IAPSS

# Politikon

## the IAPSS Journal of Political Science

2414-6633

# Volume 21 Number 3: September 2021

**ISSN 2414-6633**

**https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.50**

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*Originally published as Volume 50 (September 2021). Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.*

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# Editorial Note

**https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.50.0**

In July 2021, some members of the *Politikon* Editorial Team participated in the panel 'The Role of Students and Junior Scholars in Academic Publishing: of Students, by Students, for Students (or Beyond)?', which took place during the 2021 IPSA World Congress of Political Science. This panel reflected on the involvement of junior scholars in academic publishing – in Political Science and related disciplines – with an emphasis on how taking on editorial roles contributes to their academic career trajectories and professional development. One of the conclusions of this panel is that there is a wide range of junior journal models and, relatedly, of intended objectives and editorial practices. Thus, while some junior journals prioritize the training and development of editors in terms of the acquisition of skills such as editing and supervision of manuscript revisions, others emphasize the quality of the outcome of the editorial process. One of *Politikon*'s main goals has been to articulate these two – sometimes conflicting – purposes coherently: while this journal seeks to professionalize emerging or young scholars by supporting their acquisition and/or strengthening of editorial skills through their editorial duties, it also seeks to maintain high standards of publication by adhering to rigorous editorial practices. Additionally, one of the distinguishing features of this journal has been its commitment to supporting authors who submit manuscripts to the journal by providing them with thorough and substantive feedback, regardless of whether the manuscript is published. Maintaining a journal model that ensures not only a high quality of publication, but also the empowerment of authors and editors, is a challenge. The work of Politikon can only be sustained and achieved with the contribution and commitment of all who constitute the editorial structure of *Politikon*: editors, editorial assistants, and reviewers.

Reviewers play an essential role in the editorial process of this journal. To recognize and celebrate the work of our reviewers, the IAPSS *Politikon* Best Reviewer Award was inaugurated this year. This award recognizes the reviewer who has submitted a set of reviews that excel in their quality. These reviews offer insights in theoretical and/or methodological terms. This award is also intended to encourage the reviewers in *Politikon*'s portfolio to continue sharing their expertise through the peer review process. In this first iteration, the Award Committee consisting of Professor Asimina Michailidou (University of Oslo, ARENA Centre for European Studies), Professor Philipp Köker (Leibniz University Hannover) and Rafael Plancarte (Co-Editor-in-Chief of IAPSS *Politikon*) have selected Mirko Reul as the recipient of the Best Reviewer Award for his outstanding work as reviewer for *Politikon* over the past three years. The Award Committee also awards Larissa Peixoto and Tamta Gelashvili with Honorable Mentions.



*Originally published in Volume 50 (September 2021), pp. 4–5. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.*

In this volume, Luca Doll explores the reasons for the absence of cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean. Doll utilizes Securitization Theory and Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) to analyze reciprocal securitization of Turkey and Greece in 2020. The article introduces a new concept: the buffer subcomplex. Marco Improta examines the Italian southernist parties' identity and electoral performance between 1945 and 2020. Improta analyzes southernist parties in terms of ideology, autonomist or separatist aspirations and geographical roots. This is followed by an evaluation of the parties' degree of success in national, European, and regional elections. Improta finds that that, since the end of World War II, Italian southernist parties have been characterized by an autonomist nature, have followed the typical patterns of the catch-all party, and have been more successful in regional elections. Camila Saute Torresini discusses how arrangements among middle powers can be effective in fostering sustainable development. The author compares the effectiveness of two arrangements: the IBSA Trilateral Forum and the MIKTA New Innovative Partnership. The author shows that the former has been more effective than the latter.

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# Missing Cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean: Greek-Turkish Securitizations and their Impact on Regional Collaboration

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**DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.50.1**

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## Abstract

*Resource discoveries and an emerging maritime arms race in the Eastern Mediterranean have created incentives for an overarching security cooperation framework. However, collaboration in the mentioned sectors remains absent and the former regional coalitions have been reconfigured. This article investigates why a lack of cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean persists. In answering this question, Securitzation Theory and Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) serve as a theoretical foundation. Building on the latter theories, seeing the Eastern Mediterranean as a regional security complex leads to the contention that if two or more units of this system securitize each other's activities within the said complex, this will lead to negative ramifications on regional collaboration. The chosen case is the reciprocal securitization of Turkey and Greece in 2020. Finally, the case study reveals blind spots in RSCT and introduces a new concept to cope with these: the buffer subcomplex.*

## Keywords

Eastern Mediterranean; Regional Cooperation; Regional Security Complex Theory; Securitization Theory



*Originally published in Volume 50 (September 2021), pp. 6–28. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.*

## Introduction

In the past decade, the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean has attracted significant attention within academia and various policy networks. New developments such as resource discoveries and increasing military activity have led several scholars to dub the region the "New Eastern Mediterranean" (Stivachtis 2019; Tziampiris 2019). Arguably, these new features, especially the shared exploitation and exportation of resources, create incentives to an overarching framework of collaboration. However, these developments, alongside internationally perpetuated civil wars in Libya and Syria, led to a change of power balances and the reconfiguration of existing coalitions in the region. This trend is marked by an increasing isolation of Turkey (Gür 2020) by other states such as Israel, Greece and Egypt who try to counter Turkey's regional hegemonic aspirations. Although some scholars have tried to explain the absence or the lack of security cooperation, the existing constructivist accounts, such as the one provided by Rubin and Eiran (2019), are not particularly convincing or problematize different questions (Boening 2014; Schoenfeld and Rubin 2011). Furthermore, few scholars (Ceylan and Baykara 2020) have engaged with Securitization Theory and Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) to explain the developments in the Eastern Mediterranean and even fewer (Adamides and Christou 2015) have actually zoomed in on a particular case to analyze how security is spoken at site.

The question this article seeks to answer is why we observe an absence of regional security cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean. Following that, the argument advanced is that if two (or more) units of a regional system securitize each other's actions, the overall likelihood of regional collaboration decreases. As a case study, this article examines the reciprocal securitization of Turkey and Greece in 2020. The two countries are considered to be spearheading the coalitions that have emerged in the Eastern Mediterranean (Rose and Heras 2021). This means that their relations are of crucial importance for the overall constitution of the system in question. Moreover, the case reveals blind spots in RSCT. To cope with the arising conceptual shortcomings, a new concept is introduced. I contend that the Eastern Mediterranean should be seen as a 'buffer subcomplex', which has strong internal security entanglements but is caught up in the wider security patterns of more than one RSC. Namely, the European and the Middle Eastern one.

Following this briefly outlined plan, the article is divided into five parts. First, a short overview of the existing literature that conceives the Eastern Mediterranean as a regional system is presented. Second, a conceptual framework is introduced, following Securitization Theory and RSCT. Third, methodological guidelines that inform the case study are formulated. Fourth, the mutual securitization carried out by Greece and Turkey in the official discourse 2020 will be

analysed. Finally, it is discussed how the ramifications of these securitizations gave way to regional instability, halting opportunities for collaboration.

## Delineating the Eastern Mediterranean: A Buffer Subcomplex?

To explain why collaborative efforts in the Eastern Mediterranean stall, the region itself has to be contextualised: politically, spatially and theoretically. Several scholars have engaged in the conceptualization of the Eastern Mediterranean as a distinct regional subsystem (Tziampiris 2019) or regional security complex (Rubin and Eiran 2019; Stivachtis 2019; Ceylan and Baykara 2020). A regional security complex is defined by strong internal security interdependencies, which the Eastern Mediterranean has been found to provide (Tziarras 2019, 5). However, these interdependencies reach beyond the regional entity itself, showing strong entanglements with the broader Middle Eastern RSC (2003, 185-219) but is also attracting the attention of European and global actors. Hence, the Eastern Mediterranean has strong internal *and* external, transregional security entanglements towards more than one RSC. A condition that troubles classic RSCT and which is to be revisited in the next section.

This increasing geopolitical significance of the Eastern Mediterranean, ultimately, stems from energy and resource interests, changing alliances and aggravating regional stability resulting from the civil wars that erupted after the Arab Uprisings in 2011 (Tziarras 2019, 6-7). Yet, what is most relevant for this article is not to elaborate on how these dynamics evolve in detail, but how they become constitutive for the Eastern Mediterranean as a regional security system. Investigating the area from this rather system-oriented perspective will then allow for further conclusions as to why we observe an absence in regional security cooperation.

Throughout the past decade, conflicts over territorial demarcations that determine access to submarine mineral resources have been shaping for the political climate in the region. The discovery of natural gas in the Levant basin has led to the establishment of the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum (Ceylan and Baykara 2020, 344). The platform can be seen as an "umbrella for cooperation and dialogue" between "Egypt, Cyprus, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority" (Stergiou 2019, 11). However, the core group of this quasi-institutionalisation can be narrowed down to Greece, Cyprus, Israel and Egypt (Stergiou 2019, 26). Turkey has been excluded from this endeavour (Gür 2020), for which there are at least two reasons. First, the emerging 'energy alliance' can be seen as a power balancing coalition that seeks to challenge Turkey's geopolitical ambition as a leading actor in the region. Spearheading this endeavour, Greece has been described to have "poised itself as an informal leader of an accelerating coalition coalition to counter Turkish aggression" (Rose and Heras 2021, paragraph

4) . Second, Turkish relations with both Israel (following the Mavi Marmara incident[1] (Stergiou 2019, 15-16)) and Egypt (following the toppling of Mohammed Morsi in 2013 (Tziarras 2019, 6)) have significantly deteriorated, leading to increasing enmity in their inter-unit relations. However, the options available to export the discovered hydro carbonate, such as the East-Med Pipeline,[2] seem to be rather unprofitable. Building a natural gas pipeline to and through Turkey is considered the economically cheapest and most efficient way for broad (European) market access (İşeri and Çağrı Bartan 2019, 120; Stergiou 2019, 15). Assuming that the patterns of amity and enmity between Turkey and the mentioned alliance remain the same, the economic prospects of the gas project can be expected to be rather limited. Additionally, it seems unlikely that Turkey stops its activities to claim its regional prerogative (Tziarras 2019, 6), since "the possibility of discovering further energy reserves" (Stivachtis 2019, 57) remains.

Turkey did not cease its exploratory missions in foreign waters, frequently triggering tensed and militarily charged situations (primarily) with Greece (Stivachtis 2019). Regardless of their shared membership in NATO, the historic rivalry remains decisive for the internal dynamics of the Eastern Mediterranean and is now additionally fired by a naval arms race (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 990). This is since"[a]ll regional actors have securitized their approach to the gas discoveries and have developed naval capabilities to defend them. In turn, these moves have created a regional security dilemma" (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 990). It has to be noted, that *all* actors can be read as Greece, Egypt, Israel and Turkey. Lebanon's and Cyprus' naval capabilities are limited to coast guarding efforts while Syria's capacities have mostly been destroyed by the civil war that continues to severe the country to this day (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 992). Hence, the said security dilemma and the resulting arms race reflect how the securitizations taking place in the energy sector spill over into the military sector, ultimately leading to increasing enmity between the emerged alliances.

However, these securitizations are not limited to the countries' approaches to securing their part of the resources but find their very root in the political sector of territorial sovereignty (Demiryol 2019, 4). Needless to say, the exploitation of maritime resources follows a different rationale than doing the same in terrestrial circumstances. Arguably, the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of adjacent states in spatially enclosed areas such as the Eastern Mediterranean happen to overlap and tend to be disputed (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 993). This is most obvious for

[1] "In 2010, Israeli soldiers killed nine activists aboard the Turkish vessel Mavi Marmara who were trying to break the Israeli blockade to Gaza and deliver aid to the Palestinians. Turkey broke ties with Israel, while demanding reparations for the victims' families and a formal apology. Political relations between the two countries remained cold for years. Although Israel conceded to Turkish demands for the most part, relations never fully normalized, as Erdogan has repeatedly blasted Israeli policy in Gaza and Middle East" (Stergiou 2019, 15)

[2] A project planned by Israel, Italy, Cyprus and Greece which entails a submarine natural gas pipeline that connects the Leviathan gas field off the coast of Israel to the European market via Greece.

the case of Turkey and Greece whose coinciding claims[3] to various islands and maritime spaces (Stivachtis 2019, 57) frequently pushed them to the verge of military confrontation. These tensions have been additionally exacerbated by increased use of migration as a tool to gain political leverage and subsequent military exercises in each other's waters (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 993-994). The securitization of territory and national sovereignty goes beyond the energy domain and should be identified as a proxy for securitizations across the different sectors.

Following these thoughts on the state of inter-unit relations, patterns of amity and enmity (Stivachtis 2019, 51) and sector-overlapping securitizations in the Eastern Mediterranean, it seems evident that the region has to be identified at least as some sort of (regional) security (sub)complex. However, none of the schemes provided by Buzan and Wæver (2003) seem to properly fit or accommodate the case. Nevertheless, considering the described cross-sector entanglements, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Israel, the Palestinian Territories, Egypt and Libya should be part of the complex in question. As Stivachtis (2019, 52) argues, it does not matter if the units perceive themselves as part of the complex, "however, one could observe that a certain degree of awareness about their security interdependence […] has developed over the last couple of years". Arguably, such awareness will lead to increased activity in identifying other actors of the complex as possible threats or partners and subsequently lead to (de)securitizations.

