

About the Project

Background

Closed seas play very diverse roles in relations between their bordering states: they unite and separate. They are places of transit, a shared –sometimes disputed- space, an element of joint identity, a common heritage.

Sub-regions provide an additional arena for the European Union to interact with its closest neighbours, where sub-regional cooperation, i.e., international cooperation between states (and sub-state governments) in geographical groups which are smaller than a continent, provides a valuable complement to the EU's foreign policy aim of peace, stability and prosperity.

The EU relations with its neighbourhood are an issue linked to the debates about the role of the EU as a global actor: model of governance, promoter of multilateralism, normative power or, even security power and the nature of its activities.

Objectives and methodology

The Main goal of the EU4SEAS project is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the sub-regional multilateralism (notion and practice) in the four maritime basins (Mediterranean, Baltic, Black and Caspian Seas) as a specific approach for the EU in handling relations with those spaces. EU4SEAS will examine the development of sub-regional cooperation in its specific contexts as well as the EU's impact on it.

The project is an interdisciplinary effort (political science, international relations, international political economy) and its methodological thrust comprises theoretical, empirical, comparative and prescriptive aspects.

Research Questions

- What have been the main achievements and failures of sub-regional multilateralism in each basin and which practices can be transferred from one to other sea basin?
- How do EU membership and EU policies impact on multilateral cooperation around the sea basins?
- Does the EU reinforce or hamper the multilateral framework?
- How can the EU and other multilateral organisations and initiatives cooperate in achieving their shared objectives?
- What would be the benefits of a specific approach of the EU for each of the four basins?

Research Programme

The project encompasses three main elements, organized in Work Packages (WP).

- 1. A detailed theoretical framework** to analyze the sub-regional dimension and the interaction with the EU (WP1).
- 2. Empirical research** focused on four areas of study:
 - Politics and Security (WP2)
 - Environmental and maritime issues (WP3).
 - Energy and transport issues (WP4).
 - The Four Freedoms (free movement of goods, services, capital and people) (WP5).
- 3. A prescriptive element**, based on findings of the first two phases, including the drafting policy papers and the detection of best practices (WP6).

Planned dissemination

The main dissemination and discussion instruments of the project are:

- EU4SEAS web-site (www.eu4seas.org) as a main communication platform and primary dissemination channel for the project
- Project newsletter
- Project leaflets and posters
- A series of 6 regional workshops (for experts and practitioners) in the four main regions of the project is planned throughout the project.
- Presentation Sessions in the Baltic, Intermediterranean, Black Sea and Balkans Commissions of the CPMR.
- Final open international conference in Brussels in Winter 2011 as a main concluding event in collaboration with the other two projects on "The EU and multilateralism" (MERCURY and EU-GRASP)

Deliverables

For each region EU4SEAS will generate the following deliverables:

- A seminar conducted by researchers and practitioners to extract both analytical and policy-relevant conclusions to be presented in separate documents.
- Publication containing the main results of the seminar
- Scientific Paper to be published in a refereed journal, with one of the concrete case analysed and deepened.
- Policy Paper with recommendations for the EU taking into account their effects on sub-regional multilateralism.
- Best Practices Reports to be included in the project website.



The main project areas are the overlapping regions surrounding the Europe's seas, including some non littoral countries.

Baltic Sea

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Northern Germany (Hansestadt Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Schleswig-Holstein), Northern Poland (Pomorskie, Warminsko-Mazurskie and Zachodnio-Pomorskie), Russia's Northwestern region including Kaliningrad and the nearby Belarus.

Black Sea

Turkey, Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria as well as nearby countries Greece, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Caspian Sea

Iran, Azerbaijan, Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and the nearby countries, Georgia, Armenia, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

Mediterranean Sea

Spain, France, Italy, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Israel and Gaza Strip, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Malta and Cyprus.

Project partners

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IIA-CSSS
Reykjavik, Iceland
<http://www.hi.is/page/internationalaffairs>

International Centre for Policy Studies
ICPS
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www.icps.kiev.ua

Centre for European Studies at the Middle East Technical University
CES-METU
Ankara, Turkey
www.ces.metu.edu.tr

Istituto Affari Internazionali
IAI
Rome, Italy
www.iai.it

International Centre for Defence Studies
ICDS
Tallinn, Estonia
www.icds.ee

Centre for National and International Studies
CNIS
Baku, Azerbaijan
www.cnis-baku.org

CIDOB Foundation
CIDOB
Barcelona, Spain
www.cidob.org

Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions
CPMR
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The EU4SEAS Project is a large scale international study that shall be implemented by a consortium embracing 8 partnering teams from 4 EU and 4 non-EU countries.

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The EU and sub-regional multilateralism in Europe's sea basins:

Neighbourhood, Enlargement and Multilateral Cooperation

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