not favour an approach closer to the real nature of the SSC. No points of convergence were found between the agendas of the different EU institutions and this translated in no proposal being made for more adapted, horizontal policies and programmes following the Multiannual Strategies with the different regional groups in Latin

America. At the same time, in the policy stream, the South – South cooperation was still unknown to a large extent within EU actors (Interviewee 55, EU official in the EEAS HQ). A mention to the South – South cooperation is made in the European Union Strategy for Latin America for 2014 – 2020 when highlighting that ‘current regional programmes have focused to an important extent on knowledge – transfer and peer learning (between the EU and Latin American countries; but also among Latin American countries). Such approach is relevant for addressing the different development needs of all countries in the region, in particular poverty reduction. It allows ample scope for South – South cooperation, and for fostering regionally – owned solutions to regional challenges’ (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014, 5). This means that at strategic level the SSC was recognised as a relevant tool, the challenge resided however in deepening the understanding on how to design policy solutions translating and applying the ‘language’ of the South – South Cooperation approach.

As highlighted during interviews with a large number of officials (both in Brussels and Madrid, and from Latin American Embassies and European Union institutions – for example: Interviewees 13, 14, 15, 18, 27, 29, 38, mainly diplomats from Mercosur and Andean countries, but also European Parliament officials), the need for developing a new approach in this context was clear from the European Union side. The European Union as a traditional donor needed to use an adapted normative framework in order to keep its relevance as an international cooperation actor. This is why ‘the European Union started to plan its actions using a new approach – triangular cooperation, in which it becomes possible to be part of the more horizontal cooperation of the countries in the South’ (Interviewee 34, EU official in the European Commission in DG DEVCO). This approach was developed as a new norm both

for international cooperation for development in general and interregionalism and regional integration in particular. It was applied to a large extent in the case of Latin America, where major projects were developed using this normative approach. Concrete examples will be analysed in the next sections. However, the major question resides in how this was perceived by its counterparts and how this conditioned the success of the EU initiatives.

Concerning delegated cooperation, the European Union used this approach as a solution for difficulties encountered in its cooperation for development projects due to still a limited knowledge of partner regions, and in order to improve country ownership, aid efficiency and coordination between EU cooperation for development policy and Member States policy in the sector³⁶. Delegated cooperation was a first step towards making a better use of Member States knowledge on Latin America and the EU aimed to keep the region – to – region approach, but this was achieved only to a small extent as it will be shown using the examples detailed in this chapter. Nevertheless, Latin America was better involved in planning projects that addressed real and pressing issues in the region (Interviewees 18 and 27, Latin American Diplomats from Mercosur and Andean countries in Madrid).

More detailed definitions of these two approaches (triangular and delegated cooperation) in international cooperation are presented in the next sections, and an analysis is made of how the European Union used these two norms in concrete projects.

³⁶ For more information: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-funding-and-procedures/how-do-we-offer-funding_en, last accessed on 12th May 2017.

3. Triangular cooperation

3.1. Defining triangular cooperation

From the outset, triangular cooperation was closely linked to the South – South initiatives. The United Nations defines it as ‘Southern – driven partnerships between two or more developing countries, supported by developed countries or multilateral organisation(s), to implement development cooperation programmes and projects’³⁷. For the World Bank, it is ‘a relatively recent mode of development cooperation. It normally involves a traditional donor from the ranks of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC), an emerging donor in the South, and a beneficiary country in the South’ (Ashoff, online). For the OECD, triangular cooperation ‘can bring together the best of different actors – bilateral providers of development cooperation, partners in South – South cooperation and international organisations – to share knowledge and implement projects that support the common goal of reducing poverty and promoting development’³⁸.

All these definitions share common elements: triangular cooperation appears as a particularly enabling norm for the European Union (as a traditional donor and actor in international cooperation for development), and one that can be considered as being closer to the horizontal cooperation of the South – South initiatives. It appears in the context of the aid efficiency agenda with the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. According to these international agreements, cooperation for development should be carried out at the most appropriate

³⁷ For more information:

http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/news/articles/2015/agricultural_biotech_workshop_godollo.html,
last accessed on 15th May 2017.

³⁸ For more information: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/dac-global-relations/triangular-cooperation.htm>,
last accessed on 15th March 2017.

level, being inclusive in terms of actors and encouraging beneficiary country ownership (OECD, 2012). However, norms formulated within these frameworks were far from providing real guidance for appropriate policy in the case of traditional actors like the EU. It meant that while following norms developed in the multilateral fora, the European Union needed to design appropriate and adapted policy solutions with each partner. The challenge of providing programmes addressing the realities in different parts of the world, here included Latin America, referred to the need of a reinforced knowledge of local realities and of tailored policies. No *one size fits all* could be used in this context.

The definition used here for triangular cooperation is closer to the one promoted by international entities such as SEGIB (the Ibero – American General Secretariat), that considers this as ‘triangular South – South cooperation’ (OECD, 2013, 13) and less to the way in which China and the United States use it as a form of ‘trilateral cooperation’ (Li and Bonschab, 2012). The latter highlights too much the role of individual countries while ignoring the way in which other entities like international organisations may play an important role in the field.

First mention to this type of cooperation was made in the 1970s in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, recommending to developed countries to ‘support [...] technical cooperation among developing countries [and saying that] all the United Nations organisations should play a prominent role as promoters and catalysts of technical cooperation among developing countries’ (OECD, 2013, 13). The term as such has its origins in 1980 and it was used for the first time by the Independent Commission on International Development issues (former German Chancellor Willy Brandt was the chair) when suggesting that triangular cooperation schemes should be developed for the cooperation between developing

countries (Chaturvedi, 2012). One of the main purposes of this new framework became inclusiveness: that is being open not only to countries and international organisations, but also to other type of actors such as the NGOs.

From its beginnings, triangular cooperation offered leadership to middle income countries (MICs) whose agency could not be ignored due to their increasing economic presence, and at the same time to international organisations (mainly the United Nations agencies), which became essential players. The idea of inclusiveness created different levels of interaction and brought additional challenges in accounting for the success and controlling the spread of institutional frameworks, while keeping an approach focused on results. Having a unified vision and common goals when interacting with civil society actors, governments, academia, media or the business sector needs a sharp long – term vision and a good understanding of the realities and challenges in partner countries and regions around the world. Traditional actors in cooperation for development like the EU needed to learn from their partners how to plan and implement their policies. It meant that at least at the beginning EU institutions were far from having this sharp long – term view. It started being built, but it is still under development.

In addition to strengthening a more horizontal cooperation with a more inclusive panorama of actors, triangular cooperation became an important way to foster regional integration. This was recognised in a survey from 2015 of the OECD when concluding that ‘providers of South – South cooperation [...] are often interested in enhancing their capacity to manage development cooperation. Respondents indicated that triangular cooperation helps forge mutually beneficial relationships and creates new opportunities for regional integration’ (OECD, 2016, 2). In this way interregional relations could also be reinforced, and

new incentives were provided for both actors in the North and the South in consolidating their regional organisations. South – South and triangular cooperation serve in this context the same purpose: reinforcing the regional dialogue and integration by sharing successful experiences and models of development within a changing and complex landscape, not as institutionalised as in the EU model. We can affirm that in this sense the need of flexibility on the EU side was higher and the need to discern between the potential partners needed to be doubled by a deep understanding of local realities, in order to be able to identify those institutional partners that could maximise the impact of EU programmes in the region.

Important limitations can also be highlighted in this panorama of development actors and practices. A first one relates to the fact that while in theory triangular cooperation should be closer to horizontal cooperation, the participation of traditional providers of ODA and their practices in the field cannot change so easy. This means for example that actors like the EU were taking part in projects of triangular cooperation, but at the same time were providing grants and service contracts, being in no way different from the very beginning of their cooperation programmes with Latin America (Interviewee 60, Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid). Vertical and more horizontal cooperation coexist and this creates limitations in terms of normative and discursive coherence. These limitations are normal for a transition period from a North – South cooperation model to a more horizontal one. However, a big challenge resides in making this shift effective. Actors responsible for dealing with this challenge include DG DEVCO and the EEAS through its delegations. Their partnership with Member States needs to feed the EU programmes with relevant information about local realities and this, in return, will ensure the real horizontality of the new approach.

3.2. Triangular cooperation and the European Union – Latin America dialogue

In the case of the European Union, triangular cooperation was developed in a context in which the Lisbon Treaty failed to build a more inclusive perspective on international cooperation and in which the Middle Income Countries started to have leadership. It became an approach aiming to 'leave behind the self – reflective phase and start listening to the partners. The European imaginarium³⁹ often [contrasted] with how Africans, Asians and Latin Americans perceive the European Union and in particular the Commission' (Schulz, 2010, 4). The Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of the EU from December 2006, on the Financing Instrument for Development Cooperation (DCI), talks in the context of food safety about what can be considered as triangular cooperation: the EU should develop 'scientific and technical South – South and South – North cooperation and twinning [together with] developing innovative food security policies, strategies and approaches, and [strengthen] the potential for their replication and South – South dissemination' (European Union, 2006, online). In addition, the Euro – deputy José Ignacio Salafranca highlighted the relevance of 'countries under South – South solidarity and cooperation programmes' and '[emphasised] the need for greater cooperation with Latin American countries which [...] are [...] playing a leading role in generating extensive South – South cooperation' (European Parliament, 2006, online).

The Declaration of the Summit between the European Union and Latin America in Madrid in 2010 puts as an interregional priority of the Joint Action Plan for 2010 – 2012 to include triangular cooperation initiatives and programmes (European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean, 2010). In addition, during the Spanish Presidency of the EU (in

³⁹ Understood here as normative environment.

the first half of 2010), the Council contributed to the EU perspective on triangular cooperation by presenting its position on the High Level Event on South – South cooperation and Capacity Development that was held in Bogota. This is the first EU document giving an overview of why triangular cooperation is important for the European Union in the context of South – South cooperation, admitting that more precise conceptual frameworks and definitions are needed for these forms of cooperation in order to facilitate a better understanding of their characteristics, limitations and benefits. The Council also manifested its concerns related to the need to have evidence on why a bridge between South – South and triangular cooperation should be built. A recommendation made to its Member States to map their experiences on triangular cooperation was aimed at improving the knowledge on the advantages of this new framework for international cooperation (Council of the European Union, 2010). However, this recommendation did not take into account the fact that similarities between Member States and EU experiences were only limited, due to their different nature as international actors.

Concerning the European Union interregional relations and cooperation with Latin America, first triangular approaches can be identified in the Multiannual Strategies for the 2007 – 2013 period, including initiatives at regional and sub – regional levels, with Latin America as a region, with Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community. From these four plans, the only one that did not include a triangular or more horizontal approach is the one with the Andean Community. As for the other three plans, the regional plan with Latin America saw horizontal cooperation as a useful approach for the actors in the region (including the least developed countries) to benefit from interregional programmes, while reducing imbalances between the participants in the programmes (European Commission,

2007d). In the multiannual plan with Mercosur (European Commission, 2007e), horizontal cooperation is linked to projects led by Argentina and Brazil in scientific cooperation. As for Central America, the European Commission highlighted the importance of triangular cooperation for the success of the newly introduced programme addressing regional governance and security (the Commission put Mexico as an example of partner country) (European Commission, 2007b).

The European Commission Communication from 2009, *The European Union and Latin America: Global Players in Partnership*, makes brief references to triangular and horizontal cooperation when saying that ‘the countries in the region [have developed] cooperation with poorer countries, [and] further opportunities for South – South and triangular cooperation should be explored’ (European Commission, 2009, 9). To achieve this, the Commission proposed ‘triangular cooperation with partners from Latin America and other regions’, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to address in an appropriate way ‘trans – regional threats’ (European Commission, 2009, 9). The Millennium Development Goals and their successors, the Sustainable Development Goals, gained an important place on the international agenda and became a normative framework used by both countries and regional organisations to design policy solutions. Latin American countries showed entrepreneurship in these initiatives and this was made manifest through programmes such as those described in the chapter on South – South cooperation at national and regional level. In addition, non – state actors had an important contribution (and again Latin American NGOs acting in the framework of the *living well* norm in the Andean region are an example).

The EU is in this new reality an indirect force in triangular cooperation, just another actor in the plethora of actors, without enjoying the privileged status that it used to have in previous decades of cooperation for development history (Interviewee 70, Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid). This creates the need for European actors to learn from those that used to be beneficiaries of their programmes in order to continue being relevant on a changing international scene that reverses power relations. As mentioned previously, the need to abandon the *one size fits all* approach is an important challenge that requires efforts on the EU side to get deeper knowledge on the local Latin America realities and to address them in an open dialogue planning and designing programmes jointly.