The question that remains is whether the Eastern Mediterranean, in said delineation, makes up for its regional entity. A scenario also discussed by Ceylan and Baykara (2020) as well as Adamides and Christou (2015). The former identifies the Eastern Mediterranean as a regional subcomplex, still associated with the Middle Eastern RSC. The latter take sees "a conflation of the two regions [the European and the Middle Eastern RSC] that is intensified as a result of the impact of energy as an intervening variable" (Adamides and Christou 2015, 11). Certainly, the inclusion of Greece, strongly embedded in the European RSC, into any sort of Eastern Mediterranean complex would necessitate the possibility of membership in multiple regional entities. The same applies to Syria, Israel or Turkey, as there is little sense in analyzing their external action and behaviour without taking other actors of the Middle Eastern RSC into account. Nevertheless, the strong security interdependencies, resulting primarily from securitizations over sovereignty and energy issues (Adamides and Christou 2015, 3) render it necessary to consider it a distinct but strongly interconnected entity. Following that, it seems logical if not necessary to introduce the concept of a buffer subcomplex to accommodate the case of the Eastern Mediterranean, an entity that is subcomplex to both the European and the Middle Eastern RSC.

[3] In late 2019, Turkey and the Libyan Government of National Accord agreed on a shared EEZ that runs between their shorelines. This demarcation is conflicting with the EEZ delineated in a Greek-Egyptian agreement that has been signed in July 2020 (Adar and Toygür 2020).

Although classic RSCT cannot incorporate the discussed feature of multi-RSC membership of certain units into its rationale, it does provide clues as to why efforts of cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean continue to fail. Following Rubin and Eiran (2019, 980), the nature of the discussed areas of conflict and securitization suggests multilateral solutions instead of various unilateral approaches (Demiryol 2019; Adamides and Christou 2015). Rubin and Eiran (2019, 980) argue that the security challenges created by conflicting border demarcations and subsequent disputes over resources, migration as well as questions in environmental degradation "coupled with expectations of significant gains from cooperation (e.g. in the extraction and export of natural gas) create strong incentives for interstate coordination". However, the point according to the authors is that the absence of maritime security cooperation results from ethnic and religious divide and differing inclinations towards democratic values. They identify a "Hellenic alliance […] [among] Greece, Cyprus and Israel" (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 997) that "align themselves with the West" while "others (Turkey, Egypt, Hamas, Syria, Lebanon) identify themselves with the Arab or Islamic world" (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 996). The conclusions end with the claim that "regional cooperation will remain low as long as the region cannot develop at least a partial shared value system" (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 996).

Rubin and Eiran (2019) are right in identifying incentives for cooperation. Nevertheless, the presented argument claims to explain the absence of security cooperation in the region but lacks depth. Citing constructivism as the "answer to the puzzle" (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 996) as to why Eastern Mediterranean security cooperation has failed to emerge, two groups are carved out: the Western-inclined group of states that seeks to join efforts, following democratic values while advocating for human rights versus the line-up of autocratic and Muslim dictatorships that seek to thwart the endeavours of cooperation initiated by the 'civilised' West. It is "the barbaric Other [that] constitutes a threat both to world order and, above all, to Western civilization" (Hobson 2014, 76), ultimately foiling overarching frameworks of collaboration.

This argument cannot be sustained and has to be rejected both empricially and theoretically. On an empirical note, the argument is not backed up by a case study that would bolster such claims or examine the norm systems mentioned. The literature that has been cited on this matter is equally scarce or absent (Rubin and Eiran 2019). On a theoretical note, acts of securitization are driving inter-unit enmity and impede cooperation between the securitizing actors not differing in cultural inclinations, as suggested by scholars such as Samuel Huntington (1996) (Hobson 2014). There is no doubt that cooperation requires a certain set of shared norms. However, insisting on the fact that religious and ethnic camps stall and hinder collaboration (Rubin and Eiran 2019, 996), without providing a well-structured and well-reasoned argument as to why,

seems misguided. Therefore, what is to be seen as decisive is not the summoning of a binary ethnic divide but the construction of threat (Hansen 2011; Wæver 2011), whose rationale does not follow lines of ethnicity. Since Securitization Theory and RCST offer more expedient and detailed explanations on such matters, they have been chosen to serve as the theoretical foundation of this article and will be elaborated below.

## Conceptual Framework

This section will set up a conceptual framework that illuminates how securitization counteracts cooperative dynamics within regional security complexes, addressing five aspects in particular: first, the levels of analysis and the different sectors postulated in securitization theory will be briefly explained. Second, the options of (non-)politicization and securitization of issues will be distinguished and shortly explained. Third, these will be linked to the internal modes of amity and enmity that regional security complexes (RSCs) can adopt. Fourth, the subdivision of RSCs into regional subcomplexes will be discussed. Finally, these considerations will be condensed and summarized.

Securitization theory distinguishes five different levels of analysis. On a macro scale Wæver, Buzan and Wilde (1998, 6) identify (1) the international system as well as (2) international subsystems. These subsystems can be understood as "groups of units within the international system that can be distinguished from the entire system by the particular nature or intensity of their interactions with or interdependence on each other" (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998, 6); (3) As mentioned, these groups are composed of units (i.e., states) which can be further subdivided into (4) subunits such as lobbies and, eventually, (5) individuals (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998, 3). On these levels of analysis, a variety of sectors can be identified. Questions of sovereignty or authority may be subject to the political sector, questions of biodiversity or climate might fall into the environmental sector and concerns about sanctions or tariffs into the economic one (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998, 7-8). However, the construction of these sectors follows the constructivist rationale, meaning that sectors are not a given but have to be identified and communicated by actors (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998, 7). What is important here is that the sectors can overlap. Hence, they should not be investigated independently, as their intersection could be critical for the analyst. In this vein, there is little sense to look into the securitization of territoriality (political sector) in the Eastern Mediterranean without taking the discourse on resources and national energy considerations (economic sector) into account.

Considering these thoughts that give the conceptual framework an initial outline, the rationale of securitization itself has to be elaborated. As already suggested, the conception of security does not follow objective and deductive terms but intersubjective and constructive ones.

This means that a threat to the security of an object is not absolute but rather constructed by actors that paint an issue or a problem as such. In doing so, three hierarchical modes, how a problem will be perceived by society and handled can be distinguished: non-politicized, politicized, and securitized. The first one will see an issue as not relevant enough to be subject to the political-institutional process. The second, the politicized way of managing an issue, will handle a problem in an institutionalized way that conforms with an established set of rules. As an example, even though the member states of the EU disagree on matters of labor regulation, these conflicts and disputes – at the time of writing – will be settled according to a self-imposed set of binding laws and rules. However, if an issue or a problem is securitized and perceived as a threat to a referent object, it will leave the politicized realm. A securitized problem will be taken care of in an extraordinary fashion, taking extraordinary measures as the issue has been considered an existential threat (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998, 23-24). Hence, these three options follow a gradient of (de)securitization. The more issues are seen as a security problem and the more problems are being securitized, the less they will be taken care of in a rules-based and institutionalized fashion. When contemplating on problems that concern more than one unit, this rationale implies that a securitizing tendency counteracts or precludes a cooperative approach to a problem (Adamides and Christou 2015, 11).

Building on the introduced levels of analysis and considering an increasing relevance of the regional security dynamics in the post-cold war world, this article will focus on what lies between the system and the unit level. These subsystems of security interaction have been coined (regional) security complexes and are defined as "a set of units whose major securitizations, desecuritization, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot be reasonably analyzed or resolved apart from one another" (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 491). Furthermore, their "formation and operation […] hinge on patterns of amity and enmity among the units in the system" (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 40). An RSC's default constellation is hence marked by (partly historically long-standing) rivalries and alliances. In addition, realist ideas like polarity or balance of power are critical in understanding RSCs. The rules that command the international system can therefore equally be applied to the regional level since the structure of a RSC is sufficiently delineated from other regional complexes (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 47-50).

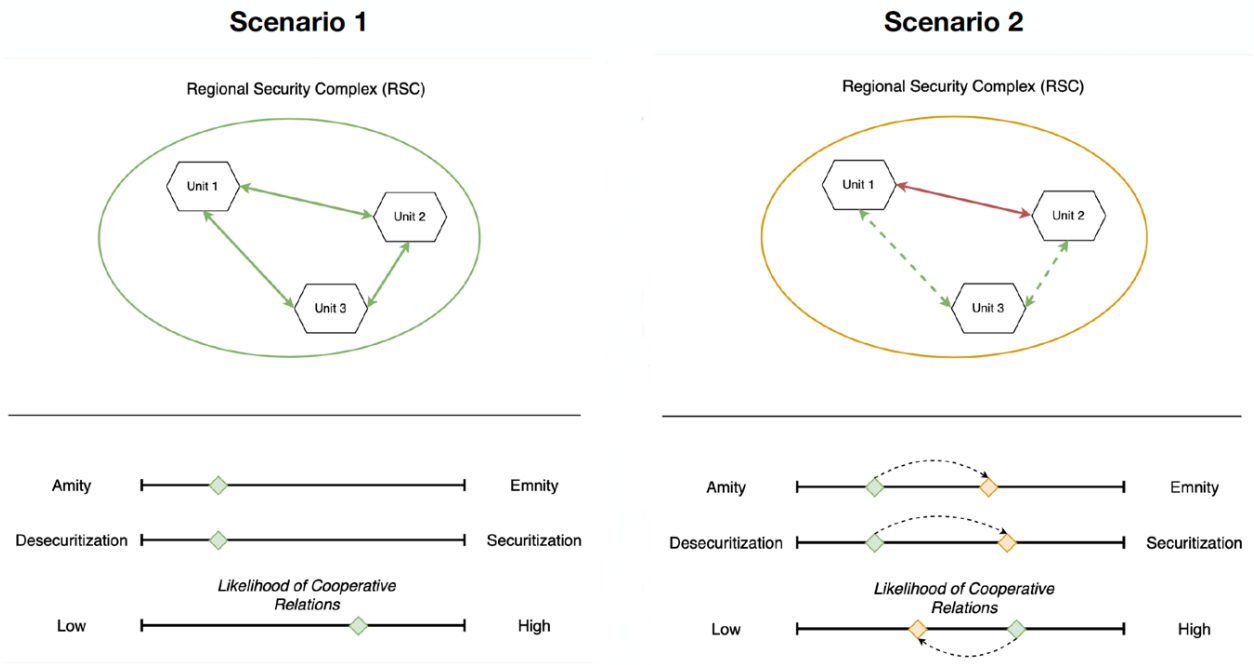
That said and reiterating that the internal dynamics of an RSC depend crucially on (de)securitizations made by their major actors, the aforementioned negative correlation between cooperative and securitizing moves can be expanded by another analogy. Buzan and Wæver (2003) identify a 'security' continuum that describes the status of inter-unit relations within an RSC. These modes range from *conflict formation* to *security community* and reflect to what extent the actors of the

RSC securitize mutual problems. A security community, for example, is determined by more amity among its units, experiencing a lesser amount of securitization of shared issues (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998, 12). That means that patterns of amity and enmity depend on acts of securitization within the RSC. As shown in figure 1, this dependency supports the idea that less RSC-internal securitizations lead to more amity among the units and eventually to the possibility of politicizing shared problems instead of securitizing them. What is important is that acts of securitization between singular units within a broader RSC will draw notches into the cooperative arrangement of the system in question. In other words and illustrated in figure 1, if two key-units of an RSC securitize each other's actions, this is likely to have a negative impact on cooperative endeavours pursued in the said complex.

The prime example for a region that has experienced a major, yet not total, desecuritization of inter-unit relations and common problems is the European Union (EU). Certainly, the EU has "moved strongly towards the amity end of the amity-enmity spectrum", creating "joint institutions" and common rules (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 57). This development supports the idea that desecuritization and politicization of shared issues act in favour of integration and cooperation. However, it has to be stated at this point that theories of region-building and regionalism (too) frequently build on the European example and have to be considered with care (Acharya 2016). The point here is not that "the EU's record should be ignored" (Acharya 2016, 275) but that it should not serve as the benchmark for functioning regional cooperation. Following that, avoiding EU-centrism means to reject "the tendency to view the EU as a "model" of regionalism with the expectation that other regionalisms should follow […] in order to be judged successful" (Acharya 2016, 275).

Finally, the authors of RSCT postulate the possibility of subdivision of RSCs. These entities are called *regional subcomplexes* and follow the same rules as RSCs. However, "[s]ubcomplexes represent distinctive patterns of security interdependence that are nonetheless caught up in a wider pattern that defines the RSC as a whole" (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 51). The reason for having them integrated into RSCT is that they constitute a vehicle that accommodates or "eliminates most of what might otherwise occur as disturbing cases of overlapping membership between RSCs" (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 52). However, the question remains what happens if a subcomplex is caught up in more than one wider pattern of security at a time? For example, between two larger RSCs. Does it become a 'buffer subcomplex'?

