

Ideological roots for regional friendship?

A possible determinant of regional intergovernmental cooperation in Central and South Eastern Europe (1990-2004)

Abstract

Recent research, particularly on Latin American democratization, suggests that contemporary regional intergovernmental cooperation might develop better when the political leadership of the countries involved in such processes has similar or converging ideological backgrounds. In other words, regional agreements would be created or consolidated more frequently when parties or coalitions with similar ideologies are leading the governments in most of the participating countries. If true, this is very relevant for the advancement of research on the relationship between the domestic and international spheres. Literature on the topic is still scarce. From a theoretical point of view, such a hypothesis is plausible – similar values will probably promote similar behavior. Yet, one still needs to understand how exactly, and especially in what contexts, similarities in political ideologies produce similar behavior in the international interactions. This study develops a model for testing this hypothesis using the case of Central and South East European regionalism. On the basis of this model, it shows that ideological convergence with origins in the party system is not significant for regionalism developed during transition but other ideologically weighted factors might indeed explained much of this case of regional cooperation.

Keywords: domestic-international relations, ideology, regional intergovernmental cooperation, Central and South Eastern Europe

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(1990-2004)

In comparative politics, especially in democratization scholarship, the parallel between the Latin American and the Central and East European transitions is very common and used particularly in the analysis of domestic structures and institution building (Huntington 1991; Huntington 1991; Linz and Stepan 1996; Diamond 1999; Bunce 2003). Partially on the basis of this frequent comparison, regionalism research commonly presents the development of post-communist regional intergovernmental cooperation as a rough copy of its Latin American counterpart (Fawcett 1995; Schulz, Söderbaum, and Öjendal 2001).

However, in the regionalism literature, the idea that there are many similarities between the two areas represents only a logical inference, sometimes supported only with *prima facie* assessments. A more in-depth comparison is difficult since, so far, the factors and mechanisms that led to the emergence and development of Central and Eastern European regionalism have not been thoroughly investigated. In this case, the Latin American experience could be useful for generating hypotheses.

One of the most interesting findings deriving from this experience is that contemporary regional intergovernmental cooperation might develop better when the political leadership of the countries involved in such processes has similar or

converging ideological backgrounds (Sunkel 2000; Frohman 2000; Hagopian and Mainwaring 2005). In other words, regional agreements would be created or consolidated more frequently when parties or coalitions with similar ideologies are leading the governments in most of the participating countries.

Beyond the Latin American case, at a purely theoretical level, the relation between ideological background and regionalism is highly plausible. Similar visions on domestic politics might yield similar behavior in external politics, especially when it comes to community building. Since regional cooperation is partially a community building exercise (Hurrell 1995; Adler and Barnett 1998), the connection is particularly relevant. In this paper I investigate whether this hypothesis can be positively answered in the case of Central and South East European regional initiatives and show that partisan ideology has no significant relevance for the this regionalism. The time frame was limited to the period of democratic transition, roughly delimited by the end of the Cold War and the year of the first EU enlargement in the area.

A possible approach

Since there are almost fifteen cases of post communist regional intergovernmental agreements and over twenty countries in the region¹, each having at least three different governments since the collapse of the communist regimes, many political scientists would choose a quantitative (-like) approach to this investigation. Even if an in-depth statistical analysis would not be undertaken, one would most probably build

¹ For this study I included only the Central and South East European initiatives and governments (former communist countries there were not part of the USSR, except the Baltic countries).

a matrix of data related to the ideological affiliation of each government and its activity in each of the existing regional initiatives. From this perspective, in order to test the possibility that ideological affiliation be significant with respect to the moments of creation or consolidation of regional agreements, irrespective of the depth of research, one would need several core elements, some related to the governments and some related to the regional initiatives.