These challenges redesign the way to understand the three streams and the manner in which they constrain the more horizontal policies in the EU international cooperation realm. In the problems stream, the need to know better, understand and integrate local realities is a difficult task for EU actors. In the policy stream, incorporating this reality and giving content to horizontal cooperation through real and constant consultation mechanisms with local actors in Latin America is a task and challenge in the long – term. In the politics stream, the way in which Latin America regional actors perceive this in different frameworks as the interregional Summits will condition the results of the different programmes and will decide the fate of this horizontal approach.

3.3. Examples of programmes using a triangular approach

Triangular cooperation becomes a norm applied both to programmes with the whole Latin American region and with specific regional groups. The link with the South – South cooperation is highlighted as a crucial dimension and both norms become key elements necessary for reinforcing the partnership between the two regions.

Involving actors from both the European Union and Latin America as initiators and providers of expertise, there are illustrative cases of how this normative approach was used by the European Union in Latin America. Concerning the interregional relations with Latin America, the European Union developed a number of programmes with a triangular vision. The first example to be analysed is Eurosocial as a case of how more horizontal cooperation, with more Latin American ownership and regional participation, brought to life the new EU normative approach. Other examples analysed here include Euroclima and Copolad as examples of programmes developed in different fields of policy related to climate change and the fight against drugs as crucial themes for the EU – Latin America cooperation.

3.3.1. Eurosocial

Eurosocial can be considered a relevant example due to its content – social cohesion, a main concern and topic of debate in the Latin American context aimed at fostering at the same time regional integration (Freres and Sanahuja, 2005). The project saw ‘opportunities for institutional partnerships and triangular cooperation’ useful to be explored (Ayllón, 2012, 117), and it is part of a renewed approach of the EU in Latin America (Interviewee 12, Latin American Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels).

When analysing programmes related to social cohesion as a topic of cooperation between the European Union and Latin America, it is necessary to consider the trajectory of the interregional negotiations on the subject. As early as the 1990s, European Union institutions like the Council and the Commission approved and promoted documents aimed to foster the relation between the two regions while placing democracy consolidation and the reduction of inequality as top priorities, whose achievement was interlinked. In 1999, the Commission Communication before the Rio Summit⁴⁰ highlighted the importance of distributive aspects of growth (European Commission, 1999b). The follow up Communication talks about the importance and the urgency of the topic when saying that

‘[The] Commission proposes setting up an EU – Latin America / Caribbean *Social Initiative* [emphasis added] in order to stimulate general discussions on this issue and share experiences and best practices for the reduction of social imbalances and assistance for the most vulnerable groups. The Initiative consists of a series of meetings bringing together representatives of different groups of social agents from both regions’ (European Commission, 1999a, online).

Aiming to reduce social disparities in Latin America, this set of documents can be considered as the roots of Eurosocial.

There are a few elements of novelty in the European Commission's intervention in Latin America in topics of social cohesion that can also be considered as main characteristics of the EU vision on the topic: a redistributive component and a clear way of linking social cohesion to the European social model (including the European Employment Strategy – EES,

⁴⁰ This Summit was between the European Union and the Rio Group, a regional group of almost all Latin America countries, the precursor of the EU – CELAC Summits.

and the Lisbon Strategy) by placing together employment, social policy and economic / social cohesion. These elements show the normative intentions of the European Union in an attempt to couple the three streams favoured by the politics stream in which the new region – to – region Summits were the most appropriate space for proposing such objectives and finding support for regional programmes from the Latin America side (HTSPE, 2010, 11). However, there are also important constraints, mainly related to the limited effort made by EU experts (the majority were Spanish, French and Italian) to adapt these contents during the many training sessions and make the exercise an useful learning experience for the Latin American institutions (Interviewee 22, Diplomat from a CAN country in Brussels). According to interviewees, the policy content of exchanges, seminars and working visits made by European experts to Latin America and by Latin American civil servants to European countries were seen as having suffered from a reduced *translation* of European best practices to Latin American realities (Interviewee 28, Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid). This meant that a big part of the debate was informed by the European model, but it was not ‘exportable’ to the Latin American context.

Social cohesion was addressed in concrete areas like justice, taxation, health and employment. An evaluation of the programme was made in 2010 and concerned its first phase (developed from 2005 to 2010, the programme is now at its third phase, recently started, in 2016, and planned until 2021). In this evaluation (HTSPE, 2010), the success of the programme is highlighted through a couple of elements. The first element is the triangular dimension, the programme being based on a demand – driven approach from the Latin American countries and regional organisations, which proved to be flexible and to reflect shared needs while ensuring wider participation than in traditional cooperation for

development. The second element concerns the fact that more ownership of the processes was developed by the beneficiaries, in the form of norm adoption and adaptation. Solutions found during the programme were to be used as future reference after finishing the implementation phase. Flexibility on the EU side proved to be crucial for peer learning in an innovative process due to both the subject and the way of involving a higher number of stakeholders, here included non – governmental actors such as *Yo no fui* or *the Association of Family Members of Prison Inmates* on justice topics. The demand – driven characteristic was also important and it was highly valued by the partner countries and Ministries in Latin America, having allowed the programme to adapt itself to national realities, while avoiding long processes of revision and correction.

‘[In the justice sector] the participants [took] a very positive view of the strengthening of SSC. In taxation, SSC was encouraged to implement educational actions, inspired by the Argentinian experience, which contributed to progress in this area in El Salvador, and subsequently in Costa Rica. In health, the exchanges of experiences gave rise to the creation of networks favouring SSC. Finally, in the actions relating to employment, the progress gained related to the encouragement of SSC’ (Ayllón, 2012, pp. 119 - 120).

This highlights the numerous policy areas in which the SSC approach was deployed during this programme.

Concerning the evaluation of the second phase of the programme, the most relevant issues for interregional cooperation and regional integration are the Regional Model of Comprehensive Policy for the Prevention of Violence and Crime that was approved by Latin American representatives, and the Latin American Network of Public Policies for Regional Development that was created during this phase of the programme. In the case of social

policy, that can be considered as one of the main parts of the programme, common needs and demands were identified by the EU through the implementing Agencies with the aim to generate synergies and 'share accompanying solutions, thus opening up regional and subregional spaces that have finally crystallised into groups of work with a certain vocation of permanence' (Altair, 2016, 41). Examples are the *Working Group on People living in the street* and the *Regional Platform on Competencies and socio – emotional aspects as a new axis of inclusion policies*.

In terms of triangular cooperation, Argentina, Chile and Costa Rica were seen as main providers of policy models or policy transfer for the region in topics of public defence; Chile and Mexico – in laws of transparency and access to public information; Colombia – in policies on preventing violence, while the model of employability of Costa Rica was transferred to Guatemala (Altair, 2016, 42). However, the report concludes that the exchange of good practices in social cohesion with the European Union was limited to a dialogue with few countries: Spain, France, Italy and Portugal, and at the same time the cooperation with some other Member States (as for example Finland and the United Kingdom) was very limited since they did not participate actively in the implementation phase of the programme.

Triangular cooperation becomes in this way a better suited platform for policy transfer than the traditional North – South cooperation allowing exchanges between countries with similar needs and experiencing similar development issues as shown in the previous examples. By promoting this programme that has favoured South – South cooperation as the component that has achieved the intended results, the European Commission started building its vision on triangular cooperation. While losing leadership, it started adapting its

international cooperation norms to a new reality that in Latin America was already dominated by horizontal, peer – to – peer cooperation. However, it can be noticed that this approach had as a result a less interregional and a more bilateral relation which was developed by some EU Member States with Latin America, while other Member States could only be involved marginally. Specific Member States, like Spain, gained a special place in these triangular programmes having coordinated all phases of Eurosocial. Almost all interviewees considered that Spain played a more relevant role than the European Commission in ensuring the triangular exchange of best practices was ensured.

While losing leadership, the European Union in general and the European Commission specifically started building the needed local knowledge on Latin America through the demand driven approach in which Latin American actors were asked and consulted on how to address issues that were pressing and relevant for their contexts. In addition, the inclusiveness approach was used when considering actors like *Yo no fui* or *the Association of Family Members of Prison Inmates* on justice topics.

3.3.2. Other programmes

Other programmes of the European Commission with the whole Latin American region using the triangular approach included additional strategic priorities, like drugs and environmental policies. Copolad is ‘a partnership cooperation programme between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean countries aiming at improving the coherence, balance and impact of drugs policies, through the exchange of mutual experiences, bi – regional [interregional] coordination and the promotion of multisectoral, comprehensive and

coordinated responses⁴¹. The first phase of the programme (2010 – 2014) received political support during the first EU – CELAC Summit in Santiago de Chile in February 2013. The decision was to expand the Action Plan (European Union and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, 2013a) and the programme as such to an interregional level. The second phase of the programme (planned from 2016 to 2019) received also more funding – 10 million euro (compared to 6.5 million euro for the first phase). Promoting the consolidation of the National Observatories, the capacity – building in the reduction of demand and of the supply, and the policy support and consolidation of the EU – CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs, Copolad has similar objectives as Eurosociat in terms of the European Commission normative approach: a triangular, more horizontal cooperation, accompanying other regional cooperation initiatives in topics like the cooperation on drug control and prevention within the Andean Community. Copolad aims in this way to reinforce the interregional approach.

Euroclima can be seen as a third example of triangular cooperation of the European Union in the Latin American region. While its legitimacy has been highly contested and its horizontality questioned (Interviewee 62, Diplomat from an Andean country in the Representation to the United Nations, New York), the programme had as objective ‘to facilitate the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and measures into Latin American public development policies and plans’⁴². At the Lima Summit in 2008 (the Fifth Latin America – European Union Summit), the Final Declaration established Euroclima, aimed to tackle climate change.

⁴¹ More information: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/copolad-cooperation-programme-between-latin-america-and-european-union-drugs_en, last accessed on 15th May 2017.

⁴² More information: <http://www.euroclima.org/en/euroclima/what-is-euroclima>, last accessed on 16th May 2017.

From the European Union side the programme achieved these stated objectives. However, from the perspective of some Andean countries, the programme was not adapted to the horizontal cooperation that was initially proposed (Interviewee 63, Diplomat from an Andean country in the Representation to the United Nations, New York). The existence of competing norms can be seen as an explanation. In this case, as previously analysed, the *living well* norm is the main one, through its vision on climate change and sustainable development that is different from the European Union normative approach to the topic, as discussed in the previous chapter.

While Eurosocal can be considered as the first example of EU engagement in triangular cooperation (Interviewee 29, Diplomat from an Andean country, Madrid, and Interviewee 35, European Commission Official, DG DEVCO in Brussels), other programmes such as Copolad (for drugs policy) or Euroclima (for climate change) can be considered as elements strengthening this same European Union approach through DG DEVCO and the European External Action Service⁴³ aiming to build a more horizontal, demand – driven and flexible international cooperation.

If for Eurosocal some limitations were identified, but as a whole the demand driven approach ensured that the programme addressed real issues in the different Latin America regions, Euroclima seems closer to norm resistance and rejection at least in regions like the Andean Community. This is due to normative friction (between the way in which the European Union conceives sustainable development and the Andean *living well* norm) that prevented a normative encounter to be made manifest through the implemented policies.

⁴³ In cooperation for development, both the European Commission through DG DEVCO (Directorate G is the Directorate assigned in the DG to the cooperation with Latin America) and the European External Action Service, through its Delegations in the different Latin American countries, share the responsibilities of programme implementation.

3.4. Triangular cooperation, interregionalism and regional integration

Concerning the role of triangular cooperation in consolidating an interregional approach and through this, regional integration, programmes as Eurosocial, Euroclima or Copolad have had contradicting effects. While contributing to building a more integrated regional vision on different topics of social cohesion, climate change and drug control within the Latin American region, they can be seen as having weakened the interregional approach of cooperation between the European Union and the Latin American counterparts due to the active support of particular EU Member States during the implementation phase of these programmes. In this way, the dialogue has become more bilateral and less interregional. Mainly Spain, but also France and Italy have become key partners for Latin America actors, and, while these were programmes financed by the EU, for the interviewees they become more bilateral cooperation initiatives and less region – to – region ones. However, if the European Commission in particular and the EU in general will manage to create a strategic and coherent vision on the interregional partnerships, the pieces resulting from these individual programmes could be placed in a regional puzzle in which the EU has frameworks of dialogue and cooperation in different fields and at different levels with a broad range of Latin America actors.