Figure 1: Relation between RSC-internal securitizations and the likelihood of cooperative relations




Source: Author.

As mentioned, the authors see RSCs as mutually exclusive as a sufficient degree of delineation precludes the possibility of being part of two complexes at a time. However, granted that a sufficient delineation is crucial to achieving system character, insisting on mutual exclusivity of RSCs might ignore empirical reality. As pointed out by Santini, Lucarelli, and Pinfari (2014, 80), potentially strong transregional patterns might challenge this idea of strict delineation. RSCT argues that insulator or buffer states, the latter standing at the centre of a securitization pattern the latter at its edge, can help this puzzle (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 41). Exceptions such as Afghanistan which is clamped between the Middle Eastern and the South Asian RSC can have considerable security entanglements with more than one RSC and help the problem of mutual exclusivity. Another option is a so-called *overlay* or *penetration* by a superpower that is projecting its power far beyond its territories. Finally, "[s]trong […] interregional dynamics may be indicators of an external transformation (merger) of RSCs" (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 49). As shown, there is a lot of leeway for interpretation where to draw the RSC's line. Certainly, exceptions should not provide for the consistency of a theory. However, conceptually, RSCs are inherently flexible and modifiable and should therefore be investigated as such. That means that the proposed delineation of existing RSCs, drawn by Buzan and Wæever (2003, xxv), cannot and should not be seen as set in stone and is subject to constant evolution.

Summing up these considerations, an interim theoretical framework can be formulated. First, the chosen level of analysis is that of international subcomplexes since it corresponds with the spatial dimensions of the investigated case. Second, securitizations of shared problems and issues, especially between major actors and identified leaders of alliances within the complex, are considered as counteracting cooperative or politicizing efforts in solving problems. Third, (de)securitizations are seen as causal to the continuum of amity and enmity. Fourth, a securitization between two units influences the condition of the complex as a whole. Fifth, cross-sector dependencies are crucial to be taken into account for the analysis. Finally, adapting RSCT, regional subcomplexes are seen as exempt from the necessity of mutual exclusivity. They are thus granted the possibility of acting as 'buffer subcomplexes' between two larger RSCs. What applies to the unit level should equally apply to the regional one.

## Applying Securitization Theory: From Concepts to Methods

Acts of securitization form a web of regional and sector-crossing security entanglements that can eventually result in the formation of an RSC. This means that if one is to analyze RSCs one is also bound to analyse acts of securitization as they constitute the RSC's underlying condition. As already mentioned, securitization theory builds on constructivist assumptions: "[t]he structure of securitization theory is organized around securitization as an act, as a productive moment, as a discontinuous reconfiguration of a social state" (Wæver 2011). Essentially, a securitizing actor is identifying referent objects which are supposed to be seen as existentially threatened on the one hand as well as the source from which this threat emanates on the other. Furthermore, a platform that influences public opinion to a sufficient degree is critical to accomplish a successful securitization. Put into an example a securitizing act might look like this: an actor (e.g. a leader of a state) has to convince the relevant audience (e.g. the nation) that a referent object (e.g. the sovereignty of the state) is existentially threatened and that this can only be averted if extraordinary measures are taken. To deem the securitization as successful, a relevant audience (e.g. the population of the state) has to accept the extraordinary measures to be taken (Wæver 2011). This includes breaking loose of formerly agreed rules (Hansen 2000) such as an agreement that was supposed to safe guard peaceful relations between two actors.

The task of the analysis is therefore to reveal how *security* as an intersubjective construct is being dispersed in the public discourse. It follows the idea that *security* is not an absolute or total condition but relative, interpretative, and embedded in semantic structures (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998). In tracing how *security* is being *done* or *spoken*, the examination will track "grammar of security" (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998, 33). Needless to say, qualitative approaches preclude the possibility of pre-made schemes that the analyst can follow when searching for rhetoric alike.

However, we can look for assertions that follow the rationale of securitization. This might include scenarios of what could happen if no action is taken, a point of no return, us-them distinctions, rallying the audience around a collective identity, exaggerations and other sector-depending prospects that are at stake (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998).

To operationalize these theoretical considerations of what signifies securitization, Hansen (2006) proposes a research design tailored to the investigation of security and foreign policy discourses more broadly. She identifies four dimensions to inform such studies. (1) Number of selves, "or how many states, nations, or other foreign policy subects one wishes to examine" (Hansen 2006, 67). (2) Intertextual models, which distinguish between different focusses and objects of analysis, ranging from official discourses over oppositional voices and cultural representations to marginalized political discourses. (3) The temporal perspective, discerning if the study examines a snapshot or a larger historical development and, finally, (4) the number of events that have been included in the analysis (Hansen 2006).

Furthermore, this article adopts coding-categories that follow the rationale of qualitative content analysis. These will correspond to the referent objects identified by the respective administration or foreign policy executive and will serve as the first dimension of the coding grid or analytical framework. As outlined above, securitization theory describes a certain language, rhetoric, or tone of security, which will serve as second dimension of the said grid. For example, a foreign policy executive of an investigated country A identifies their sovereignty as existentially threatened by an activity carried out by a country B. In this case, the security of the referent object (sovereignty) has been found at existential threat by the speaker and is, hence, subject to an act of securitization.

## Case Study

The central claim this article pursues is that if at least two actors of a regional security system securitize each other's activities, the overall likelihood of cooperation within the said complex drops. Following Hansen's (2006) elaboration on choosing a security-study's cases, "political pregnancy" (Hansen 2006, 67) is central, applies especially to regional investigations, and signifies the explanatory power and validity of a case:

> "[p]olitical pregnancy is tied to questions of (discursively constituted) influence, a study of NATO's transformation would, for instance, be hard pressed to avoid an inclusion of American discourses, and analyses of the future of European integration would normally include France and Germany" (Hansen 2006, 67-68).

Greece and Turkey spearhead the regional and opposed coalitions present in the Eastern Mediterranean system and represent an analytically potent and "politically pregnant" case to

investiage. Rose and Heras (2021) argue that during the last years, "Turkey, driven by its Mavi Vatan doctrine, pushed its Mediterranean neighbors' limits by dispatching a string of vessels to explore and conduct offshore drilling in the disputed waters of the Republic of Cyprus and Greece". At the same time, Turkey reinforced its claim to regional hegemony in expanding existing partnerships with the Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) to bolster its territorial claims. Greece on the other hand has established itself as Turkey's regional counterpart, poising itself as the head of an informal coalition to counter Ankara's claims. In doing so, Athen's strategy was to rally "a slew of partners inside and outside the Mediterranean such as Egypt, Israel, the UAE, and France to coalesce against Ankara and build up [its] defenses" (Rose and Heras, 2021). Following these considerations, the regional constellation and coalitions at hand elevate the relevance of Greek-Turkish relations onto a higher level, which is why the two countries will serve as subjects (or *selves*, cf. Hansen (2006)) of the ensuing case study.

Having chosen a case, a working hypothesis can be formulated: if Greece and Turkey securitize each other's activities, the overall likelihood of cooperative endeavours in the Eastern Mediterranean falls. It is important to reitirate that currently, there is no profitable solution to the Eastern Mediterranean energy problem, without having both Turkey and Greece engaging in collaboration. Following securitization theory, the examined intertextual models will be official discourses, targetting speeches, official texts, and statements of the respective administrations (Hansen 2006, 57). The period under study begins in December 2019, when Turkey and Libya settled for a new agreement to share their EEZ, leading to a resurgence of tensions in the region, and ends in February 2021. Hence, the study's temporal perspective is netiher comparative nor tracking a historical development. Rather it is a snapshot of the Eastern Mediterranean's key-securitization pattern, allowing for further conclusions as to why collaboration in the region continues to stall. Finally, the number of events to be examined is not limited to certain incidents. Every event in the selected period that is mentioned in the official discourse, and only therefore relevant, will be taken into account.

***Greece***

As mentioned, when introducing and delineating the Eastern Mediterranean, a central domain for securitizations made by Greece towards Turkey are conflicting territorial claims and perceived violations of sovereignty. In the investigated time frame, these securitizations correspond primarily to four referent objects: (1) the violation of the Greek EEZ by the Libyan-Turkish maritime agreement, (2) violations of Greek airspace, (3) border security as well as, (4) the Greek claim to 12 instead of 6 nautical miles of territorial waters surrounding their islands.

The enmity that arose from these securitizations, bringing the two countries to the verge of war at least three times in 2020, becomes obvious when considering the statements made by the Greek defence minister Nikolaos Panagiotopoulos in early February 2021 (Panagiotopoulos 2021). Throughout the height of the crisis prompted by the exploration activities of the Turkish vessel Oruç Reis and its military escort in summer 2020, three general mobilisations of the Greek armed forces have been triggered. The latter vessel intended to carry out seismic research in the "false" (Panagiotopoulos 2020a, paragraph 26) Turkish-Libyan-EEZ south of Crete, Rhodes, Karpathos as well as close to the island Kastellorizo which is located merely 2 kilometres off the Turkish coast. When asked if the demilitarisation of the Greek islands near Turkey was an option, he responded: "[A]s long as there is a threat from the east […] there is no question of demilitarisation of the islands" (Panagiotopoulos 2021, paragraph 3). Accordingly, the violation of Greece's territorial (in the case of Kastellorizo) and economic waters has been perceived as a threat to Greece's sovereignty.

A similar statement has been made by Greek prime minister Kyriakos Mistotakis in August 2020. He condemns Turkey's aggressive and provocative behaviour and identifies the deployment of their fleet as a threat that is to be answered with both military means as well as sanctions. This reaction can be considered the general line of the Greek government which is reflected in various statements throughout the past year. To deter, respond or react to perceived Turkish aggressions and infringements to its sovereignty, Greece and its armed forces "are ready for all eventualities" (Panagiotopoulos 2020a, paragraph 27). "[Of] course these eventualities include military engagement […]. [We] are making it clear towards all directions that we will do what it takes to defend our sovereign rights to the greatest extent" (Panagiotopoulos 2020b, paragraph 5). This rhetoric line is also echoed in statements made by the deputy defence minister Alkiviadis Stefanis: "We are waiting that [Erdogan] escalates the situation. We are ready for that" (Stefanis 2020, paragraph 14). In September 2020, the Greek government's spokesperson Stelios Petsas stated: "We respond with political, diplomatic and operational readiness, determined to do whatever is necessary to protect our sovereign rights" (Al Jazeera 2020a, paragraph 4).

In a similar vein, in an interview conducted in early February 2020, Panagiotopolous put forward the same argument: "Our position is clear: "What is being threatened cannot be demilitarized" (Panagiotopoulos 2020c, paragraph 3). However, he added a means to which Greece might resort; "the potential expansion of territorial waters from 6 to 12 nautical miles […] is Greece's lawful right, which may be exercised without preconditions, as referred in article 3 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea" (Panagiotopoulos 2020c, paragraph 4). It must be noted that Turkey passed a law in 1995 that considers mentioned act of expansion as a declaration

of war (Syrigos 2018) and that Greece has passed a law to expand in early 2021 (Durul 2021). In doing so, Greece resorts to means that should be considered extraordinary.

Another issue that led Greece to securitize its approach to territorial sovereignty are frequent violations, overflights and dog fights carried out and provoked by Turkish aircraft. In an interview that has taken place in mid-April 2020, the Greek defence minister stated that "every violation is answered with an interception […] whenever Turkish aircraft[s] decide to enter our airspace, they are intercepted" (Panagiotopoulos 2020d, paragraph 26). This rationale of fierce rhetoric, military and political reaction as soon as Turkey is perceived as infringing on Greek sovereignty is similarly applied to the terrestrial realm. In the same interview, Panagiotopoulos stressed that "[maybe] they did not expect our decisive reaction at Evros [a border region in eastern Greece], or they did not expect to see this reaction expand to our deterrence on the islands. They were not used to such reactions in the past, yet they should start getting used to them now. Our deterrence capability is big and it is displayed every day, thanks to the effort made by the personnel in the Armed Forces" (Panagiotopoulos 2020d, paragraph 28). Following that, we can observe an escalation in security rhetoric as well as intensifying reactions to territorial infringements. Additionally, a continuous glorification of the Greek army can be identified. This rhetorical strategy is ultimately supposed to trigger a rally-around-the-flag effect and to convince the audience, the Greek nation as well as international observers, that the means taken are justified and necessary.

