

The European Union and Latin America: winners and losers



The European Union in the World
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Eu-Latin America

- 3 moments
- The EU as model and influence
- Results
- Benefits for EU and LA
- Impact of US policies
- Nature of LA factors
- Covid impact
- Ukraine

Why the Latin American integration systems differ from the EU model?

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Central Questions

- Why in any case of regional cooperation or integration the EU comes to the picture?
- Why not an example of a working federation?
- Why not a reasonable effective international organization?
- Why most experiments seem to imitate one EU dimension?
- Why the EU is despised internationally and internally?
- Why ...

Concrete LA Questions

- Why the Latin American systems of integration lag so much behind the point of reference (or the outright model) offered by the European Union ?
- Why is it that there is a recurring contrast between official declarations that for the last quarter of a century have vouched to pursue the goal of integration similar to the EU ?
- What Latin American leaders mean when they declare that the region needs “its own model of integration”, sidelining the influence of the EU precedent?

Answers

- The main obstacle for mirroring the model of the EU is posed by the unfinished task of consolidating national identity: the production of the uniquely Latin American species of the *pensadores*
- National integration takes precedent over continental cohesion

Failed states or nations?

- Prospects of the appearance of “failed states”
- What has failed is the nation, not only the state
- The liberal nation, not the ethnic nation, has been the model in LA
- “liberal” nation is easy to design
- but it is “expensive”: it has to deliver
- When the country went wrong?

Missing

- Consensus: 4 freedoms for integration
- What LA lacks? Mobility of labor
- No Jean Monnet: no “expert” behind (Raul Prebisch).
- It is the Bolivar/Martí paradigm: the “priest”

Impact and pressure in LA

- Presidential figure
- National competition
- US influence

EU backing

- Close regions -- culturally, historically
- But low trade level
- Result: uneven marriage

Comparative paradoxes

1. Europe:

- EU has problems: but model continues to be effective
- Influence of ‘soft power’ is still valid
- Europe is unique, varied, but Europeans feel something in common

1. Latin America

- Natural affinity is obvious
- No major differences in languages, religion, customs, believes
- But “Latin American” is only recognized outside

Different war historical origin

- Europe: war; Latin America: few
- Brazil: its independence not from anticolonial struggle
- Perú, Chile and Bolivia (1879-1883: loss of a sea access
- Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay against Paraguay (Triple Alliance, 1864 -1870),
- Paraguay and Bolivia (Chaco, 1932-35).
- Wars in Central America: civil skirmishes. The so-called “soccer war” between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969: uncontrolled migration.
- War involving Mexico: aggressions of the United States.

Major difference

- Concept of sharing sovereignty: not understood
- Perception of loss of sovereignty
- “press pool only”
- Pooling: an absent concept ; no similar word in Spanish

Virtuous triangle

- Political will to integrate
 - Institutions
 - Juridical structure
-
- It is converted into a vicious trio

Two basic obstacles

- Overpresent President
- Speed towards fast schemes
- No common management: institutions
- Substitute: summitry, “cumbritis”

Evolution

- Mercosur: expectations and disappointment
- Andean Community: reduction and internal threats
- Central America: small and diverse
- Caribbean: insular and young
- UNASUR: different? security
- ALBA: reaction
- USA: NAFTA/ALCA, CAFTA

Problems

- Weakening of MERCOSUR
- Survival of CAP
- Poverty, inequality
- Allergy to deepening
- President, neopopulism
- The US model ... but ALCA failed
- Brazil
- So, the EU gave up, now deals with single countries

Hope and solutions

- Facing problems for integration?
- Options:
 1. Inertia
 2. Tabula rasa
 3. Learn from experience

The EU model?

- Regardless, it is still there
- So, best solution: learn from the current solutions
- Reform treaty after treaty
- No “constitution”, no fast track
- Slow process
- There is no other model or reference

World factors on LA



Covid impact

- Lack of integration in LA
- Concentration of remedies in certain subnational regions
- Benefits for the upper levels of societies
- Damage for the lower sectors
- Worsening of social and economic conditions
- Criminality
- migrations

Ukraine impact

- Winners and losers
- Majority of LA governments denounce Russia
- Some remain silent
- 1. Minority siding for Russia:
 - Nicaragua
 - Venezuela
 - Cuba
 - Brazil

Consequences

- In case of collapse of Russian policies
- Minority of backers of Russia: isolated
- Majority of backers of US-NATO-EU
- The special case of Brazil

Consequences for LA integration

- Worsening of LA integration
- Reinforcement of presidential powers
- Conversion of the “left”