The limitations related to the leadership of particular Member States were not the only ones with which the European Union was confronted in its triangular approach in Latin America. The interregional approach was also questioned due to the importance that was given to triangular cooperation in bilateral dialogues and negotiations with particular Latin America countries. In order to foster the EU – Brazil Strategic Partnership, the European Parliament recommended in 2009 that triangular cooperation should be given greater

attention. At the 5th EU – Brazil Summit (held in Brussels on 4th October 2011) the Joint Action Plan for 2012 – 2014 consolidated this position. Triangular cooperation with developing countries was described as a ‘way to complement existing bilateral cooperation initiatives, so as to boost knowledge, consistency and additional financial resources to benefit developing countries’ (Ayllón, 2012, 120). The objective to work jointly in order to develop triangular and South – South cooperation was also highlighted in the case of Chile during the 4th EU – Chile Summit (Freres et al., 2010).

Looking at the EU Member States and at their contributions and participation in triangular cooperation, Germany appears as the leader due to the budget dedicated to this type of cooperation at bilateral level (through GIZ), together with other active countries like Spain (and its Agency for cooperation for development, AECID), France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Other Member States were involved only to a smaller extent in this type of projects, and examples include Denmark, Finland, Italy and Luxembourg (Ayllón, 2012, 120). This constrains the future of a real interregional dialogue and reinforces the idea that a more bilateral dialogue instead of an interregional one is being consolidated. The European Union itself seems to walk away from its attachment to region – to – region dialogues and to become more a pragmatic actor and less a normative one.

Not only that the interregional approach of the European Union in triangular cooperation with Latin America was followed by a bilateral approach with some of the most strategic partners in the region, but some other normative shortcomings can be signalled. A first point is related to questioning the triangular character of this cooperation when taking into account that the multiannual strategy of EU – Latin America cooperation is still being

decided by the European Union with no formal consultations with Latin American actors (several interviewees mentioned this: Interviewees 11, 13, 17, 18, 22, 25, 29, Diplomats from Mercosur and Andean countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively).

A second point is related to the limitations that this new model of cooperation can have when taking into account that it is not one in which all actors (here included the EU) are open to question their models of development. The European Union gets a place in a model of more horizontal cooperation, but differently from Asia, for example, it is not being part of these projects with the aim to question and improve its own model, and the exchange remains a traditional one in which Latin America is searching for better solutions and development options with European funding. It means that the European actors are not looking for 'experience and development practices [of Latin America] as critical resources' (Kwak, 2013, 50), but they aim only to support SSC and diffuse European models such as the one related to social cohesion.

A third point concerns the limitations of programmes like Euroclima due to norm friction (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015b, 5) and insufficient translation of some competing norms as the *living well* normative approach. The living well norm is different both as approach recognising the rights of Mother Earth, and in policy practices, being for example extremely cautious about free trade agreements. While limited attempts of translation were made in the interregional Summit framework (as shown in Chapter 5), this remains incomplete. In this context, norm translation would allow 'different avenues of cross – cultural encounters and transmissions of meaning' (Zwingel, 2016, 31). In the case of Euroclima, this normative encounter could not be exploited. The opportunity was missed due to, once more, the absence or insufficient agency of translators, meaning a limited

understanding capacity of the European Union institutions and actors to approach Latin American counterparts using a common normative content. That is, a content that could be shared and understood by both regions. The missing entrepreneurship that could have taken shape during interregional Summits or within EU regional programmes in Latin America prevented a normative encounter.

What are the implications of these normative limitations? This meant on one side that the European Union missed the opportunity in these cases to be a normative entrepreneur. On the other side, what can be seen as probably having more practical and longer term consequences is the fact that the EU was not able to participate in the more horizontal and flexible approach needed for triangular cooperation. It meant that it had only scarce normative presence in these triangular programmes, limited to those that were not addressing topics in which normative friction was encountered. Triangular cooperation did not help the European Union to address or find a solution for normative friction. Vertical cooperation could still be seen in the regional strategies which were not open documents to be discussed with regional actors in Latin America. As a result, other traditional frameworks (such as grants, service contracts) continued to coexist, showing that there was no full commitment on the EU side for triangular cooperation.

3.5. The European Union and triangular cooperation – from norm entrepreneur to norm interpreter?

Despite these limitations, through the examples presented in the current chapter (mainly Eurosocial due to the fact that it received more attention, funding and participation both in the European Union and Latin America), it can be concluded that the European Union started using new norms in its international cooperation programmes, even if sometimes it

was not seen as a relevant player in these new approaches by its counterparts. The last question that the current chapter section wants to pose is: was the EU a norm entrepreneur when talking about triangular cooperation or was it a mere norm interpreter adapting norms already used in the South – South cooperation framework?

In 2009, a Task Force on South – South cooperation led by Colombia and Egypt was established in the framework of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP – EFF). This was a platform of the countries in the South, middle income countries, and counted with the participation of donors, sectors within civil society, academia and regional and multilateral bodies. The agenda topics were the principles of the Paris Declaration and of the Accra Agenda for Action, discussing how to apply them to the South – South cooperation. The aim was to ‘enrich the effectiveness agenda with its practices and experiences; identify the synergies between SSC and North – South Cooperation, including triangular cooperation’ (Ayllón, 2012, 115).

In the last report of the Ibero – American General Secretariat (SEGIB) on the South – South cooperation (SEGIB, 2016) a constant mention is made to triangular cooperation and its importance in the new international cooperation context. SEGIB proposes a set of five principles for ensuring the success of this type of cooperation. The first one is the leadership of the beneficiary country in an approach based on demand and co – responsibility. The other principles relate to horizontality and no conditionality associated to aid, efficacy and efficiency, and mutual learning (SEGIB, 2016). While in practice Latin American countries cannot fully control how norms like triangular cooperation are applied to concrete programmes of international cooperation, their participation in the formulation of the norms is an important contribution and they become norm entrepreneurs, ‘conditioning the

way in which the European Union thinks, plans and uses this type of cooperation' (Interviewee 17, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid). Thus, while keeping its normative space for contributing to the way in which triangular cooperation is being designed and applied, the European Union and its Member States become also norm interpreters due to the fact that horizontal cooperation is a field in which partners like Latin America are norm entrepreneurs. This offers interesting insights that can also be used in the next section on delegated cooperation.

4. Delegated cooperation

4.1. Defining delegated cooperation

Similar to triangular cooperation, delegated cooperation is a concept that has its roots in the international agenda for aid effectiveness aiming for ownership of the beneficiaries and focusing on results, inclusive development partnerships, transparency and accountability. The aim here is to advance the idea that while the concept was introduced with mainly practical and contractual implications, it generated longer term effects, effects that can be considered from a normative perspective. It meant that it started to be consolidated as a norm generating expectations concerning the frameworks of cooperation at interregional level. Even if extensive analyses have been performed by different scholars concerning the diffusion and importance of triangular cooperation (Ayllón, 2012, Chaturvedi, 2012, Freres and Sanahuja, 2005), delegated cooperation has been omitted by the literature. Hence, this section highlights the importance of this emerging norm.

Delegated cooperation is an international development approach that was introduced and defined by the European Commission in the Code of Conduct on Division of labour in Development Policy from 2007:

‘If a given sector is regarded as strategic for the partner country or the donor, European donors may enter into a Delegated Cooperation / partnership arrangement with another donor, and thereby delegate authority to the other donor to act on its behalf in terms of administration of funds and / or sector policy dialogue with the partner government’ (European Commission, 2007c, online)

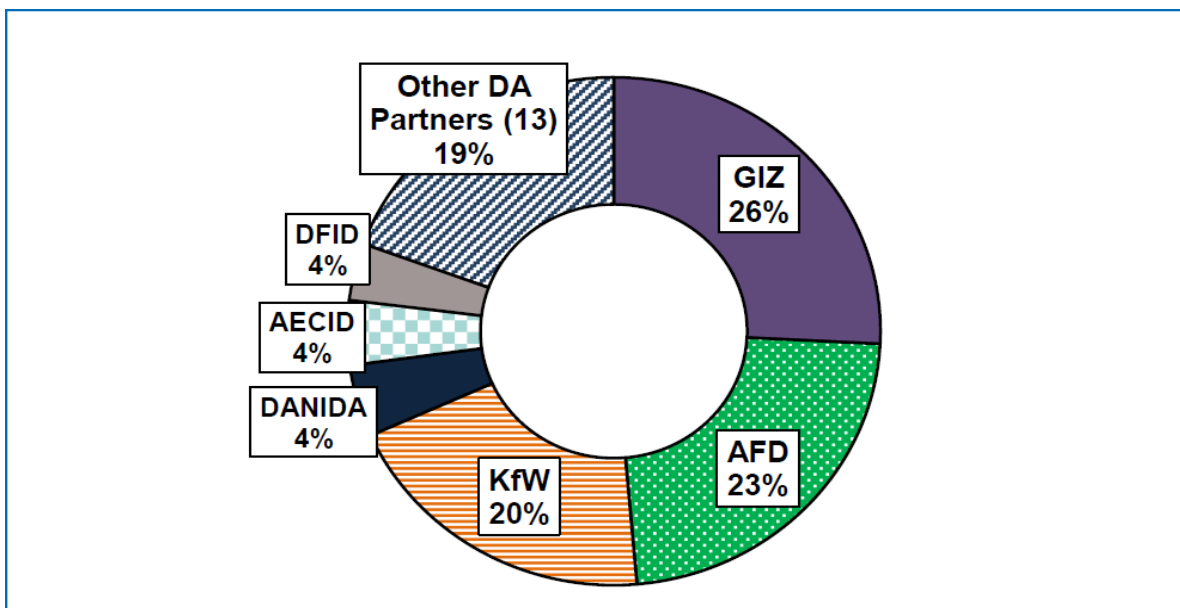
This leaves unanswered questions related to who defines what ‘strategic’ means and the role and responsibilities of the different actors.

Clarifying these concepts, further instructions come in the document accompanying the Code of Conduct in cooperation for development (called Companion) (European Commission, 2017 (last update)), giving details on how the Commission envisages that delegated cooperation should be used. Talking about ‘a like – minded approach to development’, delegated cooperation should deliver ‘development results more efficiently by sharing and maximising [the] use of technical and management capacity and systems’. It should promote ‘better donorship’ practices ‘based on a systematic assessment of better cost / benefit / impact ratio’, building upon ‘a clear comparative advantage of the fund – managing donor’ and promoting ‘the role of the EU and Member States as a joint endeavour, [...] ownership and leadership of development programmes by partner countries and their accountability to people. [...] To sum up, Delegated Cooperation should not be considered if there are no clear benefits for the EU visibility, enhanced aid and development effectiveness’ (European Commission, 2017 (last update), online). What these definitions

and objectives leave out is the inherent contradictions between the EU and its Member States interests and visions in the different regions and countries around the world, the different histories and ways of conducting and implementing cooperation programmes. A synergy hard to find in reality is assumed on paper.

As a new approach in the international development policy of the European Union and an EU response to international events such as the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, delegated cooperation is at the same time a reaction to the new landscape of more horizontal cooperation, similar to triangular cooperation (Interviewee 50, EU official in the EEAS HQ). The figure below shows that main partners for the European Commission (DG DEVCO) became Germany (through its implementing agencies GIZ and KfW) and France (through AFD), and to a smaller extent Spain (through AECID), the UK (through DFID) and Denmark (through DANIDA).

Figure 5 – Share of Delegation Agreements partners in % of total value of Delegation Agreements, 2008-2014



(Source: European Commission, 2016a, 41)

The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) were the beneficiaries of almost 60% of the delegation agreements, showing that delegated cooperation was applied to a different extent in the EU development cooperation policies with different regions and partners, having the ACP region as a clear leader. The next section of the chapter presents an overview of how this was applied to the EU dialogue on cooperation for development with Latin America and analyses concrete programmes that started using this approach.

However, we need to highlight that even if Latin America is not a protagonist in this type of cooperation, its role should be seen at the intersection of triangular and delegated cooperation. While the ACP region is more important in terms of funds dedicated to delegated cooperation, not the same can be said about the triangular one. In the context of the current study this is crucial taking into account that triangular and delegated cooperation are analysed as part of the horizontal approach of EU cooperation and its responses to South – South cooperation. The Latin American distinctiveness resides in the fact that the funds dedicated to delegated cooperation were to be used in the context of peer – to – peer dialogues and technical cooperation based on best practices exchanges between public administrations. This was not applied to the same extent in other contexts such as the ACP one.