***Turkey***

Turkey identifies similar objects as being threatened by Greece and frequently mentions its readiness to defend them with all means necessary. Just as with the case of Greece, Turkey's priority seems to be its territorial claims, yet to a lesser extent its land borders as well as its airspace. This is due to the fact that mentioned dog fights primarily take place in Greek air space and that migratory movements are directed rather out of Turkey instead of into it. Evidently, the most common referent object is Turkish sovereignty that it sees as endangered by a number of threats that emanate from different sources. Following that, Turkey frequently refers to three objects as being threatened by Greece and its allies. (1) The security and integrity of its terrestrial territory, considering the Greek militarization of Kastellorizo, (2) its proclaimed (exploratory) rights in the region (EEZ claims and Northern Cyprus), threatened by foreign interference, (3) as well as its maritime demarcation deal with Libya whose delineation conflicts with the Greek-Egyptian agreement.

In a press release of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in late August 2020, the administration criticizes the Greek militarization of its island Kastellorizo (as well as the other

Greek islands in the region), which Turkey sees as "cutting off [its] continental […] shelf" (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020a, paragraph 4). The press release states: "We reject the illegitimate attempts of changes on the status of the Island. We also underline that Turkey will not allow that such a provocation immediately across her coasts to attain its goal […]. Should Greece continue to take tension-increasing steps in the region, she will be the one suffering from it" (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020b, paragraph 7). Hence, Turkey identifies said militarization as an immediate threat to its territorial integrity, considering the proximity of the island. It argues that the provocation will not be allowed and that Greece will suffer from it, implying the employ of measures it deems proportionate. Considering the means Turkey usually resorts to when safeguarding its interests, such as the deployment of its navy to escort its exploratory vessel Oruç Reis, these measures can be expected to be of military quality.

Securitizing moves alike can also be found when examining Turkey's rhetoric towards countries it perceives as Greece's allies, the most obvious case being the French presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. With respect to Greek and therefore European claims to Mediterranean sovereignty, France can be found to be a strong ally of Greece in countering Turkish aspirations in the region. In seeing this sovereignty threatened by the Turkish resource exploration, France formulated a 'red line', Turkey would be crossing if it continued its exploratory activities. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan rejected the latter threat and stated "It is high time for those, who are in delusion of grandeur, to face reality. The era of defining imperialist conceptions by drawing lines on maps is long gone. Turkey is perfectly capable of deterring anyone, who attempts to forcibly usurp her legitimate rights and interests by dispatching an "armada"" (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020c, paragraph 4). Similarly, in mid-October, deeming the held negotiations with the EU and NATO as failed, President Erdoğan said Turkey will continue to give them (Greece and its allies in mentioned organisations) "the response they deserve" (Al Jazeera 2020b, paragraph 1). "We have told Greece, if you attack our Oruç Reis, you will pay a heavy price" (DW 2020, paragraph 2). Considering that, Turkey sees its claims to exploratory rights in the region as existentially threatened by said actors and is ready to respond to possible interventions in a deterring military fashion.

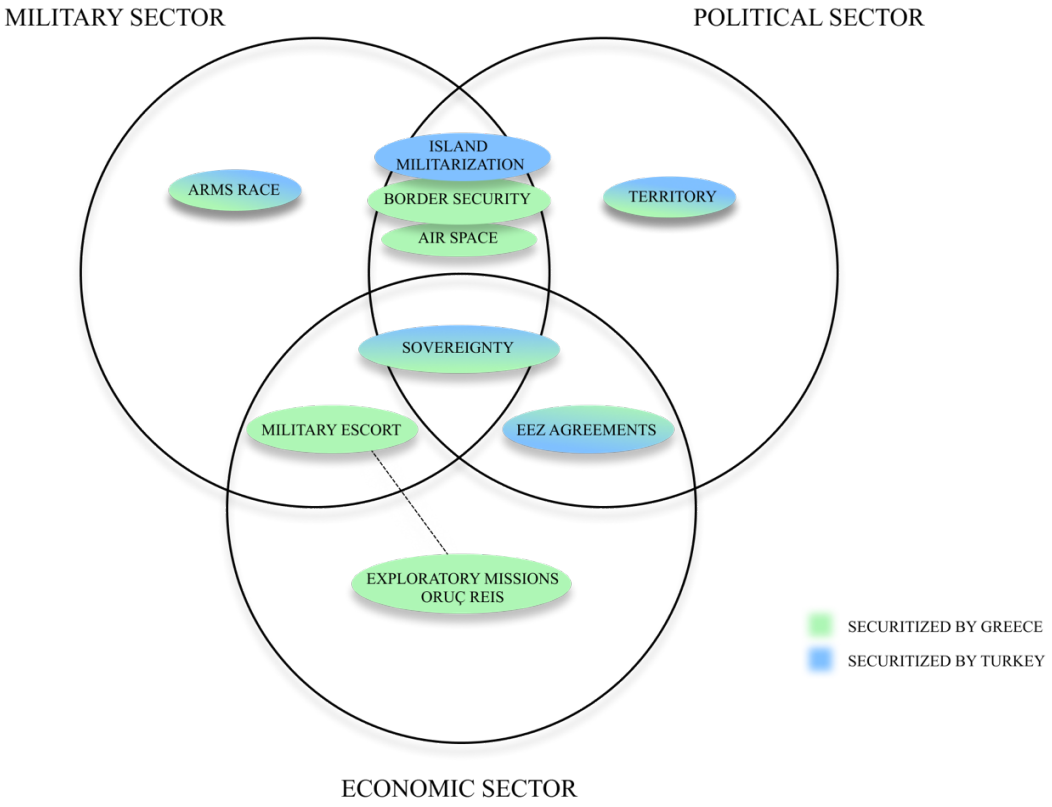
Following these acts of securitization, it becomes obvious that Turkey's territorial claims to sovereignty are (currently) at the root of the increasing dynamic of enmity with Greece. Facing rising isolation from both the West and Middle Eastern countries (such as the UAE or Egypt), Turkey insists on the territorial delimitation it brokered in its agreement with Libya. In a statement made in early September 2020, Erdogan argues that "[they] are going to understand that Turkey has the political, economic and military power to tear up the immoral maps and documents

imposed. […] They're either going to understand the language of politics and diplomacy, or in the field with painful experiences" (Al Jazeera 2020c, paragraph 2). These 'immoral maps' refer to the maritime delimitation of the Greek-Egyptian EEZ agreement that Turkey considers "null and void" and a "boundary [that] does not exist" (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020d, paragraph 1). Once again, considering Greece's allies, Turkey "will not take a single step back with regards to the East[ern] Mediterranean conflict […] from now on, Greece will be the only party for any negative development in the region, and this country will be the only one to suffer" (Erdoğan 2020, minute 01:15). Therefore, Turkey perceives the Greek-Egyptian agreement that is being backed by a larger international coalition as fiercely threatening its territorial claims and hence its economic prospects in the region. In securitizing these dangers to its role in the Eastern Mediterranean, it seeks to draw the attention back to the regional level in making it clear that Greece will bear the responsibility for these infringements.

***Findings***

After examining the securitizations made by both Greece and Turkey, respectively, the findings can be condensed into the following illustration.

Figure 2: Reciprocal securitization between Turkey and Greece




Source: Author

Every coloured patch represents a referent object that has been securitized by either party. It also shows that cross-sector dependency plays a crucial role in the examined case, since it is difficult, if not irrational, to separate the economic and the political sector when analysing referent objects like the EEZ of a state. Ultimately, it shows that *sovereignty* is the referent object that is located at the centre of the examined conflict, incorporating an entire network of other objects and issues that is being referred to. Hence, the heterogeneous approach (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998) to security complexes, as chosen for the analysis has been proven to be preferable for the investigated case. The audiences that were to be addressed in the discussed securitizing moves can be split into two categories. The populations of Greece and Turkey as well as the international public such as other countries outside the security complex. Regarding the former, national polls can be consulted to evaluate to what extent extraordinary measures find support inside the nation's populations. A survey conducted by the Turkish polling company MetroPoll found that a projected 31.7% (Antonopoulos 2020a) of the Turkish population would deem the deployment of military means, if necessary, as justified. However, on the Greek side, a poll conducted in June 2020 by Vergina Television found that over 56% (Antonopoulos 2020b) of the participants see a military response as appropriate if Turkey violated Greece's maritime or terrestrial sovereignty. Without doubt, such surveys should be treated with caution. Nevertheless, at least they provide an insight into the extent to which the securitizing moves meet with approval and acceptance in the respective populations. Regarding the international audience, the approval by coalition partners can be taken into account. In the case of Greece, the state has been backed by a large number of western and non-western states. This can be seen, for example, in the French engagement in the region, as well as in the joint naval exercises between Greece, the UAE and Egypt (Adar and Toygür 2020). As Turkey retrieves itself in increasing international exclusion, it is less relevant for it to convince outside actors of its activities. However, actors like the Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA), depending on Turkish support in its domestic affairs, seem to approve the Turkish foreign policy rationale (Seufert 2020).

## Discussion

What are the main findings of the case study and what conclusion can be drawn from the investigated securitization pattern? Cleary, the two main findings are (1) the relevance of cross-sector dependency and (2) which referent objects have been securitized during the period of investigation. Recalling figure 1 and the working hypothesis formulated, the likelihood of cooperation in an RSC can be expected to drop if two or more units of the complex in question securitize each other's activities. As shown above, large parts of the Turkish and Greek population accept the securitizing moves made by both parties and coalition building reaches well beyond the

shores of the Eastern Mediterranean. Accordingly, and unsurprisingly, Turkey and Greece have successfully securitized each other's activities. Therefore, due to the characteristics of the Eastern Mediterranean, cooperation in the region will most likely continue to stall until Turkey and Greece either come to terms or if they cease to be part of the security entanglements this paper has attempted to investigate.

Summing up, the case made by Turkey and Greece shows how security entanglements in the Eastern Mediterranean cross sectoral delimitations and have an impact on the overall configuration and therefore cooperation in the complex. Since the coalitions existing in the Eastern Mediterranean can be considered as spearheaded by Greece and Turkey, securitizing activities between the two units become critical for patterns of enmity and amity in the region. As mentioned, when reviewing existing literature on the Eastern Mediterranean, the security problems the region faces range from environmental issues over questions on migration to the task of facilitating the exploitation of resources in an economically profitable manner. As argued by Rubin and Eiran (2019), the units concerned have numerous incentives to cooperate in these domains. Every single sector relies on the cooperation of every unit concerned, which applies most crucially to the energy domain. However, their claim that the absence of collaboration is to be explained with conflicting ethical coalitions must be rejected. On a side note, the invalidity of this argument becomes most evident when considering the aforementioned military exercises between Greece, Egypt and the UAE as well as the recent approximation of Israel with most states of the Gulf Cooperation Council. RSCT offers a more elaborate and developed take on these dynamics. The increasing securitizing activity between the coalition leaders Greece and Turkey drives a wedge between the units and increases patterns of enmity in the complex. Since cooperation relies on amity among the units, these securitizations counteract possible aspirations for collaboration. As shown in the analysis, the main object of securitization is sovereignty, which will continue to curb efforts of collaboration if not politicized. In other words, as long as the disputes about territorial and maritime sovereignty do not find a settlement, overarching patterns of cooperation in the region will remain absent.

## Conclusion

This paper has shown how cooperation in various domains in the Eastern Mediterranean crucially relies on the securitizations made by the actors active in the region. It has been argued that an increase in acts of securitization between Turkey and Greece influences the overall system to the detriment of collaborative endeavours. As mentioned, the analysis conducted offers an insight into the Turkish-Greek case as it is the analytically most potent one, allowing for conclusions to be drawn for the overall condition of the region. However, it is critical that more

scholars, who engage with Securitization Theory or RSCT, actively analyse the securitizing rhetoric of the actors they seek to understand.

Furthermore, in various instances the conceptual imperative of seeing RSCs as mutually exclusive caused ontological confusion. This article introduced the concept of a buffer subcomplex, describing a regional subsystem that is caught up in the wider security patterns of more than one larger RSC. Undoubtedly, as shown in the case study, Greece has enormously strong security entanglements in the region. However, it is strongly embedded in the European RSC which is not to be expected to merge with the Middle Eastern one. However, we cannot reasonably analyse the Eastern Mediterranean without taking units from *both* complexes into account, thwarting the idea of a regional subcomplex, starkly pointing towards the introduced concept of a buffer subcomplex. Ultimately, the example of the Eastern Mediterranean shows that future RSCT-scholarship has to adopt new concepts for new international circumstances or lose its universal applicability to the rapidly changing politics of the 21st century.