From the point of view of government core features, drawing the list for each participating country from the region all the existing governments since the fall of the Cold War represents an obvious first step. Then, each government would be assigned at least two characteristics - ideological features and institutional structure. Ideological affiliation of the government is decided on the basis of doctrine. The measurement can be done taking into consideration, for instance, doctrine differentiations (i.e. socialist, conservative, liberal etc.) or distance from the ideological center (Huber 1989; Huber and Gabel 2000). Institutional structure is needed in order to control the degree to which ideological affiliation has an impact in decision-making, irrespective of the type of ideology. In other words, on this dimension one should assess the level on which decision-making and agenda setting related to regional cooperation are located. A useful classification might be, for instance, between the technical level, a political level with low partisan affiliation and a political level with high partisan affiliation.

From the viewpoint of each government's activity in the regional organizations, there are four main possibilities. A certain government can be an (1) active initiator (i.e. it clearly pushed forward the creation of that agreement), (2) a founding member, (3) an active member or (4) an ordinary (more or less passive) member. in order to evaluate

the importance of governmental participation, it would be valuable to include also the evolution of the respective organization. Thus, one could introduce the distinction between the creation, the consolidation and the stagnation moments of a certain regional agreement. The resulting matrix would look like the one in table 1.

Table 1. Modeling government participation to regional agreements

Government characteristics				Regional cooperation participation						
Country	Government	Ideological affiliation	Level of decision-making & agenda-setting	Regional agreement I		Regional agreement II		...	Regional agreement XV	
				Government participation	Organization development	Government participation	Organization development	...	Government participation	Organization development
A	Government 1									
	Government 2									
	...									
	Government n									
B	Government 1									
	Government 2									
...	...									
F	Government 1									
	Government 2									
...

Several hypotheses can be derived from such a combination of data. With respect to the role of ideology in the formation and development of regional agreements, the most interesting finding would probably be a strong correlation between a certain type of ideology affiliation and the founding moments (the *origin hypothesis*). In other words, governments with certain partisan composition are more inclined than others to form regional agreements. A second interesting finding would be a significant correlation between the ideological affiliation of a government and the quality of being initiator to such agreements (the *initiator hypothesis*). This would mean that

governments with a certain ideological background would be more inclined to propose/initiate regional cooperation. Finally, another important correlation would be the one between the ideological background and the moments of consolidation (the *consolidation hypothesis*). Any of these correlations would be particularly relevant in the case in which decision-making and agenda setting related to regional cooperation are located at a political level with high partisan affiliation.

At first glance, such an approach would be a good solution for testing the hypothesis of the ideological origins of regional intergovernmental cooperation. The concepts are operationalized in a way that allows for comparison of different types of governments and regional agreements. At the same time, the design is simple and straightforward. There are, however, several issues that have to be taken into consideration. Most of them are related to the characteristics of governments.

First, it is time-consuming and partially unnecessary to find complete data on government formation and duration for each of the countries under scrutiny. For each country, it is enough to find data since the first participation to a regional agreement and then, only for the periods of creation and consolidation of a certain regional initiative. This significantly reduces the time for data collection by eliminating all information that is not necessary for testing the correlations.

The challenges related to the ideological component are, unfortunately, more difficult to address. The most frequent of them is the measurement of the ideological background in the case of coalition governments. The issue is classic for comparative politics (Riker 1962) and it's still debated (Martin and Vanberg 2003). When it comes to transition countries, the measurement is even more difficult because there is no stable and consolidated doctrinal background like in the case of some Western

democracies, for instance. Especially in the first years of the democratization processes, the ideological foundations of the parties are extremely fluid (Wightman 1995; Vachudova 2005). This fluidity represents a relevant obstacle also for evaluating at a comparative level the “grand visions” of governments created only by one of the parliamentary parties. For that reason, the distance from the ideological center rather than categories such as socialist and Christian Democrat might be more useful for measurement purposes. However, in case of serious doctrinal blending, like, for instance, in Romania’s National Salvation Front government (1990-1992), not even this way of operationalizing ideology is very helpful.