4.2. Delegated cooperation and the European Union – Latin America dialogue. From programming to programmes

In the last Multiannual Indicative Regional Programme for Latin America, adopted for the 2014 – 2020 period, the European Commission and the European External Action Service (both institutions contribute to these documents) mention delegated cooperation as a way

of achieving the EU objectives in the region, here included regional integration through a region – to – region approach both with the whole continent and with regional organisations (mainly with Central America) (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014). The concept was formally introduced in 2014 (it does not appear as such in the 2002 – 2006 and 2007 – 2013 strategies), but in practice this approach has been used since the 2000s. The programmes mentioned as example of triangular cooperation were also examples of how delegated cooperation started working in practice, even if from a contractual point of view they were signed as normal grants. Member State entities managing these programmes started using a delegated cooperation approach because they were entitled to decide on the content of such programmes and to sub – delegate specific components to the Latin American beneficiaries that become, in this way, real partners.

In the cases of Eurosocial and Copolad, they were delegated to a consortium of Member States, being led by Spain (though FIIAPP – the International and Ibero – American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies). The remaining programme, Euroclima, was implemented by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and by EuropeAid (DG Development and Cooperation). This programme was actually a mix between delegated cooperation and direct management by the European Commission involved in the achievement of particular results: exchange of information on climate change (result 1) and identification of measures of adaptation and mitigation (result 2)⁴⁴. Taking into account the fact that on one side Euroclima did not involve only European actors and on the other side the European Commission was still part of the implementation phase, it can be said that it is

⁴⁴ For more information: <http://www.cepal.org/en/pressreleases/strategic-alliance-between-european-commission-and-eclac-renewed>, last accessed on 8th April 2017.

not a 'classical' example of delegated cooperation. As for Eurosocial and Copolad, the analysis in this section focuses on how and if this emerging delegated cooperation changed the importance given to interregionalism and regional integration by the European Union in its cooperation with Latin America.

Concerning Eurosocial, it is one of the first and biggest programmes of this type in the Latin American region. The delegated approach was motivated by the Spanish knowledge on the region and the advanced dialogue between Spain and regional groups in Latin America in frameworks like the Ibero – American General Secretariat (SEGIB). The evaluation of the first phase of the programme mentions as a main improvement 'the fact that some European institutions and the Fiscal Studies Institute [Spain], as the leader of the consortium, already had a consolidated experience in the region, which enabled them to understand very easily the needs of Latin American institutions, and to seek out those experiences that were useful not only in the European Union but also in Latin America, enhancing South – South cooperation' (HTSPE, 2010, 13). Examples included fiscal education and electronic government.

What we can question is the extent to which this transfer of knowledge and institutional experience can come to represent the EU as an entity. We can also look at it as a continued and reinforced exchange between the Spanish public administration and homologue institutions in Latin America, with the only mention that this was done with European funding. And it is in this way that the Latin American counterparts perceived it (as highlighted during almost all interviews with Latin American diplomats in Madrid and Latin American civil servants working for International Organisations). Even if this can be considered a normative encounter since the normative vision proposed by the programme

has been translated and implemented through concrete policies, the EU has not been the norm interpreter, but its Member States (mainly Spain and to a smaller extent, France and Italy).

The rationality of delegated cooperation in this programme was motivated for the Commission by the fact that this approach provided 'enhanced aid and development effectiveness' (European Commission, 2017 (last update), online) through this better knowledge of the region and its needs. However, this approach did not take into account how this affected, if it enhanced or jeopardised, the region – to – region approach of the European Union. Several interviewees (Interviewees 7, 18, 22, 25, 29, Diplomats from Central American, Mercosur and Andean countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively) argued that the European Union visibility in general and the European Commission visibility in particular was not enhanced through this type of project, but it was replaced by a better dialogue on cooperation and development models with particular European Union Member States.

The general consensus of interviewees was that projects such as Eurosocial (but also Copolad) achieved better results than traditional EU cooperation, but jeopardised the interregional relationship and the dialogue using a region – to – region approach. In this sense, delegating cooperation made the EU aid more bilateral than interregional. It remains an open question whether new initiatives or programmes like EL Paccto (2017)⁴⁵, a delegated cooperation project managed by a consortium of Member States including Spain, France and Italy and addressing topics related to Citizen Security – police, justice and prisons – will reinforce the EU presence and better showcase EU – Member States synergies in Latin

⁴⁵ More information: <http://www.bseurope.com/about-us/our-group/latin-america-and-eu-fighting-together-organised-crime-%E2%80%99cel-paccto%E2%80%9D>, last accessed on 24th April 2017.

America. However, no changes in the way to implement the project can be noticed, so changes can be suspected to remain limited in terms of reinforcing an interregional approach.

Another limitation that was recurrent during interviews on delegated cooperation related to the type of organisms that are accredited by the European Commission for this type of projects, with main bodies as SEGIB missing from the list. While in the future these institutions may receive the accreditation, for the time being this was considered as a main limitation taking into account the fact that delegated cooperation is expected to become a tool for triangular cooperation with more European Union support for the South – South approach (Interviewee 57, Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid). In this sense, SEGIB is an actor with entrepreneurial presence and consolidated experience and knowledge on how to apply horizontal cooperation programmes.

Different from triangular cooperation, delegated cooperation can be seen as linked to traditional actors in international development, attempting to adapt to a context of horizontal cooperation. Other European (Northern countries), non – European actors (like Australia and New Zealand), together with international organisations (OECD) have contributed to defining it (OECD, 2013, OECD, 2016). The European Union started using it in important programmes like to ones previously described, showing norm entrepreneurship through the Commission and counting with the participation of the EEAS through its different Delegations. While in the case of triangular cooperation it can be argued that the Latin American countries have not only contributed to defining the norm, but have also applied it in their regional projects, delegated cooperation is more inherent to the European Commission nature.

It is worth mentioning that, as a norm, delegated cooperation can be thought as having achieved only the *norm cascade* phase (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998), the internalisation phase being the next one if it becomes the usual practice. Delegated cooperation emerged in a context in which the European Commission was looking for an adapted strategy to the international reality both in forums in which it took part (in the context of the aid effectiveness agenda) and in the cooperation spaces in which its presence could only be scarce (as the South – South cooperation in Latin America). It started to be used in a moment that allowed the Commission to use these international events and negotiations (such as negotiations on climate change and the Sustainable Development Objectives) for coupling and opening a window of opportunity in the politics stream, and to propose delegated cooperation as a viable policy solution to what could become a problem for the EU if it was to be isolated from the international cooperation evolutions.

Normative encounters due to delegated cooperation can be identified in programmes as Eurosocial, but they are less between the EU and Latin American actors and more between specific EU Member States and their homologues in Latin America. In terms of normative reactions, we can conclude that we are witnessing cases of norm adoption and adaption translated in concrete policies, but the EU through the European Commission is not the entrepreneur or it is not perceived as such by its counterparts.

5. Conclusions

This chapter has looked at triangular and delegated cooperation as normative responses of the European Union to the Latin American leadership in developing and spreading projects in the region using a South – South cooperation approach. The questions asked here are related to how this has challenged the European Union as a norm entrepreneur in topics related to interregionalism and the promotion of regional integration.

In terms of the development of interregionalism, both triangular and delegated cooperation have had opposing effects: while the projects using these approaches were promoted as region – to – region policy solutions and while being part of the EU strategy with the whole region⁴⁶, that is mentioned in the last EU Multiannual Plan with Latin America (2014 – 2020) (European Commission and European External Action Service, 2014), they strengthened more the national facet of the European cooperation than the EU presence and visibility as an international organisation. They were designed to address in the problem stream the need for a more efficient and horizontal cooperation at an interregional level, however, specific Member States had entrepreneurship (in Latin America it was especially the case of Spain, but also France and Italy played an important role). The knowledge on the region, the interaction within previous EU projects, as well as in other frameworks (such as SEGIB), favoured the achievement of the proposed results and were important coupling factors in the politics stream.

Normative friction in topics such as climate change and sustainable development was the main limitation in projects as Euroclima, and the missing European translation of these norms in the logic of the intervention compromised the achievement of the proposed goals.

⁴⁶ At *continental* level as it is called in the European Commission / European External Action Service document.

In addition, Latin American interviewees saw the European Commission approach as being too restrictive concerning the delegation of its projects to entities representing the Latin American space and composed of representatives coming from its different regional groups. It is one of the major concerns that the Commission and the EEAS will face in their interregional approach and one that needs to be addressed quickly if delegated cooperation is to provide the expected results in consolidating a region – to – region approach.

Concerning the promotion of regional integration and dialogue, delegated cooperation has had only a small influence due to the fact that it is a norm still needing more consolidation on the international scene. However, triangular cooperation can be considered as having contributed in a significant way to the diffusion of intra – regional models and to the circulation of solutions coming from Latin American countries and aimed to support their peers. As one of the main objectives and normative aims of the EU in the region, regional integration and an improved regional dialogue can be considered as a main achievement of projects like Eurosocial, Copolad or Euroclima.

It is also necessary to look at how these normative approaches have challenged the European Union as a norm entrepreneur. As analysed in the section related to triangular cooperation, the European Union becomes also a norm interpreter or at least a norm entrepreneur that is defining norms and at the same time is being conditioned by other entrepreneurs. Interregionalism and international cooperation used to be analysed by scholars as being the exclusive normative entrepreneurship space of the EU. With the proliferation of the South – South cooperation initiatives and with the consolidation of the Latin American normative position on international cooperation and regional integration,

the European Union enters a new phase of its dialogue with the region. That is, a more horizontal dialogue, between peers.

These conclusions show a new international and normative dynamic: the European Union, through its institutions (mainly the Commission in general and DG DEVCO in particular in topics and projects of international cooperation), becomes an actor whose normative behaviour is no longer something inherent to its identity, but also a reaction to how third actors, in this case Latin America, conceive and design new forms of dialogue such as the South – South cooperation. These ideas are in line with the argument of Onar and Nicolaïdis when they talk about the need to ‘Rethink Europe in a Non-European World’ (RENEW) (Onar and Nicolaïdis, 2013).

The need to *renew* the vision through which the European Union is analysed as an international actor should include these interactions between the EU and other actors, the way in which these third actors condition the EU, and the nature of the EU responses. This happens in a multipolar world, where new actors gain importance and the European Union capacity to diffuse its norms becomes more constrained (Heron and Murray-Evans, 2013, Nicolaïdis et al., 2013).

‘Taking other actors, their interests, histories and cultures seriously is therefore of central importance for the EU’s international posture in coping with a changing world’ (Lenz, 2013, 224).

This chapter has shown through examples from the interregional dialogue with Latin America how some of these new normative dynamics work in practice. This included triangular cooperation, arguing that it was at the same an EU norm entrepreneurship case

and a case in which the European Union has adapted external normative contributions to its reality. In addition, delegated cooperation has been presented as a more realistic international development normative approach, providing a more realistic and efficient framework for international cooperation, however limiting the interregional approach and giving a more national facet to the European cooperation.

In the context of the general argument of this thesis, this chapter analyses the second dynamic of EU entrepreneurship and the first proposition as formulated in Chapter 1: how the EU adapts to a challenging normative reality through the creation of new norms. Norm entrepreneurship – norm interpretation dynamics were questioned in the case of the Association Agreements that the European Union signed or negotiated with different regional groups in Latin America and in the context of the EU cooperation strategies and programmes (in chapters 4 and 5). Norm subsidiarity of Latin America was presented in the context of the South – South cooperation (in chapter 6), to conclude with the EU normative responses through delegated and triangular cooperation (chapter 7).