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# One, No One, and One Hundred Thousand: Exploring Identity and Electoral Performance of Italian Southernist Parties

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**DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.50.2**

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## Abstract

*Despite a considerable body of literature on Italian ethnoregionalist parties, scholars of nationalism and regionalism have overlooked southernist parties. This article aims to fill this lacuna by examining Italian southernist parties' identity and electoral performance from 1945 to 2020. Firstly, it investigates southernist parties according to ideological positioning, autonomist or secessionist nature, and territorial area of origin. Then, by relying on official data, it explores the parties' electoral performance in national, European, and regional elections. The main findings of the study show that, since the end of World War II, Italian southernist parties: a) have been characterized by a more autonomist rather than secessionist nature; b) have followed the typical patterns of the catch-all party; c) have performed better in regional elections. This article provides preliminary information on southernist parties, paving the way for further research on such political formations.*

## Keywords

Elections; Ethnoregionalism; Identity Politics; Southern Italy; Southernist Parties



*Originally published in Volume 50 (September 2021), pp. 29–48. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.*

## Introduction

Over the past decades, political scientists have devoted little attention to Italian southernist parties. In particular, scholars of nationalism and regionalism have overlooked Southern Italy, focusing primarily on Northern Italy (Agnew 1995; Tarchi 1998), and Sardinia (Hepburn 2009). Instead, sociologists and historians have researched such an issue and related topics with greater interest (Lupo 1998; 2004; Ivone 2003; Saraceno 2005). Relevant contributions have explored social, economic, and political phenomena in Southern Italy, highlighting patterns of social disruption (Tarrow 1967), economic marginalization (Bagnasco 1977), and amoral familism (Banfield 1958).

The peculiar nature and the multifaceted identity of southernist parties paint a puzzling picture in many aspects. This paper aims to try to disentangle such complexity. The starting point of the analysis, however, is constituted by a straightforward observation: since 1945 no southernist party has been able to represent the political reference of Southern Italy. Conversely, for a long time, the interests of Northern Italy have been represented by the Northern League (League), which was often able to gain a high vote share. After the so-called 'nationalization process' (Cataldi 2018), the League has abandoned the explicit reference to the 'North', achieving even higher electoral support, yet preserving its traditional constituency. The rise of the League primarily derived from the salience of North-South differences (Putnam 1993) and Italy's failed attempts to achieve homogenous economic development (Trigilia 1992). On the other hand, the proliferation of competing parties in the southernist galaxy resulted in lower effectiveness in representing Southern Italy's interests.

The choice of this title, which recalls one of the several Luigi Pirandello's[1] masterpieces, is an attempt to interpret the complexity that has been described so far. Southernist parties have not had and still do not have a clear and well-defined political identity. They are 'one' as only the Movement for the Autonomies (henceforth MpA) has managed to obtain electoral performance at least sufficient to reach governmental offices at the national level. In addition, they are 'no one' considering the weak electoral support gained over the years. At the national level, indeed, southernist parties' vote share has never reached 2%. Nonetheless, such political formations are also 'one hundred thousand' since the remarkable level of proliferation shown along the decades.

Unlike the League (Barraclough 1998), southernist parties have never been guided by strong leadership. No political leader has effectively established successful electoral alliances of southernist political formations. Arguably, issue entrepreneurs (Hobolt and De Vries 2015) operating in national parties have hindered the emergence of new figures, filling the representation

[1] Luigi Pirandello was an Italian prominent dramatist and poet, winner of the 1943 Nobel Prize in Literature.

gap in a traditionally disputed area (Diamanti 2009). National parties included Southern Italy as a pressing issue in their policy agendas since the post-war period, proposing economic development measures (Bianco 2021). Nevertheless, the increased external constraints deriving from the establishment of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in the 1990s limited the policies' effectiveness and helped highlight the dualism between North and South (Gomez-Reino 2000).

This article aims to investigate the past and present nature of southernist parties. Such a preliminary investigation may bring more interest on the matter, especially from political science, which has not devoted much attention to this object, although for quite shareable reasons.[2]

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. The next section presents the theoretical framework of the analysis. The third section deals with the research questions and hypotheses. The fourth section illustrates the data and methods. Section five analyzes southernist parties' ideological positioning, varieties, and electoral performance. After identifying the party family in which this particular party type can be included, a classification aimed at providing guidelines for a detailed investigation of these political formations is presented. Specifically, southernism will be taken into account, considering its complex ideological patterns and its composition in terms of claims of self-government, diffusion and evolution over time, and positioning on the left-right scheme. The final section discusses implications for future research and concludes.

## Theoretical Framework

### *The Center-periphery Cleavage and Ethnoregionalist Parties*

While relevant research has been carried out on ethnoregionalist parties (Delwit 2005; Tronconi 2009), notably on the 'old' League (Agnew 1995; Passarelli 2012), there is still very little scientific understanding of Italian southernist parties' features and ideological positioning. In particular, research to date has not yet determined whether such political formations can be included in the ethnoregionalist party family and be considered secessionists or simply autonomists.

Ethnoregionalist parties are defined as parties representing the interests of regionally concentrated ethnic groups which challenge a nation-state's status quo by demanding recognition of their cultural identity and a certain degree of self-government for their region (Müller-Rommel 1998). Existing literature has emphasized that ethnoregionalist parties sustain an identity anchored in the cleavages (notably the center-periphery) and issues that gave rise to their birth (Türsan 1998). According to Lipset and Rokkan (1967), all European countries have experienced two main shared

[2] One of the possible reasons concerns the southernist parties' poor electoral performances. In particular, in the election, parties, public opinion (EPOP) research, the vote share obtained by such parties is frequently below 1%.

paths. Firstly, the 'national revolution', namely the born of the nation-states in Great Britain, France, Spain, Germany, and Italy. Such a tumultuous process caused two fundamental conflicts: the 'center-periphery' cleavage and the 'state-church' cleavage. The second disruptive juncture identified by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) is the 'industrial revolution', which generated the 'labor-capital' cleavage and the 'urban-rural' cleavage.

For this article, the most insightful element of the inquiry of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) is constituted by the assumption that these conflicts, although disruptive, do not produce necessarily political parties able to exploit electoral opportunities. Therefore, the presence of a social conflict is not sufficient to give rise to a 'cleavage' and a party willing or prepared to exploit the electoral incentives deriving from it. Hence, to detect peculiarities of southernist parties in Italy, the analysis considers one of the cleavages caused by the national revolution, namely the center-periphery. This cleavage refers to a conflict between the central culture of the nation and the growing opposition of peripheries (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). For Lipset and Rokkan, the territorial, regional or center-periphery cleavage represents the crystallization of ethnic or cultural identities on the periphery of the political system (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Bartolini and Mair 1990). Specifically, the concept of 'periphery' encompasses ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities living in a social system. Along these lines, analyzing what kind of parties might emerge from this cleavage appears necessary for the conceptual clarification of southernist parties.

In the Italian context, such a cleavage, similarly to the urban-rural one, has known a substantial absorption into the state-church and labor-capital conflicts (Tronconi 2009). As an instance of such phenomena, the main Italian political parties have been a Christian-democratic party (DC) and a class cleavage party (PCI – Italian Communist Party). The emergence of successful ethnoregionalist parties, such as the League, was visible only from the 1990s. Interestingly, such a disruptive breakthrough resulted in the replacement in the public debate of the 'Southern question' by the so-called 'Northern question' (Biorcio 2016).

Ethnoregionalist parties have been studied in-depth (see in particular De Winter and Türsan 1998). Studies over the past two decades have provided important information on ethnoregionalist parties' left-right positioning (Delwit 2005), manifestos (Dandoy and Sandri 2008), and competition between such political formations and state-wide parties (Basile 2015). In particular, findings have emphasized that ethnoregionalist parties constitute a specific party family (Gomez-Reino, De Winter and Lynch 2006) and behave as 'catch-all parties' (Kirchheimer 1966; Dandoy and Sandri 2008). The catch-all party model is a consequence of a multifaceted process, concerning a stagnation in the size of membership of parties, a transformation towards a more

balanced social profile in terms of party membership, and reduced importance of membership fees in terms of the overall party revenue (Krouwel 2003).

However, ethnoregionalist parties present high levels of internal differentiation. They may pursue more autonomism or request complete independence and self-government. The following section deals with such issues.

***Autonomism, Secessionism, and Ideology: Typologies for Investigating Ethno-regionalist Parties***

Over the past decades, several attempts have been made to offer a fine-grained typology for investigating ethnoregionalist parties. One of the most encompassing efforts is represented by Gomez-Reino, De Winter, and Lynch (2006) typology, mainly based on parties' self-government claims, typically autonomism or secessionism, and left-right positioning. Previous works have also focused on cultural revivalism (Bugajski 1994), post-nationalism (Seiler 2005), anti-regime and authority (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998). According to Türsan (1998), there are seven elements useful to distinguish specific ethnoregionalist parties. Notably, such political actors can differ in terms of:

i. Confining conditions
ii. Clan, ethnic group, and language identities
iii. Ideology (left-right)
iv. Organisational strength
v. Popular support (link with groups)
vi. Level of influence
vii. Electoral support

To investigate southernist parties, this article draws upon Gomez-Reino, De Winter, and Lynch (2006) typology and focuses on three elements of the abovementioned classification, i.e., identity (*b*), ideology (*c*), and electoral support (*g*). Studies have highlighted the low ideological cohesiveness of ethnoregionalist parties (De Winter and Gomez-Reino 2002) and differences in their political demands (Tronconi 2009). In that respect, as ethnoregionalist parties, southernists may vary in terms of:

i. Requests for self-government
ii. Ideological positioning on the left-right scheme
iii. Territorial area of origin and ties with social groups and movements

Ethnoregionalist parties operate at the substate level, striving to represent regional and local interests (Hepburn 2009). As mentioned, they may differ in their demands on the scale of self-government. Specifically, ethnoregionalist parties can be 'autonomists' if they seek more local control over territorial resources and decision-making. If such demands are not satisfied, ethnoregionalist 'autonomy-seeking' parties could benefit from voters' disaffection with

mainstream party elites (De Winter, Gomez-Reino, and Lynch 2006). On the other hand, such political actors' demands may be also more pressing for the central government. Mainly, secessionist claims for self-determination can derive from ethnoregionalist parties seeking to represent nationalist minorities' interests. Typically, such movements have been frequent in Catalonia (Serrano 2013) and Scotland (Keating 2009).

Finally, scholars of nationalism and regionalism have also demonstrated the ideological heterogeneity of ethnoregionalist parties (Dandoy and Sandri 2008). Notably, such actors are generally deemed parties in favor of the European integration process, yet they show lower ideological cohesiveness in the left-right dimension (Hix 1999).

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

Drawing upon the presented theoretical framework, this contribution attempts to assess whether southernist parties (1) pursued autonomist or secessionist goals, (2) are progressive, catch-all, or conservative parties, and (3) performed better in national, European, or regional elections. The expectation concerning the first part of the research question is based on critical features of ethnoregionalist parties. According to De Winter (1998), such parties seek political reorganization of the existing national power structure, for some kind of self-government. As ethnoregionalist parties, southernist parties might move from 'soft' demands, i.e., autonomy, to 'strong' demands, i.e., secession. On this matter, studies have empirically observed several cases of both typologies (Dandoy 2010), yet no investigation on southernist parties has been offered to date. The article expects autonomist parties to be more frequent than secessionists. This hypothesis is based on the complex political viability of the secessionist option in the framework of the Italian constitution.[3] The distinction between autonomist parties and secessionist parties is far from irrelevant. Autonomist parties may not stress 'ethnic' or 'nationalist' components and be considered as state-wide parties aiming at achieving territorial reorganization policies (Strmiska 2003). Conversely, secessionist parties challenge the existing state and political-territorial order, its structure, its political systems, its boundaries and its distribution of power between the center and the periphery (De Winter 2006).

In addressing the second part of the research question, this article expects that southernist parties are mainly catch-all parties. The catch-all thesis has become a metaphor for describing transformations in political parties and the ways in which they behave vis-à-vis the electorate. In a nutshell, the catch-all party can be translated as a highly opportunistic vote-seeking party, a leader-centered party, and a party tied to interest groups (Wolinetz 2002). In that respect, previous contributions have demonstrated that ethnoregionalist parties behaved as catch-all parties

[3] In this regard, the Italian constitution states: 'The Republic shall be one and indivisible'.

(Dandoy and Sandri 2008). Thus, this article aims to verify the feasibility of established findings on ethnoregionalist parties' identity by considering southernist parties.

Finally, the contribution investigates the electoral performance of southernist parties. Specifically, the paper asks whether such parties perform better in national, European or regional elections. In addressing the third part, the article expects southernist parties to achieve higher vote share in regional and European, rather than national, elections. Such an expectation derives from existing literature emphasizing how second-order elections may offer windows of opportunity for minor parties to gain support and visibility (Lynch 1996; Swyngedouw 1992).

## Data and Methods

A longitudinal and holistic approach is utilized, integrating official data, party statutes, party leaders' speeches and press conferences, and official party documents to establish the features and preferences of southernist parties[4]. Information is mainly derived from the Historical Archive of Elections of the Italian Ministry of the Interior, 'ParlGov' party identifier (Döring and Manow 2021), and parties' official websites. In this way, the article performs comparative analyses of such parties, focusing on: a) ideological positioning; b) attitudes towards secessionism; c) territorial area of origin; d) electoral performance and coalition strategy. The comparison aims to understand the varieties and performance of such political formations.