To this difficulty, one should add the almost Sisyphean task of tracking down the institutional structure involved in the agenda setting and decision-making with respect to regional cooperation, for each of the governments of all the Central and East European countries. When it comes to foreign policy, it is notoriously difficult to assess whether the political rather than the technical level is responsible for a certain strategy. In this field, many political decisions are based almost exclusively on strategies designed within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Olson, McLellan, and Sondermann 1983; Hollis and Smith 1990). This happens particularly in the case of minor foreign policy goals. Regional cooperation is regularly considered such a direction. Therefore, on this dimension, the gathering of data on every government is extremely difficult and most probably impossible in a short period of time.

Deciding the role of each government in participating to these regional agreements is equally problematic. The negotiations for the participation could have started at technical level (or political level with low partisan affiliation) by the previous government while the membership could have been acquired during the term of a

government uninterested in regional cooperation. This is significant especially when the respective government may appear as a founding member or initiator. More importantly, very frequently it is very difficult to trace the level in which the vision on regional cooperation is created. The competition and overlapping between the technical and the political level/agenda make it very hard to decide where exactly the ideas on regional cooperation originate. Data could be adjusted to take into consideration these aspects but collecting such information is a time-consuming process as there are neither studies nor databases that treat this issue.

Another problem is to decide whether a country is or not an initiator of a regional agreement when it is a founding member. This issue is particularly relevant for testing the *initiator hypothesis*. Due to the limited number of cases, different input can significantly influence the results. Post hoc, founding countries can claim they were also the initiators even in the case in which the respective governments had less influence or interest than the other on the creation of that event. For instance, in its foreign policy documents the Romanian government is sometimes claiming that it was an initiator or very active founding member of the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP).² It is indeed true that it was in Bucharest that the most important document of this agreement (*The Charter on Good Neighborhood Relations*) was signed. However, most official documents of other governments and policy analyses indicate that the idea and the impetus for the creation of SEECP belong rather to the Bulgarian government. This situation clearly shows the importance of sources and particularly of the timing. At the same time, there might be also the case that the interests of two or more countries converge and all these governments can be

² See, for instance, the presentation of the regional agreements to which Romania is part of on the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs official webpage (www.mae.ro).

considered initiators. Austria and Romania, for instance, are both initiators of the Danube Cooperation Process (DCP), while in the case of the Visegrád Group all the founding members have been initiators but at different moments.

Such difficulties show that the approach is very costly, particularly in terms of time. The method requires a big amount of information that would not be used to its whole potential. Moreover, supposing that all the data can be indeed collected for all the governments of all the countries under scrutiny, the testing of the hypotheses would, ideally, provide some correlation. The explanation of the findings would still rely heavily on process tracking. Since the measurement already requires an in-depth assessment of each case, the costs of the research would be too high compared to the added value that can be brought by the rigor of this approach. In the following pages, I propose a simpler, more cost efficient and equally reliable method to assess the role of ideological factors in the creation and development of regional initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe.

The alternative approach

The alternative is based on the idea that there are cases of regional cooperation that are highly unlikely to have been significantly influenced by partisan ideology. Selecting only the initiatives that are likely to be influenced by this factor reduces the costs and enhances the understanding of the mechanisms through which ideology could have had an impact on the creation and consolidation of regional agreements.

The first question one should ask is whether it is useful to include in the pool of cases all the existing instances of regional cooperation. I suggest that the number of cases

can be significantly diminished to a relevant sample if one takes into account the logical premise that ideological convergence is more probable in small regional agreements (three to five members). Second-wave regionalism³ indeed suggests that the higher the number of participants the smaller the chance to detect noteworthy ideological convergence (Hurrell 1995).

Another premise one could use for case selection is that policy oriented initiatives are more technical both in manifestation and origins, due to their nature and because their political value is usually low. Therefore, it would be more useful to choose the politically oriented initiatives.

