

ALTERNATIVE REGIONALISMS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

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Introduction

This study seeks to address regionalism in the Mediterranean region, with a particular focus on alternative approaches that have the potential to be established in the region. Regionalism refers to the process by which states situated within a specific geographical region collectively develop common policies with the objective of strengthening economic, political, social and cultural cooperation. The objective of such cooperation is to enhance regional peace and stability, accelerate economic development and safeguard shared interests. Since the 1990s, the Mediterranean region has constituted a principal topic of discussion in the context of regionalism. The Mediterranean region is an area of significant geographical and strategic importance, encompassing numerous countries and characterised by a rich tapestry of cultural diversity and historical richness. The concept of regionalism for the Mediterranean encompasses a multitude of initiatives that seek to enhance collaboration between countries in the region on matters pertaining to economics, politics, the environment and security.

The discussion of regionalism in the Mediterranean can be divided into two principal categories. The initial category encompasses regionalisms in the Mediterranean that are based on territorial considerations. In this context, three sub-regions (Europe, the Maghreb, and the Levant) with strong political, cultural, and historical ties can be easily identified. Mediterranean regionalism involves interactions between these sub-regions across historical, economic, and security dimensions. The common historical and cultural heritage, economic cooperation potential and security threats of these regions serve as the primary determinants of their dynamic relations. The second category of regionalism in the Mediterranean is constituted by sector-based initiatives, which are based on four fundamental pillars: economic development, security, environmental protection and cultural

cooperation. Initiatives such as the Barcelona Process, the Union for the Mediterranean, the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly seek to establish a regional identity and to enhance solidarity by promoting joint projects across these sectors.

However, recent developments in the region have further complicated the prospects for peace and security. The recent Russian aggression in Georgia and its escalation in Ukraine, the Israeli military action in Palestine, the unresolved conflict in Cyprus, the Syrian war, the involvement of Yemen and even Iran in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and other factors contribute to an unstable environment that presents significant challenges to the formulation of effective regional policy. These factors create significant obstacles to the development of effective regional policies, making peaceful cooperation increasingly difficult to achieve.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section outlines the formation of regionalism and its historical development. The second section discusses the concept of micro-regionalisms in the Mediterranean. The final section analyses the prospects and challenges of greater Mediterranean integration.

Regionalism and its Discontent

The formation of regions is contingent upon a multitude of factors, including geographical, political, economic, strategic and cultural associations. The regions are shaped by the influence of common norms, tendencies, values and practices (Fawcett, 2005). The term region can be applied to a variety of areas, including continental regions such as Europe or Latin America, subcontinental regions such as West Africa or Southeast Asia, and transcontinental regions such as the transatlantic area or Eurasia (Börzel, & Risse, 2016). Some of these groupings are designed to reinforce others, as in Europe and the Pacific, while in other cases, such as in the post-Soviet space, their coexistence may indicate discord and even conflict (Fawn, 2009). In regard to territories, a straightforward territorial definition may prove inadequate. It may be necessary to refine the concept of territory to encompass the potential for partnership, interaction, and consequently,

cooperation. One approach could be to view regions as units or areas based on groups, states, or regions, whose members exhibit shared salient characteristics. This would allow for the possibility that a single country could be a member of multiple regional organisations, some of which have overlapping but not identical mandates.

The term regionalism is defined as a primarily state-led process of establishing and maintaining formal regional institutions and organisations among mostly at least three states (Börzel, & Risse, 2016). The concept of regionalism is shaped by the understanding of the regions in question. The expectations of different actors help to determine the norms, rules and procedures that govern these regions. Regionalism is a process that aims to pursue and promote common goals in one or more subject areas – therefore it is more a state-led project in the making. Regionalisation, on the other hand, is used to describe processes of increasing economic, political, social, or cultural interactions among geographically or culturally contiguous states and societies. In other words, regionalisation emphasises transnational relations between non-state actors, such as firms, interest groups, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as their direct involvement in the process of region-building (Börzel, & Risse, 2016).