Moreover, the analysis investigates both national elections and so-called 'second-order elections' (Reif and Schmitt 1980). To this end, the information gathered concerns the general, European, and regional elections held in Italy from 1946 to 2020. Timewise, the first general election considered is the seminal election of the Constituent Assembly of 1946, and the 2018 Italian general election is the last. As for the European elections, the investigation starts from the first election held in 1979 up to the last election held in May 2019. Finally, as concerns regional elections, the period considered goes from 1947 for Sicily (1947-2017), and 1970 for the remaining regions.[5] Specifically, the regional elections studied are Abruzzo[6] (1970-2019), Basilicata (1970-2019), Calabria (1970-2020), Campania (1970-2015), Molise (1970-2018), and Apulia (1970-2015).

As for the data collection, the following criteria have been applied. First, political parties which have changed the label in different elections yet related to a defined predecessor, do not constitute new political formations. This is relevant as the emergence of new electoral alliances has often been the outcome of coalition strategies and bargaining. Secondly, since southernist parties

[4] Compared to other parties and party families, data on southernist parties are very limited. For instance, the 'ParlGov' party family identifier (Döring and Manow 2021) provides information only on few parties, e.g. Lega d'Azione Meridionale, Movimento per l'Indipendenza della Sicilia.

[5] In the Italian institutional architecture, the Sicilian region has a special status. For this reason, local elections were held earlier compared to so-called 'ordinary' regions.

[6] Abruzzo is included in this analysis according to a historical criterion.

have performed poorly in most elections, no minimum threshold of votes is considered for the analysis.

Lastly, coalition strategies are analyzed according to the presence or the absence of formal agreements between parties. Where available, data on pre-electoral coalitions are taken from the Historical Archive of Elections of the Italian Ministry of Interior and official parties' sources.

## Analysis

### *Southernist Parties' Identity: Autonomists v. Secessionists*

To begin with, Table 1 shows that southernist parties have been both autonomist and secessionist. Autonomist claims promote further political and administrative autonomy and request more powers to regional governments. Secessionist demands undermine the very existence of the national government's legitimacy and sovereignty.

From Table 1, it is observed that, as expected, the majority of southernist parties have adhered to the autonomist perspective. The classification is based on parties' statutes and manifestos, considering whether a party express separatist stances or 'just' self-government requests. As an instance of secessionist claims, the Movement for the Independence of Sicily (MIS) expresses in its statute the need for a 'sovereign, independent state' (MIS programmatic documents and statute 1947: 6). On the other hand, autonomist interests were evident in the statute of 'It will become beautiful – Sicily' (*Diventerà Bellissima*, the party of the current governor of Sicily), which advocates for the 'defense of the Sicilian autonomy, yet respecting the unity of the Nation' (DB Statute 2017: 1).

Overall, twenty out of thirty southernist parties are autonomist, while the remaining ten are secessionist. Interestingly, the first period considered (1945-1965) displays the higher share of secessionist southernist parties. The reasons underpinning such a secessionist spread in that period are rooted in the Sicilian statute development (Paci and Pietrancosta 2010). In detail, the main objective of Andrea Finocchiaro Aprile's secessionist formation – the Movement for the Independence of Sicily (MIS) – was to reinforce the position of Sicily vis-à-vis the Italian central government by benefiting from the post-war transition. Finocchiaro Aprile's movement has emerged as a key political actor in Sicily during the Italian institutional transition, yet playing a prominent role in achieving autonomy, rather than secession, in favor of the Island.

Timewise, southernist parties have initially known a decrease from the first period (1945-1965) to the second (1966-1989), moving from six parties (one autonomist and five secessionists) to four parties (two autonomists and two secessionists). In contrast, from the second period onwards southernist parties have increased, reaching ten parties in the last two periods. In the third period (1990-2009), eight autonomists and only two secessionists are recorded, while in the last

period (2010-2020) the share of secessionist parties further decreased to just one party (PIS, For the South). Therefore, the southernist galaxy is currently dominated by the prominence of autonomist parties.

Table 1: Party classification according to autonomist or secessionist nature

| Autonomism | Secessionism |
|---|---|
| **First period: 1945-1965** | |
| Socialist Party of Sicily | Movement for the Independence of Sicily<br>Sicilian Liberal Union<br>Autonomist Independentist<br>Autonomist and Independentist Concentration |
| **Second period: 1966-1989** | |
| People's Party of Calabria<br>Southern Movement | Movement for the Independence of Sicily<br>Sicilian National Front |
| **Third period: 1990-2009** | |
| Southern Action League<br>Southern Alliance<br>Southern Movement<br>Sicilian Democracy<br>Republican Movement<br>Mediterranean<br>Southern League<br>Movement for Autonomies | Sicilian National Front<br>Mediterranean Union |
| **Fourth period: 2010-2020** | |
| Mediterranean Union<br>Democratic Movement<br>Freedom and Autonomy – We the South<br>Rights and Autonomy<br>Me the South<br>Great South<br>Sicilian Revolution<br>Movement for Autonomies<br>It will become beautiful | For the South |

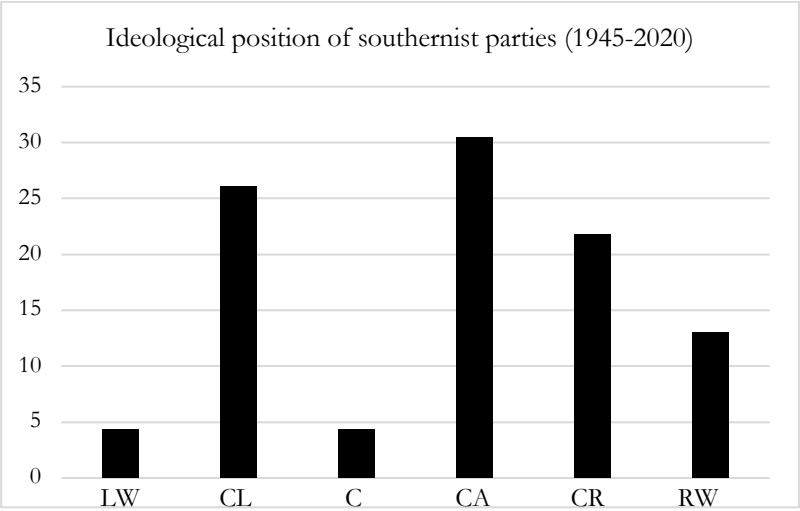
N = 30

Source: Author, based on parties' statutes.

***Southernist Parties' Identity: Ideological Positioning***

After analyzing southernist parties based on the dichotomy autonomism-secessionism, we can now turn the attention to the investigation of southernist parties' ideological positioning. As has been previously mentioned, 'center-periphery' conflicts can be incorporated into other conflicts, i.e., labor-capital. In the case of southernist parties, labor-capital and center-periphery are strictly related, as many southernist parties have acted within the framework of the traditional left-right scheme.

Figure 1: Southernist parties on the left-right axis




Source: Author, based on ParlGov party family identifier[7] (Doring and Manow 2021) and parties' official documents.

Note: categories include: left-wing (LW), center-left (CL), center (C), catch-all (CA) center-right (CR), and right-wing (RW).

In Figure 1, it is observed the ideological background of southernist political formations. The index is built on six categories: left-wing, center-left, center, catch-all, center-right, right-wing. The classification is based on the party family identifier of the ParlGov database (Doring and Manow 2021). Parties are classified into families according to their position in the economic and cultural left-right dimensions, i.e., state versus market and liberty versus authority. Overall, eight party family categories are proposed in the database: communist/socialist, green/ecologist, social democracy, liberal, Christian democracy, agrarian, conservative, and right-wing. Moving from such a classification, the analysis includes communist/socialist and green/ecologist families in the left-wing category (LW), social democracy in the center-left (CL), liberal and agrarian families in the center (C), Christian democracy and conservatives in the center-right (CR) and finally the right-wing is maintained in its original categorization. Furthermore, a fundamental party family to consider when dealing with southernist parties, i.e., catch-all, is added.

Percentages exhibited in Figure 1 are derived from the number of parties belonging to a specific party family in relation to the total number of southernist parties investigated. As we can see, the 'catch-all' nature (Kirchheimer 1966) is predominant, reaching the highest share (30%) over the entire time span considered. However, this finding is not surprising. Southernist parties

[7] It should be noted that the ParlGov party family identifier was not available for all the parties under investigation. Where not available, the left-right position of southernist parties has been detected by analyzing different sources, such as: party statute, party leader's speeches, official documents, party manifestos. Most of these sources are retrievable from the parties' official websites.

have frequently employed catch-all strategies for many reasons (Dandoy and Sandri 2008). On the one hand, citizens' mobilization for controversial issues such as autonomism and secessionism required a widespread consensus, which goes far beyond a limited left-right-based target of voters. On the other hand, southernist parties are not associated with class conflicts. Instead, they try to exploit the 'call of unity' against Italy's sovereignty on their polities. In detail, among those parties classified as 'catch-all', MIS can be found. Such a party was founded in 1943 and has been particularly inclined to avoid 'ideological contaminations' within the party.[8]

Moreover, Figure 1 shows that 26% of southernist parties belongs to the category of center-left. Both catch-all and center-left parties show equilibrium in terms of autonomist or secessionist nature. Out of seven catch-all parties, four are autonomist and three secessionists, whilst out of six center-left parties, three are autonomist and three are secessionist. As for the center-right and right-wing categories, they respectively represent 22% and 13% of the total. Conservatives reach almost 35%. Such findings demonstrate the multifaceted identity of southernist parties. Furthermore, as we will see in the next section, conservative southernist parties were able to gain the highest share of voters' support in the elections compared to both catch-all and progressive southernists. Also, government personnel at both national and local levels have been mainly members of conservative southernist parties.

Intriguingly, considering the peripherality of right-wing parties, the share displayed in Figure 1 is remarkable. However, the most insightful element is constituted by the homogeneity of center-right and right-wing parties concerning the autonomism-secessionism divide. All the parties connected to this ideological area belong to autonomism. This is not surprising, as connecting secessionist claims to the Italian far-right's traditional nationalist perspectives might be more challenging for such parties than others (Ignazi 1992; Golder 2016). For this reason, southernist autonomists associated with right-wing party family have maintained positions firmly anchored to the protection of Italy's unity.

Finally, Figure 1 shows that southernist center parties and left-wing southernists are the least frequent over the time-span investigated (4.3% in both cases). The left-wing Marxist party was the Sicilian Socialist Party (PSS), while the People's Party of Calabria (PPC) is the only instance of southernist center party. The PSS was mainly active in 1958. The PPC contested the election only once, i.e., the 1979 Italian general election.

[8] See Battaglia (2014) on the debate between Finocchiaro Aprile and Varvaro, i.e., the two party leaders, in the MIS Third National Party Congress in Taormina, 1947.

***Many Parties, Few Voters: Examining Southernist Parties' Electoral Failure***

In the present section, the electoral performance of southernist parties is analyzed. As mentioned earlier, no electoral threshold for including political parties in the analysis is used.

Figure 2: Origin areas of southernist parties




Source: Author. Note: No southernist party originated from Abruzzo, Basilicata, and Molise.

Before investigating southernist parties' electoral performance, it is worth observing the territorial origin of such political formations. The share of southernist parties by origin areas is calculated by considering the number of southernist parties originated from a specific region in relation to the total number of southernist parties studied over the entire time frame, i.e., 1945-2020. To gauge the parties' territorial origin, the article adopted primary sources (e.g., party statutes).

Figure 2 shows a clear predominance of Sicily-based parties (58.33%). In contrast, no southernist parties were originated from Abruzzo, Basilicata, and Molise. Thus, southernist parties operating in such regions are Sicily, Campania, Calabria, or Apulia-based formations, striving to maximize their influence by contending elections in multiple areas of Southern Italy.

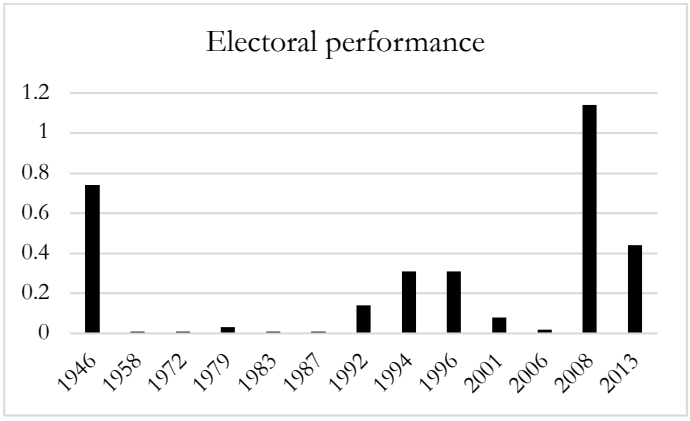
Campania-based southernist parties consist of 16.67% of the formations investigated. However, the main southernist political actor in Campania is We the South (NS). Such a party was

a former faction of the Sicilian MpA. Therefore, the most rooted southernist party in Campania is still somehow related to Sicily. Similarly to Campania, Rights and Autonomy (DeA), one of the parties originating from Calabria, was born in 2013 from an internal split from the Sicilian MpA. Southernist parties deriving from the Calabria region are about 12.5%.

