

The european union as a model similarities argumentative essay examples

[Parts of the World](#), [European Union](#)



Introduction

The European integration (European Union, EU) is widely perceived, not just as an example, but as a model for regional integration due to its vast experience. The EU is greatly harmonized and the integration process is well institutionalized, advanced, and expanding. EU has recently pursued an increase in the number of trade agreements to foster the economic ties. Besides, it has undertaken comprehensive agreements with other regional groupings in the arena of trade, trade-related issues, political aspects, and development concerns (Dorrucci et al., 2002). The Latin America case, however, presents some empirical and theoretical hurdles. Even though the integration process has modelled the EU in several aspects, it has failed to move past an imperfect stage and unwilling to develop strong institutional structures. Latin America, however, has experienced several advances in harmonization of migration policies which lie outside the economic integration framework (Kaltenthaler & Frank, 2002). This paper gives a comparative analysis of EU and Latin America integration (in this case, MERCOSUR) and discusses the extent to which the EU can serve as a model and positively influence the integration in Latin America.

European Union is often considered as the epitome and point of reference in terms of regional integration process. It has long history, broad scope, successive enlargements, and undisputable success. This is the reason why different regional integration processes have often been compared to EU process, either to expose their narrow approaches or limitations, or to stress their ambitious objectives.

EU has inspired Latin America integration initiatives in terms of institutional

development or policy agenda. Besides, integration process in Latin America has adopted institutional designs and economic integration objectives that, in one way or another, resemble some of the features of EU model. For MERCOSUR, just as other regional integrations, most of the key characteristics are outlined in agreement with the EU model. These include the regional Commission and Secretariat, Council, regional Parliamentary Assembly, Court of Justice, and other key organs on economic and social issues. In Latin America, EC claims that their aim has not been and will never be to recommend a European model, “ but rather, where relevant, to share European experience with interested parties in Latin America” (EC, 2004: 11). MERCOSUR has done exactly that.

Differences

While regional integration initiative is inspired by the experience of the EU in terms of institutional development or policy agenda, the initial motivation for integration differs. The major concern for European integration process is security. For the Latin American, however, motivation concerns both political and economic reasons. Still, European integration process and Latin American integration process have two common features. The elite-driven or top-down regionalism approach is common to both. Also, both focused on trade as major policy area of intensifying interdependence.

The process of integration across the regions has continued to follow different paths. Whereas Europe gradually moves towards enlarging, deepening and attaining greater supranational level institutionalization and steadily moves to accomplish political and economic union, Latin America

has not (Mukhametdinov, 2007). It has not achieved the stage of common market, but has remained a victim of persistent internal crises. It has been subjected to political force of presidential leadership as well as powerlessness of institutional structure. Accordingly, aspects of EU process, characterized by supranational approach have not been carried out in the Latin America.

A large body of regulations exist in the European context. The regulations supersede and/or require legislation at the national level. The national level legislations signify initial impact and the structuring of law and institutions. Although a gap exists between policy implementation and principles, EU integration process progressively moves forward. Besides, its supranational bureaucracies symbolize a shift of authority, political negotiations, and the capacity of agenda setting to a field that shadows national borders. This keeps open the possibility additional policy convergence. Basically, this factor is deficient in MERCOSUR. Furthermore, there is a difference between MERCOSUR and EU in approach to integration via the law. The doctrine of supremacy as well as that of direct effect allowed the EU to rise from international law status to a community law status. Based on the law, the government is held accountable by citizens in case it fails to follow regulations of the EU, and institutional independent court is in existence to air out similar grievances (Haltern 2004). In the MERCOSUR case, such elements are not available and thus member states have high degree of flexibility to practice their own policy goals and at the same time limiting the level of deepening of the process of integration.

The inability of MERCOSUR to successfully bind member states to policy

agreements has made it have little cost to broken promises on commitments. Member states chose to abide by agreement and have an opportunity of pulling out completely if ratifications are difficult and conditions change at the domestic level. They can pull out without any significant costly repercussions. Particularly, in MERCOSUR, power rests with member states exclusively. Unlike EU, there is absence of regional institutional structure in MERCOSUR to bring unenthusiastic member state on board. This reason makes it appear to have advanced and progressive migration policy, which in actuality is not the case. Also, the presence of overlapping institutions and initiatives in MERCOSUR completely contrast with the Europe's more political and unified economic projects.

The integration process is as well different between Europe and Latin America due to dissimilar demographics. Across the two regions, the divergence in policy priorities and goals is as a result of dissimilar demographics. While Europe is against illegal immigration and effectively controls its borders, a selective policy is applied to legal migration. The policy is selective on aging population's needs as well as on a highly integrated economy. Latin America is an exporter of skilled labour. It allows intra-regional migration. Its migration policy reflected as reactive and crisis driven thus enable it deal with both political and structural economic problems.

Conclusion

As seen herein, the integration process in Europe has been, and can be used as a model for various regional integrations including Latin America.

However, regional integration is not a homogenous process; rather, it encompasses various modalities across policy areas. Therefore, the theories of integration cannot be successfully applied across regions. The neo-functional logic has not been applied by the Latin America. The non-state actors practically have a null role, authority has not been delegated to supranational institutions, and there is partial economic integration and political allegiances. In other aspects, the integration process in Latin America has greatly modelled the European Union.

Reference

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