The concept of regionalism can be constructed upon four fundamental pillars: economic cooperation, security and stability, political cooperation, and cultural cooperation. Economic cooperation allows regions to achieve goals such as trade liberalisation, the creation of common markets, and increased economic integration. Regional cooperation presents a substantial opportunity to enhance trade, stimulate investment and accelerate economic growth (Mistry, 2003). Security and stability enable regions to provide collective defence against common security threats and to preserve peace. The collaborative mitigation of shared security concerns also serves to reinforce regional stability and peace (Buzan, 2000). Political cooperation allows regions to ensure political stability and to develop common policies. The formation of regional blocs allows for a greater collective influence on global politics (Pevehouse, 2016). Cultural cooperation can

be strengthened through regional cooperation. The existence of common cultural and historical ties serves to facilitate the establishment of regional cooperation (Checkel, 2016).

The objective of such cooperation is to enhance regional peace and stability, accelerate economic development and protect common interests. In accordance with definitions that place particular emphasis on international order, regionalism has the potential to reinforce state structures and the process of democratisation (Falk, 2003).

The increasing importance of regions can also be attributed to their role in establishing regional order. The governance structures established at the regional level provide a significant and complementary layer of governance, to the extent that regionalism may influence the shape of world order (Hettne, 2005). It can also serve to challenge the oppressive actions of powerful states and global institutions, facilitate the formation of shared norms and values, enhance transparency, and enhance the accountability of states and international organisations (Risse, 2011). Accordingly, similar to global governance and international regimes, regional governance mechanisms provide the basis for establishing a steering and control mechanism, by which the behaviour of the actors within the specific territorial, economic or security region may be moulded in a way garnering a feeling of belonging and socialization (Finkelstein 1995, Gheciu, 2005; Flockhart, 2004). As can be seen in Ruggie (1982)'s example of embedded liberalism, normative orders that emerge in international/regional politics result in the establishment of organizations, and organizations transmit the defended norms to actors through the norm regimes they produce. Thus, actors who interact with organizations acquire new social, cultural, and cognitive meanings. In this sense, it is necessary to state that there is a mutually constitutive relationship between organizations and actors (Morphet, 2005).

Nevertheless, regional governance mechanisms do not even need to be institutional and sometimes closed system like regimes – in fact, the functioning of regional governance takes place in the form of a network of relations in which an

actor in a region of nations or actors from all levels of the region of nations try to influence it. In other words, the governance system is a mechanism formed by non-governmental structures as well as governments beyond the official state-member centred image of regimes – a system in which the structures envisaged by the regimes (governments and intergovernmental organizations) as well as the relevant non-governmental structures participate and assume official roles when necessary. These joint roles include the production of knowledge on issues requiring expertise, the establishment and maintenance of regimes, the determination of rules and appropriate behaviour patterns (norms), the development of general principles for the maintenance of peace and order, efforts to resolve disputes with good faith and consensus, the allocation of resources to the programs of international organizations, the establishment of technical assistance and development programs, and humanitarian and emergency relief activities (Rosenau, & Czempiel, 1992; Rosenau, 1995). Therefore, a genuinely successful regionalist initiative in the present era is characterised by the existence of a network of regional governance structures, encompassing both inter-regional collaboration and connections between state and non-state actors.

Regional initiatives therefore assume a variety of roles, including the promotion of economic development, the advancement of democratic practice, the provision of human services in war and disaster zones, the combating of terrorism, and strengthening cultural and social cooperation. These roles could exert a daily impact on both civil society networks and formal state institutions, with the potential for significant and far-reaching consequences.

Historical Development of Regional Perspectives

The historical development of regionalism can be traced back to the age of empires. In this context, regions can be understood as empires, spheres of influence or simply powerful states and their allies, which dominated different international systems (Fawcett, 2005). However, the emergence of regions as a result of interstate cooperation is regarded as a phenomenon of a multi-numerical states system that originated after the First World War (Fawn, 2009). In the aftermath of

the War, the League of Nations encouraged states and peoples to adopt a novel perspective on peace, security, equality and development. This resulted in a revised definition of international relations and a transformed normative architecture. Consequently, the experiences of the 1930s informed the nature of cooperation within the nascent European institutions in the aftermath of the Second World War (Fawcett, 2005). The concept of regionalism gained significant traction after the Second World War, to the extent that it was formally recognised by the United Nations (UN). In particular, demands from Arab countries (the League of Arab States), which constituted the first institutionalised regional cooperation initiative of the period, prompted the UN to recognise the legitimacy of regional agencies (Barnett, & Solingen, 2007). Regional economic and social commissions also constituted an early and integral aspect of UN operations, attracting a diverse array of stakeholders and shaping new agendas. In summary, the principle of regional action and cooperation was firmly established.