Fig. 1 Orientation of regional intergovernmental cooperation

O R I E N T A T I O N		
	POLITICAL	POLICY
CHARACTERISTICS		Security
	The main purpose of such cooperation is to establish, maintain and develop political dialogue in the region. For this reason, it might seem loose, without significant achievements.	The main purpose of such cooperation is to create structures and instruments allowing each of the participant countries to feel more secure at regional level.
		Economic
		The main purpose of such cooperation is to promote the development of smoother economic exchanges at regional level.

³ Second-wave regionalism is a label frequently used to describe the initiatives that were developed after the collapse of the bipolar system. While the Cold war regionalism was heavily influenced by the ideological confrontation of the two blocks, second-wave regionalism is lacking this confrontational dimension and is significantly more complex and diverse than its predecessor (Fawcett 1995).

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the possible orientations a regional intergovernmental agreement might have. Given their political weight, regional agreements focused either on security or welfare-enhancement could be also included in the sample.

As noted in the previous section, the ideological fluidity present in the political sphere of Central and East European countries in the early 1990s makes the evaluation of this factor's impact rather problematic. In order to facilitate the assessment process and allow for a meaningful comparison, one should choose to investigate those regional initiatives where the former communist countries are in majority or, ideally, they are the only members. This would avoid the confusion that may appear when mixing in the testing process governments created in a political environment with well-established ideological distinctions and governments formed by parties with minimal experience in articulating such distinctions.

The simultaneous application of these criteria produces a sample of only two cases. These are the Baltic Cooperation (BC) and the Visegrád Group. The Baltic Cooperation was initiated, however, before the member states were even independent and before a party system could express a distinguishable ideological competition. Moreover, since then, this regional agreement experienced a continuous decline and no significant moment of consolidation (Archer 1999). For these reasons, it can be let aside.

The collection of information concerning the participating governments could be also significantly improved in terms of costs if one chooses to document this dimension only for the periods significant for the evolution of the respective regional organizations. If there is no significant activity with political potential then it has not much sense to look for the ideological component. In other words, data could be

collected only for the moments of creation and consolidation of the initiatives. This approach is consistent with research on the political determinants of international organizations (Archer 1992).

When it comes to the moments of creation, the Visegrád Group provides some evidence to support the *origin hypothesis*. The creation of the organization was highly politicized and, at that time, the governments of the member states were politically akin. Hungary and Poland had right center cabinets and the Czechoslovak government was the result of a centrist coalition (Schöpflin 1991; Simon 1997). Their affinity, however, seems to be rather motivated by a similar foreign policy goal – mainly the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, as well as by the fact that all these governments had clearly a pro-democratic discourse. In other words, the anticommunist debates and issues influenced these countries agenda, including in foreign policy matters, while the partisan affiliation of the leadership had been less relevant (Ghica 2007). A brief review of the Visegrád Group creation context supports this idea.

The 1990 conferences between the representatives of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland are the most plausible roots for the contemporary cooperation (Cottey 1999, 70).⁴ Before that, in 1989, the Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki proposed a closer cooperation among the three countries, heavily influenced by the 1970s and 1980s debates on Central Europe. In 1990, the Czechoslovak President Václav Havel adopted Mazowiecki's arguments in favor of a stronger cooperation between the three countries, and proposed a reunion in Bratislava (Bunce 1997, 248; Cottey 1999, 71). This was nevertheless a failure because of the many disagreements on the scope and

⁴ The most important was a summit held in Bratislava. There, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland established a *Trilateral Group*. This initiative's purpose was to coordinate the internal and international relations of the three states (Cottey 1999; Bunce 1997).

purposes of this collaboration. After other meetings, Václav Havel, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall finally agreed at Visegrád to intensify cooperation in “matters of their security,” economy, civil society (including education, churches and social organizations), ecology, culture, and communications (Visegrád Declaration 1990). Beyond this common goal, what brought the leadership of these states together was not a partisan affiliation but rather the fact that the epistemic communities involved in the process of regional cooperation in the early 1990s were still dominated by the anticommunist agenda and discourse.