Finally, in the case of Apulia, the main political formation in the region is Me the South (IS). Such a party was founded on February 2009 by Adriana Poli Bortone, a former minister in one of the four Italian cabinets led by Silvio Berlusconi. Differently from the cases of Campania and Calabria, IS has constantly been tied with the Apulian region. Southernist parties originated from Apulia consist of 12.5% of the total sample.

As for the general elections' results, the picture emerging from Figure 3 confirms the electoral failure of southernist parties. For this inquiry, the elections considered cover the 1946-2018 period. Overall, the elections studied are nineteen. However, in 1948, 1953, 1963, 1968, 1976, and 2018 no southernist party has contested the elections.

Figure 3: Performance of southernist parties in general elections (1946-2013)




Source: Italian Historical Archive of Elections. Note: mean vote share is 0.25%.

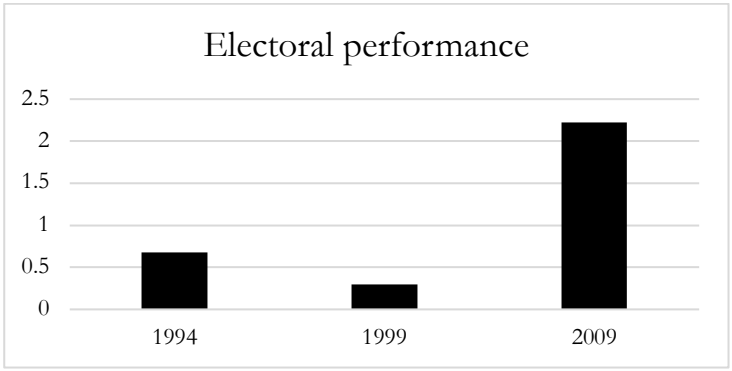
Figure 3 depicts a painful situation for southernist parties, suggesting an excess of supply in the context of the Italian electoral market. Specifically, the mean vote share over the investigated time frame is 0.25%. Consequently, the poor electoral performance has resulted in a limited parliamentary representation. Only in 1946 and 2008 did southernist parties manage to elect representatives in national assemblies. In 1946, four MIS members participated in the Constituent Assembly as the party obtained 171.201 total votes. More than sixty years later, the Sicilian MpA elected eight representatives in the Chamber of Deputies and two in the Senate[9].

[9] It should be noted that the parliamentarians of the Movement for Autonomies were not relegated to Sicilian districts, yet they contested the election in all Southern Italy's districts.

The increase in vote share for the MpA was the result of an effective coalition strategy. However, coalition strategies adopted by southernist parties were mainly unsuccessful. In particular, from 1945 to 2020, only about 15% of these political actors have established pre-election coalition agreements with other partners. In the remaining 85%, southernist parties preferred to participate in the election independently. As it is shown in Figure 3, such decisions have proved to be electorally ineffective. Conversely, the autonomist and secessionist parties of Northern Italy followed different strategies and could establish one single political formation, i.e., League. Since the 1990s, the League was influential in forming coalition agreements with national parties.

In the election of 2008, the MpA established a coalition with Silvio Berlusconi's People of Freedom (PDL), nominating candidates in the electoral districts of Southern Italy. Similarly, the League of Umberto Bossi nominated candidates in the Northern districts. The ballot box provides the MpA with enough support to obtain governmental offices. The role of the MpA in government was far from marginal as the turbulence in the legislature allowed such a Movement to exploit their 'blackmail potential' (Sartori 1976).

Figure 4: Vote share of southernist parties in European elections

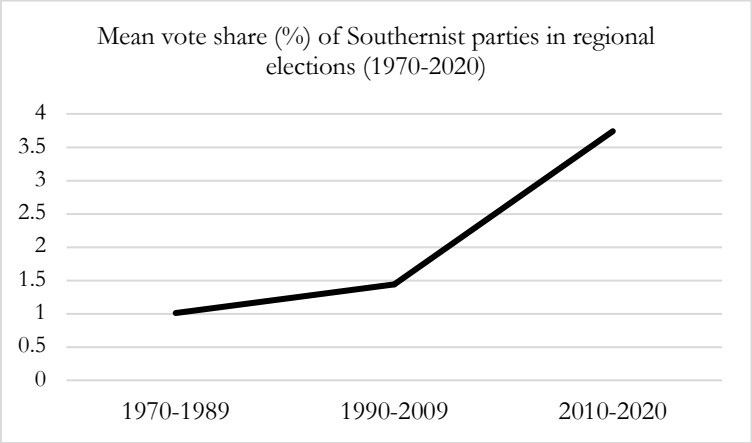



Source: Italian Historical Archive of Elections.

Looking at second-order elections, Figure 4 exhibits the poor southernist parties' electoral participation in European elections. From 1979 to 2019, only two southernist parties, i.e., the Southern Action League (LAM) and the MpA, contested the elections. The former party was founded two years before the 1994 European election and represented an instance of the 'personal party' (Calise 2000). The LAM was and is still today a right-wing party able to establish coalition agreements with larger right-wing state-wide parties such as Tricolor Flame (FT) and New Force (FN). However, the LAM constantly failed in obtaining seats in the European parliament. In the 2009 European election, by forming a coalition with other national parties such as the Alliance of the Centre (AdC) and the Right's Francesco Storace (LD), the LAM has been on the verge of reaching the 4% electoral threshold, despite securing just 2% of the vote.

In order to effectively detect peculiarities in regional elections, the overall temporal period was divided into three different periods for the 'ordinary regions' and four periods for the Sicilian elections.[10] Starting from the ordinary regions, in Figure 5 it is observed the temporal variation in vote share from 1970 to the elections of January 2020.

Figure 5: Mean vote share of southernist parties in regional elections (1970-2020)




Source: Italian Historical Archive of Elections. Number of elections: 65.

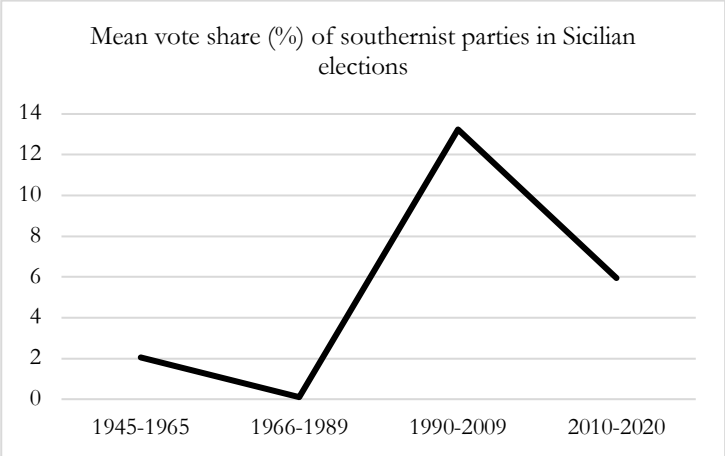
Temporal variation in Figure 5 displays an increase in southernist parties' vote share, concerning the transition from the first to the second and from the second to the last period. Such an increase is caused by the electoral support obtained by three specific parties: the Great South (GS) in Basilicata and Molise; the MpA in Abruzzo, Basilicata, and Campania; and We the South (NS) in Campania. Specifically, in the last period, the mean vote share almost reached 4%. This is a remarkable growth compared to general and European elections. Nevertheless, southernist parties' vote share remains poor, particularly if compared to national parties' support. However, in some cases, southernist parties' consensus is higher than national parties', specifically in the context of Sicilian elections.

Figure 6 shows a differentiated trend compared to other Southern Italy's electoral contexts. Before 1990, no southernist party obtained more than 2.6% of votes. In the 1990-2009 period, the emergence in the electoral arena of the MpA resulted in impressive increases in southernist parties' vote share. In detail, the MpA reached almost 13% in 2006 and 14% in 2008. In these two regional elections, such a party has overcome national parties' vote share, including the National Alliance (AN) and the center-left coalition 'The Daisy', i.e., *La Margherita*, predecessor of the Democratic Party.

[10] Note that this is a consequence of the Sicilian region's peculiar status. Sicily is a special administrative area, according to Italian constitutional architecture.

Moreover, Figure 6 illustrates a decrease in the last period considered. Despite this, parties such as GS, MpA, and 'It will become beautiful – Sicily' (*Diventerà Bellissima*) still gained high electoral consensus. Therefore, the paper's third hypothesis is partially confirmed, as data showed the poor electoral performance in national elections and the greater support obtained in regional elections, particularly in the Sicilian region. However, the article expected a higher southernist parties' participation and consensus in European elections, yet data disproved such an assumption.

Figure 6: Mean vote share of southernist parties in Sicilian elections




Source: Italian Historical Archive of Elections. Number of elections: 17.

## Conclusion

The purpose of the present article has been to investigate southernist parties' identity and electoral performance in the Italian republican era (1945-2020). This contribution represents the first effort devoted to the analysis of southernist parties from a political science perspective. Although descriptive in nature, inferences that emerged from the analysis has shown interesting elements that may pave the way for further research on the matter.

First of all, the analysis highlighted that southernist parties had been mainly 'autonomy-seeking' rather than 'secession-seeking'. Perhaps, the former self-government was deemed to be more viable compared to the latter solution. In addition, consistently with existing literature, it has been observed that southernist parties mainly followed the typical patterns of the catch-all party.

Secondly, the paper showed the existence of weak voters' response to southernist parties' electoral supply. The story of southernist parties is a story of failure. Albeit frequent participation of southernist parties in national elections, vote share has been lacking across the board. Similarly, in the European elections, such parties were both unsuccessful and unlikely to participate. However, when it comes to regional elections, the support increases. This is due mainly to the Sicilian peculiarity. Notably, such a region has been the main territorial area of origin of southernist

parties and provided such parties with vote share frequently higher than national parties. In addition, southernist parties originated from Sicily gained electoral support in different southern areas, such as Campania, Basilicata, and Apulia. Overall, the picture emerging from this article discloses tough times for southernist parties. In contrast, League's Salvini has been effective in replacing the traditional prominence of the DC in northern regions, e.g. Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia (Diamanti 2009), and attracting new voters in the South by exploiting its societal malaise in terms of pessimism about the future and declining levels of trust towards people (Albertazzi and Zulianello 2021).

Political representation provided by southernist parties is absent. Therefore, state-wide parties have tried to fill the gap in this electorally unstable and volatile area. As has been shown in previous works (Emanuele and Marino 2016), Southern Italy's party system institutionalization is weak and mainly based on personal vote and voters-candidates interactions. Over the decades, state-wide parties have conquered such an electorally unstable area. Firstly, the DC during the First Republic (1945 to 1992), then Forward Italy (FI, *Forza Italia*) from 1992 to 2013. Finally, the Five Star Movement (M5S) from 2013 to 2018. The Covid-19 pandemic will not improve the prospects of southernist parties, especially because of the rise of Brothers of Italy (FDI, *Fratelli d'Italia*) and the League, as well as because of the relative hold of FI (Albertazzi, Bonansinga, and Zulianello 2021). Still, such parties are not grounded in Southern Italy, and their relationship with the territory is not comparable with other Italian political formations' ties with specific areas of the country. As has been noted (Emanuele 2015), the main parties of the First Republic (DC and PCI) experienced a process of territorial concentration, relying on their strongholds: the South for the DC and the 'red belt' for the PCI. In particular, the latter area has guaranteed electoral success to PCI for an extended period, although such a 'red belt' is recently experiencing higher uncertainty. Conversely, Southern Italy has always been characterized by high levels of volatility and political uncertainty. Thus, the emergence of a party able to obtain stable support in Southern Italy remains unrealistic.

In conclusion, the article is a preliminary effort to study southernist parties and, therefore, has several limitations. First, the paper focused mainly on the supply side, emphasizing southernist parties' weaknesses in obtaining electoral support. However, the demand side would benefit from a thorough investigation aimed to understand citizens' preferences beyond the elections. Therefore, future research avenues could provide a more fine-grained analysis of the citizens-parties relationship in the context of Southern Italy. For instance, one may ask whether a demand of southernist parties really exists, and if it is the case, why such parties are so marginal. Also, the issue would benefit from both further quantitative and qualitative analyses. On the one hand, quantitative contributions may help disclose significant factors explaining the southernist parties'

electoral failure. On the other hand, qualitative research may focus on a single southernist party or few cases of southernist parties to effectively trace and study party specificities.

**Acknowledgements**

I wish to thank Andrew Devine, the journal editors, and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful feedback on earlier drafts of this article.