In the context of the Cold War, the maintenance of peace and security was achieved through the establishment of the Warsaw Pact, NATO and related institutions, which operated on a unilateral or regional basis. During this period, there was a notable increase in the number of regional organisations, including the League of Arab States (LAS – 1945), the Organisation of American States (OAS – 1948), the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO – 1954), Central American Common Market (CACM 1960), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU – 1963), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN – 1967), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM – 1973), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS – 1975). At a further level, the European Community project, constructed around the concept of an economic community, has become a model in which security and democratic consolidation are the primary concerns. In order to align themselves with the new economic and security architecture, these new pan-regional or sub-regional organisations have modified both their agendas and their terms of reference. The growth of regional activities, evidenced by an increase in the number of activities, a shift in the nature of memberships (between ‘North’ and

‘South’), an expansion of sectorial activity and a qualitative enhancement in the goals of these activities, has resulted in the emergence of a new regionalism (Fawn, 2009).

The growth of regional cooperation in the post-Cold War era represents a significant development in international politics. This concept is an inevitable consequence of the ending of bipolarity. The absence of superpower rivalry in all regions allows local powers to operate with greater autonomy. In the decade following the conclusion of the Cold War, the remaining superpower and other major powers (China, the European Union, Japan, and Russia) exhibited diminished motivation and capacity for intervention in external security matters (Buzan, & Waever, 2003). The process of globalisation has been also accompanied by a parallel increase in regionalism. The number of regional organisations and their respective memberships has both grown exponentially, as has the relevance of what is called the new regionalism. In examining the phenomenon of new regionalism, an expression that emerged in the 1990s, it is evident that there has been a notable increase in the number of regional organisations, their capacity, the scope of their membership, and the range of their activities. The advent of non-national and transnational actors, multinational corporations and aid organisations has brought about a shift in the normative framework of regional operations, particularly impacting developing countries where regionalism has become an integral aspect of the southern movement, such as the G77 (Fawcett, 2005).

Consequently, the phenomenon of regional cooperation is becoming increasingly significant. This is characterised by the formulation and coordination of common strategies and policies by different regions. There is also a growing involvement of cross-border networks, civil society groups and NGO activists in regional spaces. The concept of regionalism is still evolving. It has been a prominent feature of African, American and Asian institutions, particularly in the context of democratisation and human rights protection. Additionally, the role of non-nation-state regionalism has gained significant prominence, particularly in population, environmental and trade forums.

Criticism of Regionalism

In instances where the capacity of the state to address complex and diverse threats is limited, and where the agendas of existing multilateral organisations are primarily aligned with the interests of their parent states, regionalism emerges as a viable and desirable approach. The existence of regions is geographically, conceptually and functionally well suited to address regional governance issues and is therefore perceived as a useful aspiration by both state and non-state actors. Regionalism is therefore regarded as a goal that should be endorsed by regional and international societies.

Nevertheless, the notion of regionalism is not universally accepted. In some circles, there is still a conviction in the tenet of universality, the pre-eminence of the United Nations (UN) and other multilateral institutions, particularly in matters pertaining to peace, security, and development. The founders of the League of Nations and UN institutions, as well as those who advocate universal governance, continue to regard global objectives as the principal means of addressing international issues (Fawcett, 2005). It is therefore thought that regional and sub-regional structures act as a barrier to the process of international unity.

The capacity of states to engage in collaborative endeavours is contingent upon their proclivity to do so. In this regard, the constraints imposed by the principle of sovereignty assume a pivotal role. For some, the phenomenon of regionalism portends the diminution of the significance of the state. From a negative perspective, regionalism can be perceived as a strategy for asserting sovereign control, whereby sovereigns seek to avoid making significant commitments to institutions that could potentially limit their freedom.