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSIONS. NORMATIVE ENCOUNTERS AND THE EUROPEAN UNION – LATIN AMERICA DIALOGUE

1. Argument

The current doctoral research has conceptualised and then investigated how the *norm entrepreneur* and the *norm interpreter* interact. The study has highlighted the limitations of previous research by recognising the oft – forgotten importance of the *norm interpreter* and the complex interactions between the two actors. A balance has been searched between the agency of both entrepreneur and interpreter and two dynamics have been proposed in order to show how *normative encounters* happen or are prevented from doing so. On one side, an analysis has been made of cases in which the norm entrepreneur attempts to diffuse its norms to the norm interpreter that localises the norms which are then incorporated (or not) in concrete policies through policy entrepreneurship. These dynamics have been analysed in Chapters 4 and 5. On the other side, an equally important dynamic that has been taken into account is the one that starts with the actor that has been traditionally seen as the norm interpreter, that creates new norms through norm subsidiarity, diffuses this new normative content and creates a need for the initial norm entrepreneur to adapt its normative approach and to make this visible to the norm interpreter through concrete policies. This has been presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

Normative encounters are seen here as possible when norm adoption or adaptation happen, as well as when as a result of norm subsidiarity the initial norm entrepreneur adapts to the new normative content created by the interpreter. That is, pieces of the policy

initiatives are also used and followed up in the three streams: problem, policy and politics by the entrepreneur. When norm resistance, rejection or norm subsidiarity happen with no initiative on the initial norm entrepreneur side to adapt to the new norms created by the interpreter, a genuine normative encounter is seen as impossible since norms and policy decouple. *Coupling* has been developed in this thesis as a key concept building on Kingdon's three streams framework (1995). While coupling is a crucial element for policy entrepreneurship, decoupling is an important concept for normative encounters.

The problem stream has included the way in which main issues have been framed and how solutions in the policy stream have been proposed, but also how they have been perceived by interpreters and conditioned by the politics, including international events like the Doha Round, the negotiations with and the presence of third actors like the United States or internal evolutions of the involved actors like the ones related to Latin American regionalism and interinstitutional relations inside the EU. Building a link between the norm diffusion dynamics and the three streams has meant highlighting the idea that an encounter is only possible when there is convergence between the normative and the policy parts, when norms are made visible through concrete policies.

The cases analysed here have drawn on examples related to the interregional dialogue between the European Union and Latin America. Mainly cooperation for development strategies and programmes, and the negotiation of Association Agreements have been considered. Examples of normative encounters have included both cases where norms and policies have been congruent and cases in which norms and policies have decoupled (failed normative encounters). The first ones refer to situations in which for example Mercosur has used the European model for its Parliament, and the Andean Community has created a

similar institution to the European Court of Justice. In these cases the norm that the EU has aimed to diffuse, regional integration, has been embedded in concrete policies through the creation of these institutions. On the contrary, missed normative encounters have included situations like the multiparty Trade Agreement between the EU and Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, where the region – to – region agreement has been replaced by bilateral ones. Other examples refer to the cases in which Central America has failed in applying almost all European proposals like the ones related to a tax restitution mechanism and securing funding for the secretariats in the environmental sector.

The main contribution of this study from a theoretical point of view is that it places together and uses theoretical tools coming from both public policy studies and International Relations. These concepts – norm entrepreneurship including the norm entrepreneur and the norm interpreter, norm diffusion and the localisation through adoption, adaptation, resistance and rejection, but also norm subsidiary have been connected to the fact that norms are conditioned in their translation into policies by the three streams – the problem, the policy and the politics. Independently, these frameworks explain only pieces of a more complex reality. The normative part takes into account reactions and interactions at the level of norms, but fails to link them to the more tangible results related to policies. The three streams framework explain how policies are conditioned in a process involving factors related to their content, the problems they are addressing and the political context in which they are promoted. However, it fails to acknowledge more profound interactions related to norms understood as accepted ways of behaving on the international scene and defining elements of international identities, and to conceptualise the agency of actors on both

sides, entrepreneur and interpreter. Connecting these frameworks sheds light on the more profound level of normative interactions and their results in the form of concrete policies.

The idea of norm interpreter as presented in Chapters 1 and 2 has been followed up through the empirical chapters and a balance has been searched between the EU role and that of its counterparts, in this case Latin American regional organisations. The way in which norm subsidiarity has been used makes an additional contribution: it has been presented only as the creation of new norms, creating a clearer category from which norm rejection has been excluded and considered as a different type of norm localisation reaction.

From an empirical point of view, the case which has been analysed – Latin America – is an important case for both the way in which the European Union uses norms in its external policies, and for how emerging actors are challenging traditional providers of aid for development. Additional empirical elements that define the way in which entrepreneurship has worked in the relation between the two actors have been highlighted as a result of the 70 interviews, and include contributing to the development of the empirical work on South – South cooperation and starting to build a framework in which both triangular and delegated cooperation are recognised as emerging norms for traditional providers of aid such as the European Union.

The methodological approach has ensured the triangulation of information from different resources. This has included besides information from EU official documents, also the vision of EU policy makers and officials; and in addition and as crucial source of information the interviews with Latin American policy makers and diplomats who were directly involved in the negotiation of the Association Agreements, so have been both exposed to the EU vision and have negotiated on behalf of their countries and regional

organisations, incorporating demands from the different sectors (here included NGOs and the business sector).

The aim of the current chapter is to go back to some of these ideas and reinforce how normative encounters can be understood, as well as to analyse the propositions that were formulated in Chapter 1 in light of the empirical chapters. The first proposition asks if the roles of norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter can be switched at different points in time. In addition, it asks if in the cases in which the norm interpreter becomes norm entrepreneur (we are witnessing norm subsidiarity), the initial norm entrepreneur needs to frame new norms, better adapted to the new normative context, and to make this visible in the policy stream. In brief, this study has argued that the roles are switched between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter. The distinction between the two of them is useful from a conceptual point of view. However, in practice the initial norm entrepreneur can become interpreter and the norm interpreter can challenge the entrepreneur through a mix of normative reactions, ranging from norm adoption to norm subsidiarity. Concerning the normative responses from the EU to Latin American norm subsidiarity, triangular and delegated cooperation have been analysed as examples of how the EU has addressed a new normative context in which the South – South cooperation and, resulting from it, a more horizontal cooperation have become dominant for the different Latin American actors. These norms have been applied through concrete policies such as regional programmes (for example, Eurosocial, Copolad and Euroclima).

The second proposition considers how securing the right interlocutors in the politics stream conditions norm diffusion from the norm entrepreneur to the norm interpreter (here we are talking about norm adoption and adaptation). On the contrary, when the norm

interpreters form a coalition whose normative vision is in normative friction with that of the norm entrepreneur, the proposition states that the norm entrepreneur is on a weak position. To summarise, this thesis has showed that the coalition of actors conditions the translation of norms into policies and this has been seen through the examples of the negotiations of all Association Agreements with regional entities (Central America, Mercosur and CAN). Concerning the second part of the proposition, the case of Mercosur has shown how in cases in which the norm interpreters form a coalition whose normative vision is in normative friction with that of the norm entrepreneur, the norm entrepreneur is on a weak position. Brazil has promoted *strategic patience* and aimed for a reinforced dialogue with Argentina. This has limited the EU attempts to promote a two – speed approach in its negotiations with Mercosur.

The third proposition focuses on how normative friction (having as a result, norm resistance and rejection) can be avoided in the problem stream through both renewed principles (for example switching from vertical to horizontal cooperation) and practices (for example joint programming) applied in the policy stream. In a nutshell, the study has argued that such practices can favour normative encounters and ownership on the interpreter side, and in cases in which they are not present (as for example the EU norm diffusion attempts in Central America on regional integration), norms cannot be successfully translated into policies.

The second section of this chapter argues why it is important to consider norm interpreters in analyses on norm entrepreneurship. The third part of the chapter analyses the EU as a normative actor and possible entrepreneur taking into account the information

presented in Chapters 3 – 7. The last section presents implications of the current study and future lines of investigation.

2. A reinforced role of the norm interpreter

2.1. Limitations of previous research on norm entrepreneurship and ways to start addressing them

The current study has highlighted the role of norm interpreters through normative reactions and their participation in the three streams. Using the ideas formulated in Chapter 1 in the three propositions, the importance of the norm interpreter needs further attention. Norm interpreters (that is, regional organisations in Latin America) have shown agency in all the policy initiatives analysed in Chapters 3 – 7. In the case of the Association Agreements, Central America has coupled the three streams, has pushed for a region – to – region agreement and has built a coalition that has been strong enough to get the Association Agreement signed with support from individual European entrepreneurs such as Benita Ferrero – Waldner and Ignacio Salafranca. Mercosur has replied to the two – speed approach with the Brazilian *strategic patience* guaranteeing Argentina that no agreement will be achieved outside of the Mercosur framework. In the Andean region, the *living well* norm is a challenge for European norms or ways of building policy responses to sustainable development dilemmas.

In the case of the cooperation for development programmes, all five normative reactions have been identified and, in most cases, multiple reactions have been identified and analysed. The Andean Community has adopted a European model for its Court of Justice, as has done Mercosur for its regional Parliament, Parlasur. Central America has tried

to adapt tax restitution mechanisms and to reduce non – tariff trade barriers using the European model, but has eventually rejected them. Ecuador has resisted the European model of sustainable development and has not signed an Association Agreement in the first phase of negotiations, even if trade constraints in the problem stream and business pressure in the politics stream have favoured the relaunch of negotiations and their final agreement in 2016. And a crucial norm subsidiarity example, the South – South cooperation has become the norm for international cooperation in the Latin American region and has limited the EU attempts to initiate programmes following the old vertical North – South approach.

This is why the term ‘interpreter’ is better suited to describe this reality and captures agency on both sides, the entrepreneur and the interpreter. Examples of how roles have been switched between actors at different points in time have been analysed (*proposition 1*). Latin America became norm entrepreneur when using the South – South cooperation, and the European Union needed to respond to this reality if it wanted to continue playing a role in the international cooperation programmes developed in the region. This is the reason for considering both literature on norm diffusion (Lenz, 2013, Manners, 2002, Pu, 2012) and norm localisation and subsidiarity (Acharya, 2004, Acharya, 2011) as insufficient on their own. They explain only pieces of this reality; the norm diffusion literature by describing only the attempts made by the norm entrepreneur, and by the same token, the norm localisation and subsidiarity approaches as useful tools to understand the position of norm interpreters.

However, a dialogue between the actors seems poorly developed in these studies. A bridge filling in the gap between the contribution coming from the entrepreneur and the

interpreter side is absent. In addition, these discussions miss the way in which the norm entrepreneur (in this case the European Union) needs to adapt to the context created by the norm interpreter subsidiarity. Hence the normative encounter concept is a helpful theoretical concept in order to start incorporating these dynamics and to build an explanatory framework based on input coming from both sides, a loop fed by both entrepreneur and interpreter, through the two dynamics: one starting with the norm entrepreneur diffusing its norms to which the norm interpreter responds by adopting, adapting, resisting or rejecting them and conditioning in this way the policies following these normative approaches, and a second one in which the initial norm interpreter creates new norms and in this way constrains the entrepreneur to adapt its normative content and to make this visible through concrete policies.

This also implies that the idea of a norm interpreter and a norm entrepreneur is useful for making a distinction between actors, but the way to name the EU a 'norm entrepreneur' and Latin American actors as 'norm interpreters' can be reversed. Both the EU and Latin American actors have shown entrepreneurship at different points in time and have switched roles. Addressing the question related to who has been the entrepreneur needs to recognise the role of both actors and their shifting nature. This means that previous research has overlooked the mutating role of the European Union from a traditional norm entrepreneur to just another actor in a plethora of actors, in which it can also be an interpreter taking in and adapting normative contents depending on the way in which other actors, such as the Latin American ones, develop their norms.

2.2. Norm interpreters and the link between regional integration and interregionalism, norms and policies

The link between norms and policies deserves further attention at this point, as does the way in which we can understand the connection between the two norms that were at the centre of the analysis. The research has been built around interregionalism and regional integration as the main norms that have characterised and justified the European Union presence in Latin America. In Chapter 2, they have been presented as closely linked to each other and an argument has been made for why it is important to analyse them together, as norms that have been traditionally seen as reinforcing each other.

However, the empirical work has shown that the relation between the two of them is more complex than it has been assumed by scholars. As an example, we can consider the way in which the institution building function has been previously seen as ‘regionalism through interregionalism’ (Hänggi, 2003), concerning ways in which interregionalism ‘directly affects the building of regional structures’ (Doidge, 2008, 230) and ways in which ‘dynamics of interregional relations drive regional states to strengthen intra – regional cooperation, in particular so among the members of the regional entity which exhibits a lower degree of cohesiveness’ (Hänggi, 2003, 199).

Nevertheless, the way in which interregionalism reinforces regional integration and regional integration affects interregionalism has been contradictory in the empirical cases analysed in the current study. The examples from Chapter 7 show that programmes like Eurosocial and Euroclima have reinforced regional integration in Latin America, but have weakened the region – to – region relation with the European Union. A privileged relation with particular EU Member States has been consolidated, but the EU as a unitary actor is far

from creating a credible presence in the region in these new forms of cooperation (triangular and delegated cooperation). This shows that what has been traditionally assumed as a mutual reinforcing relation between the two norms is not working in the same way and to the same extent in all cases.