Consolidation moments in the case of the Visegrád Group (V4), and of Central and South East European regionalism are infrequent. V4 did not have significant moments of consolidation. These are expressed at least through political declarations for the strengthening or renewal of the basis for the regional initiative. The Visegrád Group experienced mostly periods of stagnation since its creation in 1991 (Cottey 1999; Vachudova 2005). Certain moments of renewal indeed existed. The creation of the Central and European Free Trade Agreement (1993) by the Visegrád countries and the common discussions around the moment of acquiring NATO membership are the most visible examples.

However, despite an inertial rhetoric of common action, the tensions within the group increasingly accumulated. NATO seems to be the subject of the first major disagreement between the four partner countries. In 1994 at a summit organized by the United States in Prague with the Visegrád states for introducing the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Czechs adopted an individualist attitude justified by the conviction that the Czech republic was more advanced economically and

politically than the other three. The Polish delegation accused the Czechs of having “hijacked the summit” but this did not impress the Czechs too much because several months later, Václav Klaus rejected both a closer cooperation within the Visegrád group and a formally common application for EU membership (Cotter 1999, 78).

The tensions were in fact more deeply rooted. The Hungarian-Slovak conflicts over the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric plant intensified after the split of Czechoslovakia so that in the summer of 1993 Hungary opposed Slovakia’s membership of the Council of Europe (Cotter 1999, 80). For these reasons and many other issues, since 1994 the Visegrád Group has declined continuously. After a brief 1997 revival related to NATO admission, the cooperation between the four countries almost ceased, which made many consider that by that time the group already came to its end. Interestingly, the revitalization of the collaboration between the four governments outside the structures of the Visegrád Group that followed the NATO summit seems to have been possible particularly because there had been previous cooperation within the Visegrád framework (Bozóki ms.).

Inside Visegrád, however, the situation became worse. The crisis occurred in February 2002 when the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, in the context of the electoral campaign, criticized the Czechoslovak President Edvard Beneš decrees issued immediately after the World War II. According to one of these decrees, the Czechoslovak citizens of German or Hungarian origins that had collaborated with the Nazis had been expelled and their properties had been confiscated by the Czechoslovak state. The Czechs and Slovaks interpreted the Hungarian declarations as an attempt to reverse the results of the World War II, and the conference that had to

take place a month later was cancelled. The Poles and the representatives of the EU proposed to the conflicting parts to discuss (which happened at the end of 2002 but the animosities have remained), arguing that events that occurred more than fifty years earlier are not and should not be important for the present common effort to integrate into the European structures.

At the same time, one should notice that only when, in the post-Mečiar period, Slovakia had clearly chosen a more democratic path, this country has gained diplomatic support from the other Visegrád partners.⁵ This could suggest that similarity of the values supported by the participating governments could have an impact on the strengthening of regional cooperation in the moments of consolidation. Yet, these values were never expressed in partisan affiliation terms.

In short, there is not enough evidence to support neither the *origin hypothesis* nor *consolidation hypothesis* on the basis of partisan affiliation. However, a certain common ideological position existed especially in the early 1990s. This was partially expressed as a pro-Western discourse about the importance of democratic values. At the same time, the case suggests that the convergence of ideologies would matter rather when there is a similar or common goal for the respective group of countries. This implies that the similarity of values might be only a catalyst for regional groupings, while the similarity of problems and political objectives could be more relevant as factors for the emergence of regional cooperation. Finally, the ideological roots of regionalism should be sought rather in the regional identity discourse and its determinants than in the partisan ideology.

⁵ The most significant act with this respect is the *Bratislava Summit Declaration*, signed by the representatives of the four countries on 14 May 1999.