Another issue pertains to the interrelationship between regional groups and dominant states or hegemons. The relationship between regionalism and hegemony presents an interesting challenge (Fawlett, 2005). While state sovereignty reduces the capacity of regionalism, powerful states are also prone to abuse. Critics argue that regional groups often serve the interests of different states, usually the powerful ones. In any regional organisation, one main actor often sets the agenda.

This actor may have been influential in creating and maintaining the organisation, or sometimes the dominant role may have passed to another state.

A final critique would be that despite the benefits of the involvement of non-governmental processes in the formation of regional mechanisms and equally in the increase of prospects for the democratisation of regional governance mechanisms upon their inclusion, states tend to either disvalue their role or consider them as untrustworthy agents working for the benefit of certain inwardly or outwardly state(s) (Willetts 2000; Betsill, & Corell 2008). The regional organizations, relatedly, rarely introduce monitoring or decision mechanisms for civil society access to state-led institutions. Relatedly, the pressures the civil society face in most countries, their access to regional governance mechanisms would be categorically blocked – thus the regions miss out the chance to benefit from the positive contributions of civil society organizations, academics, consultants, independent commissions, and active individuals who are in routine contact with the transnational sector within a region.

Micro-Regionalisms in the Mediterranean

The term micro-regionalism is used to describe economic, social, cultural and political cooperation at the level of smaller geographic areas or local regions. This form of regionalism frequently encompasses collaboration and integration initiatives among local communities, cities or small regions (Pace, 2006). In contrast to cooperation at the larger regional or national level, micro-regionalism prioritises issues and opportunities at a more localised scale. The Mediterranean region is an area of significant geographical and strategic importance, cultural diversity and historical richness, comprising numerous countries. Regionalism for the Mediterranean encompasses various initiatives that aim to increase cooperation between the countries in this region on economic, political, and environmental and security issues. The question of regionalisation in the Mediterranean has been the subject of on-going debate since the 1990s. Consequently, regionalism has been employed as a valuable analytical instrument to elucidate the collaborative

framework proffered by the Barcelona Process since 1995 (Panebianco, 2003). The principal research inquiry concerning the Mediterranean region is whether it is feasible to envisage the establishment of a regional collective security system in this region. Pursuing this line of reasoning, the pervasive assumption in the mid-1990s was that a region-building process was underway in the Mediterranean region as well.

Territory-based regionalisms in the Mediterranean

In the Mediterranean area three sub-regions linked by strong political, cultural and historical ties can be easily singled out: Europe, the Maghreb and the Levant (Panebianco, 2010). The concept of Mediterranean regionalism encompasses interactions between Europe, the Maghreb and the Levant in historical, economic and security dimensions. The common historical and cultural heritage, economic cooperation potential and security threats of these regions serve as the primary determinants of their dynamic relations.

The countries situated on the Mediterranean coast of Europe have been economically and culturally enriched throughout history by the existence of trade routes and the exchange of ideas facilitated by these routes. The legacy of the ancient Greek and Roman civilisations, the Renaissance and Baroque periods have all made significant contributions to Mediterranean culture. The European Union (EU) represents a significant economic integration platform for European countries situated along the Mediterranean coastline. The EU implements a range of projects and programmes with the objective of fostering enhanced economic collaboration with other countries in the Mediterranean region. In this context, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Euro-Med) represents a particularly noteworthy initiative (EU, 2024).

The Maghreb is a region that covers Northwest Africa and includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania. *The Union du Maghreb Arabe* (UMA) was established in 1989 with the objective of promoting regional economic integration. The UMA's stated goals include the promotion of free trade among member countries, the creation of a common market, and the acceleration of

economic development. However, the existence of political tensions and rivalries has made it challenging for the UMA to achieve these goals (UMA, 2024). In the context of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, Maghreb countries engage in collaborative initiatives across a range of sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, tourism and energy. The Maghreb occupies a pivotal position in the broader context of regional security and stability in the Mediterranean. Hence, the normative objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership include the fostering of economic and political development among the countries of the Southern Mediterranean, as well as the combating of transnational terrorism (Joffe, 2008). Cooperation is pursued with European and other Mediterranean countries on a range of issues, including migration, terrorism, and border security. The Mediterranean Dialogue represents a key platform through which NATO advances security cooperation in the region.