Analysing this link in other regional contexts would shed more light on the complex relation between regional integration and interregionalism, but the different examples from the EU relation with Latin America bring the first argument for affirming that the two norms do not always support each other and more caution is needed when assuming their mutual reinforcing role. Literature has assumed it due to the way in which international cooperation has been deployed in previous decades, but the new forms of dialogue, South – South and triangular, are less centralised at the level of international organisations such as the European Union, and normally involve a stronger relation with particular Member States. While this may contribute to strengthening regional organisations in Latin America and elsewhere, it may also involve a less interregional and a more bilateral relation with EU Member States. Assuming and facing the challenges that this implies for the European Union will become a key factor if the EU is to keep interregionalism as a crucial norm for its international presence.

It is also relevant to highlight the importance that the norm interpreter has in the reconfiguration of this relation. Different actors from the three regional groups – Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community – have contributed to this contradictory link between interregionalism and regional integration. The presence of the region in such spaces as the Ibero – American one has favoured the cooperation with Spain in different programmes with EU funding in detriment of a more unitary EU presence in the Latin

American region. Changing the focus of the analysis from looking at Latin American actors as traditional norm interpreters to considering them as entrepreneurs means also looking at how the European Union is being challenged. This, in turn, creates the need to acknowledge the increasing importance and relevance of spaces like the Ibero – American one, that coexist with other forms of region – to – region dialogue between the EU and Latin America.

While in the near future interregionalism may be further applied through the potential region – to – region agreement with Mercosur, regional integration following the European model seems to lose momentum and the South – South cooperation appears as the new solution for reinforcing regional processes of dialogue and integration in Latin America. The new model of diffusing regional integration as a norm is a more horizontal one, based on sharing institutional models born out of similar experiences, and the Latin American regional integration process seems to lose its ‘appetite’ for the European model.

The relation between norms and policies has also proved to be a complex one. The politics stream has been the main stream in which the norm interpreters have constrained the EU initiatives in the region (*proposition 2*). Examples include cases like Central America where keeping the dialogue at the SIECA level has proved to be inefficient and several EU initiatives have been deemed to result in failure. Not counting on the support of Central American presidents in the implementation phase has prevented a successful follow up of the EU initiatives when cooperation programmes finished. The case of Central America as policy entrepreneur of an interregional agreement has not been accompanied by a deeper regional integration process following the European model. If this can be seen as a successful policy initiative which has finalised with the signature of such agreement, it has been due to factors in the politics stream coupled by Central American actors. Efforts

include intensive diplomatic work by Central American Embassies with the support of the Spanish Representation in Brussels. Other political factors which have contributed to the signature of an interregional agreement refer to the failure of the Doha Round and the new management in the Commission that has been favourable to a region – to – region agreement, having Benita Ferrero – Waldner as Trade Commissioner for the months previous to the agreement signature. The contribution of the norm interpreter has been in this sense crucial for coupling the three streams and adopting particular policy solutions. In the case of Central America, this has meant using external favourable events and convincing European actors of the utility of an interregional agreement.

However, the results of different regional programmes have not always been congruent with the normative approach intended by the European Union actors, and examples have been analysed in which the European regional integration model has not been adopted, nor adapted by Latin American actors. The link between interregionalism / regional integration and concrete policies following these norms has been in this way conditioned and determined by norm interpreters. When norm diffusion (adoption, adaptation, resistance) has not happened as it has been the case of a number of initiative in Central America on fiscal issues, tax restitution mechanisms and the reduction of non – tariff trade barriers, it has been due to the fact that they have not been accepted by Central American policy makers as viable policy solutions and a coalition of actors has not been created in order to support such policies.

Once again, analysing this dynamic between norms and policies in different geographical contexts would bring comparative information and would create a clearer vision on the link between interregionalism / regional integration and the related policies.

The Latin America case has shown that the norm interpreter played a decisive role in these dynamics and determined whether a connection between norms and policies has been possible or not. When Mercosur refused the two – speed approach in the negotiations of an interregional agreement, it made impossible a policy solution in the short term, but allowed to envisage a possible Agreement following an interregional approach and coming out of a reinforced regional integration process. While it may seem the gloomiest example of EU negotiations in the region, the negotiations with Mercosur hold the potential to become an example of normative encounter between the European Union and Latin America actors when considering interregionalism. If the agreement that will come out of the ongoing negotiations will showcase a convergence at the three levels, trade, international cooperation and political dialogue, it can be one of the most successful cases in which norms and policies have worked hand in hand in the EU – Latin America negotiations and dialogue.

2.3. Norm interpreter, normative reactions and normative encounters

Norm adoption, norm adaptation, norm resistance and norm rejection are part of the first dynamic showing how normative encounters may happen when norms are translated into policies or how they may be prevented from happening when such translation is not possible. Norm adoption, adaptation and, depending on the initial norm entrepreneur, norm subsidiarity have favoured a normative encounter. Examples relate to regional integration and the way in which some of the EU initiatives have been implemented in the Andean Community and Mercosur through the Andean Court of Justice and Parlasur, respectively. Norm rejection on the other hand has prevented a normative encounter from

being achieved in this dynamic. The way in which Argentina, through its post – hegemonic vision on regional integration, has hindered a region – to – region agreement between the EU and Mercosur works as an example. The norm interpreter has played in this dynamic a crucial role since the resulting normative encounter has depended on its normative reaction.

The second dynamic which is related to normative encounters is even more focused on the norm interpreter. It starts with norm subsidiarity on the Latin American side, which has proved to be particularly challenging for the European Union, yet enabling for Latin American actors. As norm interpreters, Latin American actors have used the South – South cooperation as a core norm whose *centrality* has created a need on the EU side to adapt its norms and spread the use of triangular and delegated cooperation, a more horizontal and peer – to – peer model of dialogue between the two regions (*proposition 3*). Norm subsidiarity has been in this way the starting point of a dynamic in which the initial norm entrepreneur has tried to create new norms better suited to peer – to – peer cooperation. In both dynamics the norm interpreter is a key actor and this gives an additional argument for why considering the actors from a more balanced perspective is crucial for any future research.

The role of the norm interpreter in facilitating or preventing normative encounters is important both because of its normative reactions to the norm entrepreneur's intentions to diffuse norms (in this case interregionalism and regional integration), and because of its norm subsidiarity (as in the case of the South – South cooperation). In addition, we need to consider the role that interpreters have in embedding norms into concrete policies (as explained previously in the case of Mercosur, its refuse to follow a two – speed approach

holds the potential to create a normative encounter in which interregionalism is embedded in a region – to – region Agreement in the three areas: trade, cooperation for development and political dialogue). These two dimensions show how norm interpreters favour or harness normative encounters to their advantage.

3. The European Union as a normative actor and entrepreneur

Having highlighted the role played by the norm interpreter, this section goes back to ideas related to the European Union as a normative actor and a potential entrepreneur in areas related to interregionalism and regional integration. The argument has been developed looking at the three streams and at the way in which they have conditioned EU actors in their norm diffusion attempts in Latin America. In addition, an analysis has been made of the way in which the European Union has contributed to the two dynamics relating to normative encounters. And the final aim has been to analyse the EU as a normative actor in light of the cases presented in the current study.

3.1. Entrepreneurship, the European Union and the three streams

Chapter 3 has looked at different constraints that the European Union needs to face in its normative and policy initiatives. The three streams have been chosen as the framework through which these factors can be analysed. In the problem stream, the need to consolidate a partnership with Latin America through interregionalism and regional integration has been built in different documents and declarations since the 1980s when

Central America started gaining a place on the European agenda due to the security issues in the region.

In the policy stream, the two solutions that have been followed up during the last 20 years are the cooperation for development multiannual strategies and their related regional programmes, and the negotiations of region – to – region Association Agreements. Concerning this second policy solution, the EU goal has been ‘to promote regional integration and development through a *network* of association agreements that would be signed with all countries and subregional groups, adapting to the *map* of Latin American regionalism as it was conceived in the early 1990s’ (Sanahuja, 2012, 72). However, this has happened in a context of evolving Latin American regionalism. The European Union has continued negotiating with Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community as the three regional actors which have been identified as relevant interlocutors at the beginning of the 1990s. Nevertheless, other new actors have inherited the energy and political will with which the Andean Community, for example, counted two decades ago, to leave space to the newly created Pacific Alliance in which countries with similar visions on trade are finding solutions for improved regional integration (Peru and Colombia, mainly, as members of CAN).

The European Union appears in this context as trapped in a regional configuration that is out – dated and may justify the limitations encountered in the negotiations with the different regional organisation in Latin America. Identifying the right interlocutor (i.e. Ministers) has been crucial for the success of EU initiatives in Central America (within PAIRCA for example) and the same can be said in the case of the Andean Community (where an option would have been to sign a trade agreement with the Pacific Alliance instead of the

deal with Colombia and Peru). More flexibility and adapted responses on the EU side to the Latin American lax or open regionalism would have ensured more norm adoption and adaption and less resistance and rejection.

Another important point to highlight is the complex institutional landscape of the European Union and the contributions coming from the different EU actors. While the European Parliament has used its role in external relations strengthened by the Lisbon Treaty and has contributed to define the cooperation for development budget, it has also used parliamentary diplomacy for reinforcing its message on the importance of regional integration and interregionalism. Nevertheless, the message has not been always congruent. As example we can look at how the Parliament has been against a two – speed agreement with the Mercosur countries, but a few years later decided to create a Parliamentary Delegation with Brazil in addition to the regional one with Mercosur, showing more interest in developing a bilateral dialogue with strategic actors in the region.

The Commission has been traditionally seen as the EU policy entrepreneur due to its privileged position as the initiator of proposals to be sent to the Parliament and the Council (Ackrill et al., 2013, 876). In addition, thanks to its nature as the supranational institution of the EU, its attachment to regional integration and interregionalism has been seen as a guarantee that these norms will be used in the EU external relations (European Commission, 2009, 7). However, a number of cases presented in the current study have showed that the European Commission has been more a pragmatic actor than a norm entrepreneur, closer sometimes to a norm antipreneur. This is the case of Mercosur and the two – speed proposal, but also that of the interregional negotiations with the Andean Community which

have failed when Peru and Colombia agreed to sign the agreement on a bilateral / multiparty basis.

As for the Council, it has been the least prone to propose policy solutions related to interregionalism and regional integration, and the region – to – region approach has not been followed when particular Member States as Spain opposed it. Together with Germany and the High Representative, Javier Solana, Spain has expressed its concerns related to the interregional strategy and to the fact that ‘[it] has failed [so] it is time to negotiate ambitious bilateral FTAs with certain countries, as [it] has been done with Mexico and Chile’ (Santander, 2013, 121). This Council position prior to the Madrid Summit with Latin America in 2010 when Spain held the rotating presidency has helped to push for a multiparty agreement with the Andean countries.

With regards to the European External Action Service, its High Representative Federica Mogherini is playing a more important role in consolidating the relation with Latin America according to the interviews with diplomats from the region (as example, Interviewee 12, Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels). Yet, this has not been translated in a reinforced EU region – to – region approach, nor in different programmes to support regional integration in the region. It can be said that this favourable policy stream has not been used to open a window of opportunity and reinforce the interregional relation.

The last stream conditioning the EU possibility of coupling in order to open a window of opportunity favouring entrepreneurship is the politics stream. Taking into account the fact that the study analyses external relations, a need to incorporate dimensions from both the EU and Latin American sides becomes obvious. On the EU side, the Council role is a boundary one, relevant equally in the policy and politics stream. On the Latin American side,

the European Union has needed to face what has been described in Chapter 3 as a challenging and evolving regionalism process. The different forms of Latin American regionalism can be looked in a mirror and compared to the negotiations of Association Agreements with the European Union and their results. It was easier for the European Union to sign an Association Agreement with those countries and regional entities which have been closer to open regionalism (ECLAC, 1994, online) such as Peru, Colombia and Central America. On the contrary, the EU has faced major impediments in its negotiations with those actors where newer forms of regionalism such as post – liberal (Gardini, 2010, Sanahuja, 2012) and post – hegemonic (Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012) have been dominant, and examples include Ecuador, Bolivia and the Mercosur countries.