The role of the initiators

Since it focuses on the founding or consolidating moments, this alternative approach could explore, however, only the *origin hypothesis* and the *consolidation hypothesis*. In order to test the *initiator hypothesis*, namely to test whether the governments initiating regional agreements have a certain partisan ideology more frequently, there are two complementing possibilities. First, one should find the countries that initiated such agreements more than once and look at the variance in the government ideological background. The second path is to look at the ideological affiliation of all governments of Central and South Eastern Europe that were initiators.

Hungary is one of the initiators of both the Visegrád Group and the Central European Initiative (Quadrilaterale). However, the Quadrilaterale derives from a rather technical regional agreement concluded in 1978, the Alps-Adriatic Working Community (AAWC). The period in the early 1990s when the AAWC was transformed into the Quadrilaterale overlaps the period when the Visegrád Group was created. This case does not allow for variance. However, it suggests that, at that time, the Hungarian government, as well as the other founding members perceived regionalism as an important means for achieving certain foreign policy goals.

The other instance of multiple initiative is Romania, assuming that, together with the Bulgarian government initiated (or played an active part in the founding of) the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), and considering that it initiated the Danube Cooperation Process, together with the Austrian government. At the moment of the SEECP's creation (1996), the government in Bucharest was a center-right

coalition, while in the case of the DCP (2002) Romania had a left-party government (Social-Democrats). The SEECP remained an important part of the Romanian foreign policy during the social-democratic government and there is no relevant difference in the foreign policy documents when it comes to this goal. However, between 1990-1996, regionalism did not play any significant role in the Romanian foreign policy, except for hard security issues. This suggests that regionalism might be partially correlated to democratic consolidation.

This idea is supported by the fact that all governments in the area that initiated at least once a regional agreement were committed towards democratic reform or followed governments that were committed to such a path. Only an in-depth analysis of each case can provide more evidence and a possible explanation for this hypothesis. A thorough investigation is required particularly because there are several factors that make any correlation difficult to interpret. One of these is the overlapping of electoral cycles, a fact which may affect the interpretation of the results. This analysis, which for length concerns cannot be included here, is discussed at length in my PhD thesis.

This brief overview indicates, however, that there is almost no relationship between the partisan ideological affiliation and regionalism in the Central and South East European countries. The ideological determinants of regionalism seem to belong rather to the regional identity discourse and to the impact of the democratization process.

Conclusions

This study investigated the possibility that contemporary regional intergovernmental cooperation develop better when the political leadership of the countries involved in such processes has similar or converging ideological backgrounds. The hypothesis was derived from the Latin American case, which is considered frequently a good indicator for the Central and South East European democratization. That case suggested that the governmental ideology expressed through partisan affiliation is the most relevant ideological determinant. The Central and South East European case indicates that partisan affiliation has no significant impact on the development regionalism. However, an ideological component can be perceived in the form of the pro-democratic discourse, which is more frequent for governments formed by parties that were not created on the basis of the former communist parties.

A possible explanation of the existing difference between these two cases is the fact that the ideological convergence was observed in Latin American regionalism only recently, after several decades of democratization and especially after a long period of partisan ideology consolidation. In Central and South Eastern Europe, many regional initiatives were created in the period when this partisan ideology was very fluid. The Latin American case has also several particularities, which the Central and South East European case does not have. The comparison suggests, however, that partisan ideology might be relevant for the development of regionalism in democratic regimes with consolidated party systems (which does not necessarily equates with consolidated democracies).

The paper also showed that, despite the significant number of cases, a quantitative (-like) analysis for Central and South East European regionalism is costly and difficult

to undertake. A process tracking approach is more suitable. Several logical assumptions and the existing historical evidence suggested that the testing of the ideological determinants on the basis of partisan affiliation could be meaningfully investigated for the transition regionalism especially for the moments of creation and consolidation of

- (1) small regional groupings (three to five members);
- (2) which are politically oriented or have a high political value;
- (3) whose membership is in majority or exclusively formed by transition countries.