The Levant encompasses the countries along the eastern Mediterranean coast and generally includes Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and Palestine. The region has a Mediterranean climate and has historically been at the crossroads of important trade routes. The Levant displays a multitude of geographical, social, cultural, linguistic, religious and political patterns and structures, reflecting the influence of numerous civilisations. The region's diverse ways of life have given rise to a vast spectrum of potential social identities (Schwara, 2003). The Levant countries occupy a significant position in the context of trade and energy projects in the Mediterranean region. In particular, the exploitation of natural gas resources and the construction of pipelines represent crucial elements of regional economic cooperation. Euro-Med has been established with the objective of fostering this cooperation (EU, 2024). In order to ensure the security of the Mediterranean, Europe has established collaborative initiatives with countries in the Levant on matters pertaining to migration, terrorism and regional stability.

Additionally, there are significant initiatives pertaining to Mediterranean regionalism. The aforementioned initiatives are the Barcelona Process, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Parliamentary

Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM). The Barcelona Process, initiated in 1995, represents an initiative that fosters collaboration between the European Union (EU) and Mediterranean countries. The process engages in joint endeavours pertaining to political dialogue, economic cooperation and socio-cultural change (UfM, 2024a). The Union for the Mediterranean, established in 2008, is a significant organisation that seeks to enhance collaboration between countries in the Mediterranean region. The UfM's objective is to facilitate enhanced regional cooperation, dialogue and the implementation of concrete projects developed in areas such as economic development, environmental protection, energy, education and security (UfM, 2024b). The Mediterranean Dialogue, initiated by NATO, aims to increase security cooperation and stability with countries in the southern Mediterranean and to promote good relations and understanding among participating countries and NATO Allies. This dialogue contributes to ensuring regional security and stability. Non-NATO countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia are engaged in the Dialogue (NATO, 2024). The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) is a forum that promotes political dialogue and economic cooperation between parliaments in the Mediterranean region. Cooperation takes place on democracy, human rights and sustainable development in the Euro-Mediterranean and Gulf Regions (PAM, 2024).

Sectorial regionalisms in the Mediterranean

The sectorial regionalism in the Mediterranean is based on economic cooperation, security and stability, environmental protection, and cultural cooperation. Economic cooperation is typically a central aspect of regionalism. The objective is to enhance trade, stimulate investment and accelerate economic growth among Mediterranean countries. Collaboration in sectors such as agriculture, tourism and maritime is crucial. The Mediterranean represents a strategic bridge between Europe, Africa and Asia. Consequently, regional cooperation is of great strategic and economic importance. The principal driver of regional economic integration in the Mediterranean area is the Agadir Process,

which in 2004 established a free trade area between Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan. In 2005, the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) was established, championed by the Arab League, with the objective of creating a free trade agreement between the majority of Arab Maghreb countries and the majority of Middle Eastern countries (Panebianco, 2010).

The security cooperation in the region constituted the foundation of the Barcelona Process. The EU has set itself the objective of constructing a Mediterranean 'region' of stability and peace via the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership or Barcelona Process. In pursuing this goal, the EU has associated regional security with pluralistic regional integration and the development of regional identities and mutual trust (Adler, & Crawford, 2006). A joint strategy is devised to facilitate cooperation against common security threats, combat terrorism, illegal immigration and organised crime. The prevalence of security threats in the region, including political instability, terrorism, illegal immigration and organised crime, underscores the necessity for international cooperation (Attinà, 2006). The Mediterranean region is of critical importance for the maintenance of security and stability. Regional security cooperation is a significant factor in addressing shared challenges, including the fight against terrorism, human trafficking, and maritime security. In this context, platforms such as the Mediterranean Dialogue facilitate the promotion of security cooperation and political dialogue. Security cooperation in the region is a crucial dimension, particularly in light of the resurgence of the Israel-Palestine conflict following the Second Intifada in September 2000 and the subsequent stagnation of the Middle East Peace Process (Panebianco, 2010).