In addition to these EU and Latin American political factors, sometimes facilitating the coupling, sometimes preventing it, other actors are equally important. In this sense, the United States and China have played an important role. As for the United States, its presence in the region and its desire to achieve a regional trade agreement have favoured an increased European Union interest in signing Association Agreements with the three regional groups. The European Union objective has been to maintain its leverage in the region and prevent a potential USA deal from marginalising its presence in Latin America. Trade agreements have been signed with Columbia and Peru by the USA before a final agreement has been achieved by the two countries with the European Union. We can conclude in this way that the United States role in the politics stream has aided the coupling and opening of a window of opportunity making possible for the EU to sign such agreement. On the contrary, China has played a more challenging role. Its presence in the South – South

cooperation frameworks has been an advantage for Chinese actors that the European Union has started to compete with through the triangular cooperation.

The dynamics of the three streams are crucial for the study. The resulting entrepreneurship has been analysed at different levels, with both individual and organisational forms being taken into account. From the EU side, Benita Ferrero – Waldner and Ignacio Salafranca have been described during interviews (almost all interviewees from Central American countries have mentioned them) as important institutional facilitators of the interregional agreement achieved with Central America. In addition, when talking about the institutional dimension of norm entrepreneurship, triangular, delegated and South – South cooperation are all examples of how particular norms have emerged in particular institutional contexts and these same institutions have helped to reinforce them. The South – South cooperation in Latin America is closely linked to SEGIB, and triangular and delegated cooperation to the European Commission regional programmes. These institutions have helped in consolidating the recognition of both Latin America and the European Union as norm entrepreneurs in their respective fields.

European Union norms – interregionalism and regional integration – have been analysed in relation to policies applying them through concrete programmes. As mentioned when analysing the role of Latin America as norm interpreter, the relation between norms and policies has been a complex one. The same can be said about entrepreneurship in the normative and policy dimensions. Policy entrepreneurship on the European side has been analysed in relation to regional programmes during the last decade when the norms of triangular and delegated cooperation are better adapted to the South – South cooperation, to a dialogue between peers. The creation of these norms on the other side can be seen as

norm entrepreneurship and the actors are the same in both the normative and policy dimensions, they can be encountered within the Commission, creating norms and making possible their use through concrete programmes such as Eurosocial, Copolad and Euroclima, as outlined in Chapter 7.

However, in other situations entrepreneurship in the norm and policy fields has not been the result of efforts made by the same actor. As example, the European Union has tried to be a norm entrepreneur in the regional integration field in Central America through its regional programmes managed by the Commission, but this has failed and the policy part has not helped in promoting the European model. On the policy side, it has been Central America that has showed entrepreneurial initiatives by creating a coalition of actors able to promote and make possible the signature of an interregional Association Agreement. This means a complex relation between norms and policies has been showed through the different cases analysed in the current study and the agency in the two fields has been sometimes held by different actors.

3.2. The European Union and normative encounters

Normative encounters is the concept proposed in Chapter 2 for explaining the complex relation between all these elements: entrepreneur and interpreter, norms and policies, while considering the three streams – problem, policy, politics. The role of the European Union in helping to produce such encounters or preventing them will be analysed through the two dynamics already used in the section referring to the role of the norm interpreter.

In the first dynamic, the European Union as a norm entrepreneur has tried to diffuse its norms to the different regional organisations in Latin America and to socialise actors within these normative boundaries. In particular cases, the EU has managed to diffuse its regional integration models and to propose policy solutions which have been implemented by Latin American actors. This has happened mainly when the politics stream has been favourable and the cases of Parlasur and the Andean Court of Justice are an example of how the EU norms have been adopted when political will on the interpreter side has facilitated the coupling of the three streams.

In other cases, the idea of norm friction (Björkdahl and Elgström, 2015b) has been used to describe failed normative encounters in which the European Union has not managed to push its norms through policy solutions. Friction has been understood through differences in terms of both principles (as concrete dimensions of norms like horizontal versus vertical cooperation) and practices (joint planning and decisions on the lines of action and programmes versus being 'beneficiary' of programmes proposed by the EU). The way in which the *living well* norm has brought such friction and the failure on the EU side to understand and use these particular norms during the negotiations with the Andean Community has made difficult the dialogue with actors like Bolivia and Ecuador and has prevented concrete policies, as a region – to – region agreement, from being signed. Failed entrepreneurship has started in the normative dimension and has manifested in the policy field. And normative friction has been analysed not only in relation to other actors, but also inside the European Commission itself. While highlighting the importance of a region – to – region approach in practically all its official documents, the Commission has left open the option of reinforcing the bilateral relation with strategic countries in the region (European

Commission, 2009, 8), 'dividing its partners in Latin America in two categories of different strategic importance' (Interviewee 18, Diplomat of a Mercosur country in Madrid).

Concerning the second dynamic, the European Commission has needed to adapt its approach and has started using triangular and delegated cooperation through concrete programmes like Eurosocial, Euroclima and Copolad, addressing in this way the South – South cooperation that is being used in Latin America. The achievements of programmes like Eurosocial as a main example of triangular cooperation have included the Regional Model of Comprehensive Policy for the Prevention of Violence and Crime that has been approved by Latin American representatives, and the Latin American Network of Public Policies for Regional Development which has been created during the second phase of the programme. These can be examples of normative encounters made possible by triangular cooperation.

However, other examples can be seen as normative friction and failed normative encounters. These include the fact that this new model of cooperation is not one in which all actors are open to question their models of development. The European Union gets a place in a model of more horizontal cooperation, however, differently from Asia, for example, it is not being part of these projects with the aim to question and improve its own model, but the exchange remains a traditional one in which Latin America is searching for better solutions and development options with European funding. An additional argument is the fact that the planning and strategies behind the regional programmes are still proposed by the European Commission and the European External Action Service, with no formal consultations with Latin American actors.

These examples show cases of successful and failed normative encounters. The politics stream has been crucial in determining such success or failure and in most cases failure has been related to normative friction. Normative friction has been understood as differences in terms of both principles (horizontal versus vertical cooperation) and practices (joint planning versus unilateral EU proposals). Even when efforts have been made by different European actors (mainly the Commission) to adapt norms and programmes to the horizontal approach of international cooperation, the regional strategies have not been open documents discussed with regional actors in Latin America, and other traditional frameworks (such as grants, service contracts) continued to coexist, showing that there has been no full commitment on the EU side for triangular cooperation. This has limited the EU legitimacy in these new forms of cooperation and prevented a normative encounter from happening, mainly due to the politics stream. An additional point on legitimacy is related to how the EU has not been seen as a legitimate actor in the politics streams in crises like the Venezuelan case, where it has been treated as an outsider.

3.3. The European Union as normative actor

Few aspects need to be highlighted at this point concerning the way in which we can conceptualise the European Union as a normative actor. In light of the empirical chapters, there are important shortcomings in the literature which need to be pointed out. Previous research has looked at the European Union as a norm entrepreneur using norms such as interregionalism and regional integration in its external relations. These analyses have always focused on the EU normative nature, something inherent in the EU identity and history (Cerutti and Lucarelli, 2008, Diez, 2013, Jetschke and Lenz, 2013, Lenz, 2013,

Lucarelli and Manners, 2006, Manners, 2002, Manners, 2013, Merlingen, 2007). On the contrary, this study has argued that EU norm entrepreneurship is part of both the EU desire to diffuse its norms and of its need to adapt to a new international context. Norm entrepreneurship becomes also a reaction to norm subsidiarity and makes it imperative for the European Union to create new norms if it is to keep its normative identity that has been promoted as its distinctive element on the international scene since the EU beginnings. A shift from this identity seems difficult and improbable. Yet, adjustments appear inevitable.

With this argument in mind, this section analyses the way in which interregionalism and regional integration can be seen as relevant norms for the European Union in its external policies. The subsequent part looks at the lessons learnt from the interviews and ways in which the European Union norm entrepreneurship could have led to normative encounters preventing normative friction.

3.3.1. The European Union norm entrepreneurship, interregionalism and regional integration

Getting back to interregionalism and its importance for the European Union as an international actor, one relevant point which needs further attention in light of the empirical chapters is related to its collective identity function. The vision centred on how the European Union has diffused its interregional vision to other regions (Aggarwal and Fogarty, 2004, Doidge, 2014, Sanahuja, 2012, Söderbaum et al., 2006) has neglected the participation of the norm interpreter in this process and the way in which it redesigns the manner in which interregionalism is used on the international scene. This is the reason why when referring to the identity consolidation function in Chapter 2, a new approach has been proposed by splitting it in two dimensions, one that is inward – looking, an internal identity

consolidation function, and another one that is outward – looking, a normative shaper function, promoting the region – to – region approach and creating expectations on how international interactions should happen. This second outward – looking dimension is the one that shows the interaction between entrepreneur and interpreter. It creates expectations on both sides and for the future relation with third actors.

In this study, the external dimension relates to cases of changing approaches from interregional to bilateral ones. Once an Association Agreement has been signed with Colombia and Peru, expectations on both the European and Latin American sides have changed and this has been the forerunner of the European proposal of a two – speed agreement with Mercosur. Even if this proposal has not been accepted by Brazil, it has been made in a context in which the European Union has shifted from a purely interregional approach in the Latin American region to a more bilateral cooperation. While it is true that the internal dimension of the collective identity function of interregionalism is a crucial one which brings legitimacy for the European Union as an international entity and its existence as a product of regional integration efforts, the external one opens the space for a real interaction between the entrepreneur and the interpreter, which in the current study have been the European Union and Latin America. In particular cases the expectations on the Latin American side to interact with the European Union on a region – to – region basis have been contradicted and Latin America has needed to adapt to this new reality. These aspects can be considered as part of the politics stream, as external factors facilitating or hindering entrepreneurship and normative encounters.

The arguments question the way in which interregionalism and regional integration have been understood and used in EU external policies. A vision focused on EU internal

needs, objectives and challenges has prevented EU institutions and its policy makers to adapt to a changing reality, to understand how messages have been sent to partners such as Latin American regional organisations and to propose policies that would address pressing Latin American issues.

3.3.2. Lessons learnt on how to prevent normative friction

In lessons learnt during the fieldwork, a first idea relates to the need to include the partner / norm interpreter, in this case Latin America, in the formulation phase of the different strategies and programmes (almost all Latin American interviewees made reference to this). This has been a common challenge in the negotiations and programmes developed with the three regional entities, Central America, Mercosur and the Andean Community. Not doing this can question the role that the European Union can have in the longer term as an actor in triangular cooperation. It also creates additional challenges in a complex landscape of multi – level governance (European Committee of the Regions, 2009) and emerging powers, where actors like Latin America can opt to cooperate with different partners that are closer to the horizontal, South – South cooperation. Until now, incipient forms of dialogue concerning the priorities of the region – to – region cooperation have been conducted in the Summits framework, at the level of heads of states and governments, with participation from the Commission, the Council and the European External Action Service. However, this has been insufficient. The case of Central America shows how this discontinuous dialogue has not been enough, and the fact that the different fiscal and environmental initiatives have not found political support from the Central American side is an example in this sense. While heads of state have been consulted at the beginning of the PAIRCA programme, the

fact that they have not been involved, nor consulted during the implementation phase has prevented political support from being achieved.

The reinforced dialogue should include cooperation at different levels and add consultations between Summits. The multi – level governance (European Committee of the Regions, 2009) creates the need for an improved dialogue between the two actors, including besides political actors, the business, non – governmental and academic ones. In this sense, the recently created European Union – Latin American and Caribbean Foundation, proposed at the Brussels Summit to become an international organisation⁴⁷, can play an important role in the near future in reinforcing this dialogue at all levels. For the time being, Latin American interviewees have looked at the Foundation as a remote actor, with no clear mission and objectives (Interviewees 13, 14, 17, 19, 22, 25, 27, 29, Diplomats from Mercosur and Andean countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively).

In addition, the series of events organised in the framework of the Brussels Summit including actors from the business sector, academics and civil society have not received recognition, nor large participation from the Latin American actors (Interviewees 11, 12, 17, 22, 28, Diplomats from Mercosur and Andean countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively). They have been organised mainly by European actors with Latin American representatives being invited to the meetings, but without counting on their feedback and participation in the organisation phase. As a result, Latin American actors have seen themselves more as guests to these events and less as equal actors engaged in a real dialogue in the framework of the activities organised by the Foundation (Interviewees 11,

⁴⁷ The signature procedure by all countries is undergoing.

12, 17, 22, 28, Diplomats from Mercosur and Andean countries in Brussels and Madrid, respectively).

