

International Workshop

Conceptual and Empirical Perspectives on the Performance of Regionalisms in the Global South: From State Fragility to Africa-EU relations, and beyond.

2.-3. July 2020, Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany

Call for Papers

TOPIC

Research has increasingly acknowledged the rise and growing importance of regionalism and regional integration dynamics in the Global South. This reflects in a broad array of literature and a prolific research agenda focusing on comparative regionalism, overlapping regionalism, interregionalism including Africa-EU relations, or specific regional integration organisations (RIOs) and policy fields.

So far, the scientific debate on how to analyse and explain regionalism, specific regional integration processes and outcomes is yet significantly influenced by research on the European Union (EU). Theory-driven and systematic empirical studies on similar phenomena and observations beyond Europe are yet rare to find. This implies that research on regionalism in the Global South is often inherently Euro-centric.

Many shortcomings are specifically evident with reference to the performance of regionalism beyond the EU. While efforts have been made in analysing regionalism in the Global South across various policy fields **ranging from mediation, to state fragility, to trade**, and applying various different concepts, additional research is necessary with regard to the performance of RIOs and regional integration processes. Scholars have barely embarked on conceptualisations and theoretical frameworks to systematically analyse and explain the outcomes of regionalisms across various policy fields and regions, including hypotheses on the potential causal mechanisms at play and precise operationalisations of key concepts. Moreover, systematic empirical examinations and assessments on specific factors and conditions shaping the output and outcomes of regional integration projects are virtually non-existent. In addition, the performance of regionalisms in response to specific challenges such as state fragility and with reference to donor-recipient cooperation such as Africa-EU relations have so far barely been studied. In terms of theory, conceptualisations on the performance of regional organisations in the Global South are scarce, particularly because existing ones have been inspired primarily by looking at regional integration in Europe. Accordingly, many scholars have analysed the performance and effectiveness of the EU and provided for rich empirical findings and nuanced operationalisations, for instance in EU foreign policy. However, instead of simply applying these frameworks to regionalisms in the Global South, conceptualisations beyond European interpretations of performance are necessary since regional integration projects in structurally different environments might e.g. develop unique notions of performance, might be less focused on goals and their achievement, or confronted with diffuse challenges. These might evolve external dimensions of problem-solving, capacities and capabilities, alteration of behaviour, or social practices.

Possibly, the performance of regionalism is influenced by a variety of conditions. While intra-regional (f)actors such as regional hegemony, member states, non-governmental actors, or specific regional characteristics are widely recognised to play a pivotal role for the outcomes of regional organisations, there has been few systematic research on necessary and sufficient conditions affecting the performance of regional organisations. Such conditions might further involve e.g. cultural links within the regional organisation, institutional decision-making, donor recipient cooperation such as with the EU and African RIOs, the difficulty of the cooperation problem, or state fragility and institutional capacity.

OBJECTIVES

This international workshop seeks to bring together scholars and researchers who work on the topic of regionalism and aims to encourage and advance scientific research on the performance of RIOs and regional integration processes in the Global South. In this context, it aims to bring together research focusing on **mediation, state fragility, donor-recipient relations in the context of regionalism, and other topics.**

It seeks to provide for discussion and debates on the outcomes of regionalism in the Global South that move beyond European notions and European actors, and are inclusive with regard to actors or policy fields. In particular, the workshop seeks to embark on conceptualising RIO performance and its conditions by including existing frameworks to some extent but concurrently debating and developing new and innovative approaches. It aims at analysing and explaining the outcomes of regionalisms in comparative perspective – with a focus on the Global South. This shall lead to achieving systematic and profound empirical knowledge on the similarities and differences among regional organisations as well as understanding how specific conditions and (f)actors unfold influence. Methodologically, the workshop seeks to combine varying approaches to the study of regionalism including – but not limited to – quantitative analyses, single case studies, comparative endeavours, or other empirical approaches.

Successful papers address topics and questions such as:

- How can we systematically evaluate/assess the performance of regional organisations in the Global South?
- What conditions and factors affect the performance of regional organisations in the Global South?
- In what ways do intra- and/or extra-regional (f)actors shape the performance of regional organisations in the Global South?
- How do intra- and/or extra-regional non-governmental (f)actors such as member states, the EU, or international partners/donors shape the performance of regional organisations in the Global South?
- How do factors specific to the region such as state fragility shape the performance of regional organisations in the Global South?
- How do regional organisations perform in mediation efforts, also in cooperation with external actors such as the EU?
- How does the architecture of regional organisations shape their performance?
- What are the similarities and/or differences of regional organisations' performance in the Global South and what explains them?
- How do regional organisations in the Global South perform across various policy fields?
- The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods with the goal of better analysing, explaining, and understanding regionalism in comparative perspective.

Papers should provide for a (theory-informed) conceptualisation of performance and embark on an empirical approach. Analyses on regionalisms in Africa, Asia, and South America are most welcome. The conference is planned to lead to a joint publication (edited volume with an international publishing house) in which high-quality papers may become part of. In preparation of the workshop, the organisers will provide for an introductory paper that outlines conceptual and methodological approaches to the study of performance of regional organisations in the Global South.

- Please send an abstract of your paper proposal (max. 300 words; please include title, name and affiliation) by **29th March 2020 (deadline)** to: regionalism@uni-mainz.de
- Limited funding will be available to finance (part) of the travel and accommodation costs. Please, state whether your participation will depend on funding made available by the organisers. If desired, the organisers will take efforts to provide for childcare.

ORGANISERS

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