Another sectorial regionalism in the Mediterranean is based on the environmental protection. The necessity for environmental protection is emphasised, with particular reference to the protection of the ecological balance of the Mediterranean, the combating of marine pollution and the pursuit of sustainable development. Those engaged in the formulation of policy in the Mediterranean region have pledged to safeguard the marine and coastal

environment and to promote sustainable development in the region. For instance, the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), which was established in 1975, is a multilateral environmental agreement within the context of the Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It was approved by Mediterranean countries and the European Community as the institutional framework for cooperation in addressing common challenges of marine environmental degradation (UNEP, 2024). The Mediterranean ecosystem is confronted with a number of environmental challenges, including marine pollution, overfishing and climate change. In order to address these issues effectively, collaborative solutions such as MAP that transcend national borders have been developed.

The preservation and promotion of shared historical and cultural heritage, cultural exchange programmes, and educational cooperation are encouraged (EP, 2024) in the context of cultural cooperation. The objective of cultural regionalism in the Mediterranean is to safeguard and advance a specific cultural identity or heritage. These endeavours concentrate on cultural exchange, the maintenance of linguistic traditions, and the implementation of cultural heritage initiatives. The Mediterranean region is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and historical ties, which serve to foster cultural diplomacy and social interaction between the countries in the region. Organisations such as the UfM seek to strengthen regional identity and solidarity through the implementation of cultural exchange programmes and the undertaking of joint cultural projects (UfM, 2024). Nevertheless, the lack of consensus on common migration and refugee policies at the European Union level makes it challenging to devise solutions that are tailored to the social and cultural structures of the various member states.

Prospects for and Challenges of Greater Mediterranean Integration

The common tendency in describing the geography called Greater Mediterranean is to think of it as a territorial region embodying the area spanning from the Red Sea shores of the Arabian Peninsula, the Black Sea area, the Aegean

Sea, and the entire Mediterranean Sea area. The idea of Greater Mediterranean thus leads us to take countries such as Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and Georgia into account in discussing regionalism in the Mediterranean along with the European Union area, the North Africa, The Levant and Turkey (Aghazada, 2021). This broad definition presents both several opportunities and obstacles for regionalism and collaborative endeavours, as taking the huge geographical span and the political turmoil running throughout certain parts of this ‘greater’ region definition, the prospects for a peaceful regional order would be thought as a loose end (Panebianco, 2010).

The Russian aggressions in Georgia and recently in Ukraine, the Israeli war in Palestine, the frozen conflict in Cyprus, the Syrian war, the Yemeni and even Iranian involvement in the Israel’s war in Palestine contribute to an unstable environment that makes it difficult to formulate sensible regional policy thud leave the peaceful cooperation projections crippled. What is added to this is the territorial disputes in the western Mediterranean before and after the Arab Revolutions – the on-going friction that impedes diplomatic relations and regional collaboration is highlighted by the territorial conflicts including those involving Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Spain.

Furthermore, the regional peace prospects are further complicated by the involvement of outsider actors like Iran, Russia, and the United States. It is frequently more difficult to come to a compromise on regional issues since these countries have conflicting interests that might impact or intensify already-existing tensions. When it comes to the EU, albeit that the Union has long stood as the key agent for creating a peaceful order and a normative regime, apparently it has long failed to meet the expectations and hopes and impede mutual trust and the cultivation of a shared identity (Panebianco, 2010). Even worse, there have often been conflicting outcomes coming out of the EU’s attempts to resolve disputes and advance regional stability – as the Union is often considered as externalizing its Mediterranean identity and rather concentrates on *domestic* problems, including as political division and economic difficulties, which overshadows the EU’s

dedication to Mediterranean regionalism. Therefore, in discussing regionalism and peaceful order in the Mediterranean there are destructive subregional and country-based obstacles and the agents and structures of regionalism and regional cooperation in the Mediterranean have to deal with several deadlocks. (Gillespie 2009; Pierini, 2017)

Nevertheless, as described in the above section, there are salient mechanisms of sectorial cooperation that would serve keeping the region-building processes alive. However, as a final say apparently, the prospects for Mediterranean regionalism are often seized by the state-centric realities and the outlooks taking them as the sole mechanism for achieving a region. What is needed is extending the regional governance mechanisms, particularly the transnational ones, which would contribute to the materialization of processes and structures of a stable region.

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