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Appendix 1

Regional intergovernmental initiatives in Central and South Eastern Europe

	AAWC 1978	CEI 1989	BC 1990	V4 1991	CEFTA 1991 1994 (r)	BSEC 1992	SEECF 1996	SECI 1996	DCP 2002
R. Poland		1991		F	F-2004	O			
Czechoslovakia (1919-1993)		1990-1993		F-1993	F-1993				
Czech Republic (since 1993)		1990*		F*	F*-2004	O			F
R. Slovakia (since 1993)		1990*		F*	F*-2004	O			F
R. Hungary	P 1988	F		F	F - 2004			F	F
Romania		1995			1997-2007	F	F	F	F
R. Bulgaria		1995			1999-2007	F	F	F	F
S.F.R. Yugoslavia (1963-1992)	PF	F							
F.R. Yugoslavia (1992-2003) / Serbia and Montenegro (2003- 2006)	-----	2000-2006		-----	-----	2004-2006	F	2000-2006	F
R. Montenegro (since 2006)		2006			2007		2007		
R. Serbia (since 2006)		2000*			2007	2006	F*	2000*	F*
Kosovo / UNIMK (since 1999)					2007			O	
Bosnia and Herzegovina (since 1992)		1992			2007		2001	F	F
F.Y.R.O.M. / R. Macedonia (since 1991)		1993			2006		F	F	
R. Croatia (since 1991)	F*	1992			2003	O	2005	F	F
R. Slovenia (since 1991)	F*	1992			1996-2004			F	F
R. Albania		1994			2007	F	F	F	
USSR (1922-1991)									
Russian Federation (since 1991)						F			G
Belarus (since 1991)		1995				O			
R. Moldova (since 1991)		1996			2007	F	2006	F	F
Ukraine (since 1991)		1995				F		O	F
R. Armenia (since 1991)						F			
R. Azerbaijan (since 1991)						F		O	
Georgia (since 1991)						F		O	
Uzbekistan (since 1991)									
R. Estonia (since 1991)			F						
R. Lithuania (since 1991)			F						
R. Latvia (since 1991)			F						
Sweden									
Denmark									
Finland									
Germany	PF 1978-2005					O		O	F
Austria	PF	F				O		O	F
Italy	PF	F				O		O	
Greece						F	F	F	
Turkey						F	F	F	
Switzerland	P1989-1997								
Norway									
Iceland									
European Commission									F

This table was created on the basis of the founding treaties and other official documents of the regional arrangements under scrutiny. It includes only those states or international organizations that are or were members of at least one of these regional agreements. Observer/guest countries or organizations that have never been members of at least one of these groupings are not included.

Legend

 New EU members	 EU candidate countries	 International organizations or institutions	 United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
 Old EU members	 EU potential candidate countries	 Regional agreement	
 EFTA members	 CIS members	 Regional framework of cooperation	

F Founding member	P Member through one or several administrative units	* Member as successor of another state
O Observer	M Member partners	(r) Year of ratification by the founding members (if different from the year of creation)
G Guest	S Supporting partners	

AAWC – Alps-Adriatic Working Community

AII – Adriatic Ionian Initiative

BC – Baltic Cooperation

BSEC – Black Sea Economic Cooperation

CBSS – Council of the Baltic Sea States

CEFTA – Central European Free Trade Agreement

CEI – Central European Initiative (previously known as Quadrilateral, Pentagonal and Hexagonal Cooperation, respectively)

DCP – Danube Cooperation Process

GUAM – Group of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and R. of Moldova

NBS – Nordic Baltic Council

Q4 – Quadragonale Cooperation (previously known as Trilateral cooperation of Italy, Hungary and Slovenia)

SECI – Southeast European Cooperative Initiative

SEECF – South East European Cooperation Process

SP – Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

UNIMK – United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

V4 – Visegrád Group