To build a new type of dialogue means making a shift from monologues to productive dialogue including and aiming for political will on both sides, with norm and policy translation incorporating the vision of the two actors. For Latin American interviewees the current dialogue has been more similar to a dialogue of the deaf than to a real one. Through the different examples analysed in the current study, a shift can be noticed from a world in which the EU diffuses norms to other actors and regions, to a world in which the EU norms are perceived, interpreted and sometimes challenged, sometimes rejected. And this needs to be addressed by a real change in terms of planning and deploying different policies. Taking into account its partners in all phases of international cooperation policies would create real EU partnerships with third actors, would transcend the traditional paradigm of North – South dialogue and would give content to the triangular cooperation as shown in this study.

The way in which interregionalism is used in the European Union external relations shows it as useful for legitimising the EU as an international entity (Regelsberg, 1990, 11 in Doidge, 2014, 40, Söderbaum et al., 2006, 371), but as a norm it will need to include a better understanding of Latin American regionalism and to show a comparative advantage to bilateral relations with the USA and China. If this will not be built in a convincing way, both European and Latin American actors can lose their interest and desire to invest efforts in following such approach.

4. Implications and Future lines of research

Implications

The empirical findings highlighted in the previous sections have several implications for how we think about and theorise norms and specifically norm diffusion, how we use the streams within public policy studies, as well as how we look at regional integration and interregionalism as international norms, and closely related to this, how we can understand the EU as an international actor.

Concerning the more general implications of this study and in relation to the norm diffusion literature and the three streams, there are several ways through which this thesis poses a challenge and offers a useful conceptual framework for further research. In terms of the norms literature, future research should reflect more on the role of the norm interpreter and should look at the relation between norm interpreter and norm entrepreneur as a more circular one, accounting better for the influence of the interpreter over the initial norm entrepreneur. While previous research has made a step forward and has shown the role of norm recipients in interpreting norms or creating new ones (this thesis has made use of the way in which Acharya has conceptualised such relation), an important point to take for future research is the fact that this relation is more circular and with direct implications over the way in which the initial entrepreneurs create norms and diffuse them through policy initiatives. These switching roles between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter are important aspects to keep in mind when looking at norm diffusion processes involving the EU as a norm entrepreneur, but also when looking at norm entrepreneurship beyond Europe. Norm subsidiarity remains in this sense still an

understudied concept that offers an appropriate framework for analysing these emerging dynamics.

In terms of the three streams, the research has shown the relevance of this framework not only at the policy level, but also and more important at normative levels. The streams show how the normative basis and the public policy implications relate and condition each other. Applying the three streams to foreign policy areas of the EU has meant looking into how the interpreter needs a differentiated role within the plethora of actors. While such agency may find limited influence within the politics stream in the way it was defined by the public policy literature, the argument in the current thesis goes beyond this perspective and shows how the interpreter needs to be considered as a differentiated actor whose influence is to be analysed as distinctive and in relation to the streams (mainly in the politics stream) and with the same relevance as that of the policy entrepreneur.

Getting back to the way in which the streams connect the norm diffusion literature and the public policy studies, it is important to remind how the normative encounters have been shown as being conditioned from the norm diffusion phase by the specific stream that becomes dominant also in the policy part and opens a window of opportunity. Using once again the example of the politics stream, ensuring the right coalition of actors ensures that norm adoption and adaption will happen as a result of the norm diffusion process instead of norm resistance or rejection. The politics stream becomes in this sense the dominant stream, and when the norm diffusion phase is overcome, this same coalition of actors will ensure the translation of a specific norm into concrete policy measures.

The concept that connects these two types of literature, *normative encounters*, is a contribution towards understanding the links between norms and policy and the way in

which the two strands condition and enable each other. This is also shown in the table below.

Table 4 – The link between the norm literature and the three streams literature

Norm literature	The three streams literature
Nuancing the role of the norm interpreter and accounting better for its influence over the norm entrepreneur.	Applying the three streams to the foreign policy of the EU.
Switching roles between norm entrepreneur and norm interpreter.	Making use of the idea of <i>interpreter</i> .
Norm subsidiarity as ground for studying these interactions.	The streams start conditioning the normative encounter from the beginning of the norm diffusion process (example: the politics stream also conditions the normative reaction to the norm diffusion process not only the incorporation of norms into policies. This becomes the dominant stream opening the window of opportunity for embedding the norms into concrete policies.).

Normative encounters

(Source: Own interpretation)

Concerning the implications for the literature on regional integration and interregionalism, they are closely related to a more nuanced and balanced way of understanding the European Union as an international actor. Once again, accounting better for the role of the

interpreter means incorporating a circular dynamic in which these metanorms are given content by both entrepreneurs and their interpreters, a post – positivist perspective that is more nuanced and accounts better for agency within the studies on these concepts. Another important aspect is placing a higher focus on how these metanorms are translated into concrete policies, a process mediated by their subnorms (as for example democracy, the rule of law or sustainable development). This translation into policies shows a much more controversial relation between regional integration and interregionalism than previously shown in the literature, and we can witness cases in which, when regional integration is being reinforced, interregionalism is put in danger.

The implications for how we look at the European Union as an international actor include starting to think about its institutions and agents not only as norm entrepreneurs, but also norm antipreneurs and norm interpreters, as shown through the different empirical chapters. These new EU roles need to be further theorised and empirically assessed. In addition, a higher focus needs to be placed on the role played by its Member States, and on how the relation between EU institutions and Member States defines and challenges these new roles. This focus is very limited both in the study of regional integration and interregionalism in the EU, as well as in public policy research that makes use of the three streams in the EU context.

These implications concerning regional integration / interregionalism and the EU as an international actor are shown in the table below.

Table 5 – Implications for the regional integration and interregionalism literature, and the EU as international actor

Regional integration / interregionalism	The EU as an international actor
Incorporate a circular dynamic including the interpreter.	Also a norm interpreter and norm entrepreneur, not only nor exclusively an entrepreneur.
Account for how these metanorms are translated into policies.	Understanding the new roles by analysing also the controversial relation with Member States, a focus very limited both in the study of regional integration and interregionalism in the EU, as well as in public policy research making use of the three streams in the EU context.
⇒ The relation between the two of them is more controversial than traditionally assumed.	⇒ New EU roles to be further theorised and empirically assessed.

(Source: Own interpretation)

Other specific points for future research

In terms of other specific future lines of research, the two norms that have been at the core of this study are interregionalism and in relation to it, regional integration. The link between the two of them has been explored: an analysis has been made of ways in which regional integration in Latin American has been encouraged through triangular cooperation. It has been shown how this has had an opposite effect on interregional relations between the European Union and Latin America, having encouraged more a privileged relation with specific EU Member States (such as Spain) and less with the European Union as an international organisation. This type of dynamic is important for the study; however, more empirical work of other regions (outside and inside Latin America) is needed in order to better explore how interregionalism and regional integration are linked, and to highlight

similar situations in which even if the literature underlines how they mutually reinforce, international events may show how they also limit each other.

This next step of research from this dissertation would be to include further regional actors in Latin America, for example actors with which the EU has a more indirect relation than with Central America, the Andean Community and Mercosur. As examples, UNASUR and the Pacific Alliance are relevant actors in the region whose regional integration process can be studied in relation to the interregional relations with the European Union.

An additional point to be highlighted relates to the fact that the current research has taken as a case study the relation of the European Union with different Latin American regional actors. An argument has been made in Chapter 1 for why this is useful. The fact that a relation based on similar norms has facilitated the dialogue between the EU and Latin America has been presented as an advantage for why it is useful to look at this interregional relation. However, and this is common to all case studies, some limitations apply. Norms like the South – South cooperation are common to emerging actors and regions. Nevertheless, norms such as the *living well* norm are very particular and related to the geographic context of the Andean region. In addition, the intensity of normative reactions and the importance that the EU gives to the normative reactions will be different depending on how important the actor is for the EU and to what extent it is able to challenge the EU norms. These can be examples of generalisations that cannot be made following the analysis in this research.

And a last point refers to recent events like Brexit and the European unity that has been questioned in different countries like France or the Netherlands. While references to European unity have been made in the literature (Zielonka, 2014) and may play a crucial role in the near future, this would be an interesting topic for further research. The current

research has focused on the interaction between the EU and its counterparts and has had in this sense a more external focus, focusing on interinstitutional EU dynamics, but leaving other internal dynamics like the Brexit as a next research step that could be of relevance for EU external policies in the near future.

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ANNEXES

1. List of interviewees

Number	Institution	Date	Place
1	Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels	25 th September 2014	Brussels
2	Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels	26 th September 2014	Brussels
3	Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels	20 th October 2014	Brussels
4	Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels	14 th November 2014	Brussels
5	Diplomat from a Central American country in Brussels	10 th February 2015	Brussels
6	Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid	19 th January 2016	Madrid
7	Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid	10 th February 2016	Madrid
8	Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid	17 March 2016	Madrid
9	Diplomat from a Central American country in Madrid	27 th April 2016	Madrid
10	Diplomat from Central American a country in Madrid	28 th April 2016	Madrid
11	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels	11 th February 2015	Brussels
12	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels	27 th February 2015	Brussels
13	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels	25 th March 2015	Brussels
14	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels	17 th April 2015	Brussels
15	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Brussels	13 th May 2015	Brussels
16	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid	21 st January 2016	Madrid
17	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid	12 th February 2016	Madrid
18	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid	23 rd March 2016	Madrid
19	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid	26 th April 2016	Madrid
20	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in Madrid	28 th April 2016	Madrid
21	Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels	11 th February 2015	Brussels
22	Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels	12 th February 2015	Brussels

23	Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels	14 th April 2015	Brussels
24	Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels	21 st April 2015	Brussels
25	Diplomat from an Andean country in Brussels	23 rd April 2015	Brussels
26	Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid	10 th February 2016	Madrid
27	Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid	12 th February 2016	Madrid
28	Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid	16 th March 2016	Madrid
29	Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid	24 th March 2016	Madrid
30	Diplomat from an Andean country in Madrid	19 th April 2016	Madrid
31	European Commission official in DG TRADE	9 th October 2014	Brussels
32	European Commission official in DG TRADE	8 th October 2014	Brussels
33	European Commission official in DG TRADE	11 th November 2014	Brussels
34	European Commission official in DG DEVCO	15 th October 2014	Brussels
35	European Commission official in DG DEVCO	20 th November 2014	Brussels
36	European Parliament Official	23 rd April 2015	Brussels
37	European Parliament Official	28 th April 2015	Brussels
38	European Parliament Official	14 th May 2015	Brussels
39	European Parliament Official	15 th May 2015	Brussels
40	European Parliament Official	19 th June 2015	Brussels
41	EU official in the EEAS HQ	15 th January 2015	Brussels
42	EU official in the EEAS HQ	16 th January 2015	Brussels
43	EU official in the EEAS HQ	20 th January 2015	Brussels
44	EU official in the EEAS HQ	21 st January 2015	Brussels
45	EU official in the EEAS HQ	22 nd January 2015	Brussels
46	EU official in the EEAS HQ	23 rd January 2015	Brussels
47	EU official in the EEAS HQ	24 th February 2015	Brussels
48	EU official in the EEAS HQ	26 th February 2015	Brussels
49	EU official in the EEAS HQ	27 th February 2015	Brussels

50	EU official in the EEAS HQ	26 th May 2015	Brussels
51	EU official in the EEAS HQ	27 th May 2015	Brussels
52	EU official in the EEAS HQ	28 th May 2015	Brussels
53	EU official in the EEAS HQ	19 th June 2015	Brussels
54	EU official in the EEAS HQ	25 th June 2015	Brussels
55	EU official in the EEAS HQ	26 th June 2015	Brussels
56	Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid	27 th January 2016	Madrid
57	Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid	19 th February 2016	Madrid
58	Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid	26 th February 2016	Madrid
59	Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid	31 st March 2016	Madrid
60	Latin American Civil Servant in an International Organisation in Madrid	21 st April 2016	Madrid
61	Diplomat from a Central American country in the Representation to the United Nations	10 th May 2016	New York
62	Diplomat from an Andean country in the Representation to the United Nations	12 th May 2016	New York
63	Diplomat from an Andean country in the Representation to the United Nations	24 th May 2016	New York
64	Diplomat from a Mercosur country in the Representation to the United Nations	26 th May 2016	New York
65	Official from the European Union Delegation to the United Nations	27 th May 2016	New York
66	Latin American NGO representative	28 th April 2015	Telephone
67	Latin American NGO representative	14 th May 2015	Telephone
68	Latin American NGO representative	15 th May 2015	Telephone
69	European NGO representative	23 rd June 2015	Telephone
70	EU – LAC Foundation representative	26 th June 2015	Telephone