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# Sustainable Development in Middle Powers' Governance Arrangements: The Cases of IBSA and MIKTA

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**DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.50.3**

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## Abstract

*Considering middle powers' potential to address new demands worldwide and their propensity to contribute to new forms of institution-building in global governance, arrangements between them consist of interesting opportunities to promote sustainable development. However, some have shown to be more effective than others in this regard. When observing two of these partnerships' outcomes between 2015 and 2018, India, Brazil, and South Africa (IBSA) Trilateral Forum has demonstrated more effectiveness than Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia (MIKTA) New Innovative Partnership. To understand why, this study analyses specialized literature, with special attention to Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) framework on global governance arrangements' effectiveness. Arguing that middle power arrangements that address sustainable development are more effective when benefiting from greater functional specialization and that diversified power access also plays a role, this study raises awareness about middle powers' relevance in addressing new global demands. The study points out the nascent research on these informal partnerships and the causal relations between these arrangements' structures and effectiveness.*

## Keywords

Global Governance; IBSA; Middle Powers; MIKTA; Sustainable Development



*Originally published in Volume 50 (September 2021), pp. 49–74. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.*

## Introduction

The end of the Second World War contributed to the creation of international organizations, which emerged legitimized by international law and mainly built on the most powerful nations' interest like formal, standing institutions, s (Cooper 1997; Ikenberry 2001; Flemes 2007). However, from the 1990s onwards, the insufficient role of those latter states in carrying out new demands of an increasingly complex globalized system[14] led to the emergence of informal institutions outside the scope of international law (Guerrero 2018). These governance arrangements arose as a response to new demands for the global agenda, which started to require appreciation and adaptation of novel themes in the international arena, beyond security and economy, such as human rights, gender, disarmament, and sustainable development (Reis et al 2008). In this context, a group of countries marginalized in the international order began to consider alternative forms of interaction in international relations. Despite remaining controversies in International Relations (IR), these nations are commonly designated as *middle powers*. Indeed, the global financial crisis of 2008 can be considered a watershed for these states in global governance as they increased their institutional representation (Cooper 2015). In the 21st century, they become important not only for their diplomatic practice, alternative to that of the great powers, but also for their prominence in the arrangement of informal institutions as instruments to address these countries' demands (Cooper 2015; Haug 2017; Guerrero 2018).

Middle powers are influential diplomatic actors in areas where they do not collide with major powers' interests. Such a role gains momentum nowadays, with the rising alignment of global governance arrangements between these nations. These partnerships can be considered precursors of institution-building by middle powers in global governance as these groupings become increasingly institutionalized to address the aforementioned "new themes", thereby allowing these countries to gain more influence in the global system (Yoshihide 2012; Vigevani, Veiga and Mariano 1994). At the same time, since the beginning of this century, *sustainable development* has become a prevailing priority in the global agenda. Diverse international actors are increasingly conscious about this domain, consequently adapting the role of the institutions in which they participate to those novel priorities. The United Nations (UN), as the major global organization, has recently launched a series of initiatives related to sustainable development. The idea of development embracing political, social, economic, and environmental sustainability became a global compromise with the introduction of the 2030 Agenda, in 2015, which comprised the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Fukuda-Parr and Muchhala 2020).

[14] Complex governance involves cross-border systems of rule that can assume diverse forms or involve multiple kinds of actors. It became an important concept that elucidates the way governors try to solve global challenges (Roger, 2019).

As the topic of sustainable development begins to play a role in influencing global governance, groups seeking to consolidate their influence in global governance are stimulated to invest in their development agenda and structural thrusts (UNDP 2017). Partnerships among India, Brazil, and South Africa (IBSA) and among Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia (MIKTA) are current examples of middle powers moving towards new institution-building that prioritizes the SDGs. They use these partnerships as a means of reaching more representation in the global arena (Flemes 2007; Cooper 2015; Kim, Haug and Rimmer 2018; Lee 2018; Xavier and Fonseca 2018).

Based on the type of initiatives made, number of SDGs approached, and number of countries reached, IBSA demonstrated more effectiveness regarding results delivered in the period between 2015 and 2018. After all, the group worked on 23 projects approaching 8 SDGs in 18 countries outside the partnership (IBSA 2003; Indian Ministry of External Affairs 2018; RIS 2020). According to Xavier and Fonseca (2018), the group carries out actual projects that embrace specific SDGs (Annex 1). Within the same period, MIKTA developed joint projects for information exchange among the 5 members, with 14 initiatives addressing 4 SDGs (MIKTA 2020; South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018). For Haug (2017) and Lee (2018) who also consider the abovementioned facts, MIKTA's performance was inward and limited (Annex 2).

Considering the abovementioned findings, the specific objective of this paper is to comprehend why IBSA appears to be more effective in the promotion of global sustainable development than MIKTA, in order to understand the structural mechanisms of middle power arrangements that enable some to be more successful than others in this specific domain. After all, with the growing complexity of global governance, these reasons have been increasingly theorized (Hasenclever et al 2000).

This study uses Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) framework for assessing global governance arrangements, which focuses on three aspects: publicness, inclusiveness, and delegation, to examine effectiveness in middle power arrangements. This study hypothesizes that the difference in effectiveness in both middle power arrangements analyzed is due to the delegation of more specialized functions in an institution.

This paper contributes to the literature by studying *minilateral* institutions composed of middle powers whose participation grows in global governance, but whose effectiveness is under-researched. According to Guerrero (2018, 25), "little has been done to study the institutionalization processes of informal institutions initiated at the beginning of the century". Moreover, the study helps to fill a gap in literature by exploring middle powers' performance in global governance with regards to sustainable development. As noted by Lee (2018) as well as Xavier and Fonseca (2018),

this theme is key for the global agenda but remains underexplored from the perspective of middle powers agency.

Furthermore, the policy relevance of this paper is in clarifying what does and does not work for the effectiveness of middle power institutions in achieving global sustainable development, to which the SDGs are key. This is important in two ways: new institutions composed of these states improve their development agendas and organizational structures to address global sustainable development; in turn, these agenda proposals are better adapted to those new actors' capabilities, consequently contributing to their end goal of becoming more influential in the global arena.

## Middle Powers and the Sustainable Development Goals

### *Middle Power Arrangements within Global Governance*

According to Koenig-Archibugi's (2002, 7) definition, "governance arrangement" refers to "the interaction between various actors pursuing common goals […]. Thus, governance arrangements represent the link between the demand and the supply of global governance. However, as noticed by Kim, Haug and Rimmer (2018, 1), "traditional governmental organizations have become increasingly deadlock, prone and anachronistic" due to their inability to fulfil new demands in the global agenda. Considering that, an alternative group of countries has been becoming more influential in global governance. For Patrick (2015, 115), this "reflects the failure of formal international organizations to adapt to complex global challenges, dramatic power shifts, and growing normative divergences in world politics". While engineered by newcomers, these informal institutions emerged apart from the formal context of prevailing structures of international organizations (Guerrero, 2018).

In line with Cooper's (1997) "niche diplomacy", Patrick (2015) as well as Kim, Haug and Rimmer (2018) identify the arrangements between few states with informal structures as "minilateralism". They use this concept coined by Miles Kahler (1993) to explain the recent proliferation of such partnerships. One defining characteristic of today's minilateral governance arrangements is that they are "informal, non-binding, purpose-built partnerships, and coalitions of the interested, willing, and capable set up to address challenges in specific issue areas" (Kim, Haug and Rimmer 2018, 478). Nevertheless, as pointed out by Patrick (2015, 127):

> "[…] it seems dubious whether flexible minilateralism can resolve tough cooperation problems. No doubt, in the absence of standing institutions, informal frameworks may "facilitate cooperation by reducing uncertainty, improving communication, and providing focal points to coordinate policies. It is less clear [however] that they can be any more successful than other diplomatic forums in promoting mutual policy adjustment when states strongly disagree over policy preferences […]".

Aiming at expanding their participation in diplomatic decision-making and consequently changing the system from within – rather than trying to replace it, these nations tend to engage in global governance through mutual coalitions (Stephen and Zürn 2014). These countries became known as "middle powers", a concept proposed by Giovanni Botero in the 16th century to refer to countries that were neither large powers nor small powers, in military terms, but positioned in-between. For Holbraad (1984), these states count on a certain degree of independent strength internationally, which leads to significant recognition and authority. Realist scholars believe that these states have intermediate material capabilities, due to their military and economic endowments. However, the approach has been moving increasingly away from this perspective. According to Cooper, Higgott and Nossal (1993, 19):

> "Middle powers are defined primarily by their behavior: their tendency to pursue multilateral[15] solutions to international problems, their tendency to embrace compromise positions in international disputes, and their tendency to embrace compromise notions of good international citizenship' to guide their diplomacy."

Jordaan (2003) notices that these states sustain their role of legitimizing and stabilizing the global order, which is generally enabled via cooperative initiatives. The different kinds of interaction towards global partnerships differ among authors. This study adopts the concepts proposed by Castañer and Oliveira (2020, 972) who define coordination "as the attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes of joint determination of common goals, while cooperation refers to the attitude, behavior, and outcome of the implementation of those goals as agreed on". They suggest that collaboration is a more formal institution, aimed at willingly supporting others in achieving these goals, while communication is a precondition for the three-abovementioned interactions.

At any rate, according to Yoshihide (2012), middle powers can be considered drivers in the process of institution-building in global governance, as these partnerships between them have been increasingly institutionalized to address new global issues and to achieve more representation in the global arena. These states' investment in foreign policies on issues beyond security and economy – such as human rights, gender, environment, and disarmament – is what Cooper, Higgott and Nossal (1993) label "middle power diplomacy" and Vigevani, Veiga and Mariano (1994) call "new themes". Thus, middle powers have been currently achieving greater influence in the global system by confirming arrangements that are keener to address current demands, usually not prioritized by great powers.

[15] The idea of minilateralism was not yet commonly used by that time.

***Sustainable Development as a Key Agenda***

As recognized by Haug (2017) and Xavier and Fonseca (2018), sustainable development has been an increasingly important theme in the new global agenda, having become a means for middle powers to reach their end goal of increasing their influence in global governance. The most widely accepted conception of the term was coined during the World Commission on Environment and Development in the 1980s which gathered many important names in the field. Among them, there were Mahbub ul Haq and Samir Amin, who proposed that "humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987, 16). However, the emergence of sustainable development as a comprehensive international compromise, enabling the configuration of well-founded policy guidelines to put it into practice, only occurred with the creation of the SDGs, within the UN's 2030 Agenda (Fukuda-Parr and Muchhala 2020). Based on the conception of the so-called Brundtland Commission, the SDGs aim at achieving socially and economically inclusive and environmentally friendly development (Fukuda-Parr and McNeill 2019).

The worldwide emergence of such theme and commitment to the SDGs influenced middle powers arrangements to approach them "given that, since their institution, they represent the highest priority on development" (Xavier and Fonseca 2018, 101). Despite the different impacts of the influence of these nations in each of the arrangements studied (IBSA and MIKTA), it became indispensable for both institutions to approach sustainable development in their agenda, hence contributing to the SDGs implementation (Xavier and Fonseca 2018; Lee 2018). Indeed, both partnerships mention sustainable development among their current priorities, as a pathway to grow their participation in the global agenda (IBSA 2020; MIKTA 2020). Notwithstanding, as observed in the initiatives developed by the institutions, each group has been advancing it at different degrees in practice, generating debate in IR literature around their effectiveness to address new global governance themes.

Though IBSA has been subject of controversies since its formation in 2003, the assessment of IBSA's commitment to sustainable development is positive. Critiques are mostly oriented to the fact that the theme of sustainable development has a great influence in the grouping, culminating in a too ambitious agenda a priori which does not manage to be materialized. For Husar (2016), this is especially true with respect to the orchestration of the group's interests in global issues in multilateral forums. With the consolidation of IBSA's Fund, literature has been more optimistic concerning the partnership's performance regarding global sustainable development. The topic has a relevant influence in IBSA's documents, such as mission and annual

reports. The SDGs have also been designated to all of IBSA Fund's projects, since the Fund's inception, in a very detailed manner.

Many scholars consider the group's performance in the aid landscape impressive. Haug (2017) sees it as a noteworthy international cooperation instrument, highlighting IBSA's Fund. Xavier and Fonseca (2018) share this view, underlining that the Fund has been delivering several projects oriented towards the SDGs. They note that the Fund approved 32 projects, which focus on critical areas to achieve the Goals, for 21 countries since its creation until 2018, (Xavier and Fonseca 2018, 188).

When it comes to MIKTA, the majority of scholars converge on the argument that, despite the role of sustainable development in the groups' scope, the SDGs have been adapted and more generally summarized to suit MIKTA's priorities. This is reflected by absence of goals assignment to each initiative, for example. The partnership is falling short of putting into practice the SDGs, although some recognize that achieving the SDGs may be a matter of time. Husar (2016) argues that MIKTA, like IBSA, lacks coordination in international summits. Cooper (2015, 95) goes beyond this to highlight the importance of MIKTA creating a summit of their own – which IBSA already has, "as a means not only to amplify their roles with respect to the new Informalism of the twenty-first century, but also to ensure that their presence in the hub of global governance is maintained". Still, the author points to the group's early stage of development, relative to better consolidated partnerships like IBSA. Kim, Haug and Rimmer (2018, 486) acknowledge MIKTA's precarious institutional situation, indicating uncertainty concerning its performance in global governance:

> "Mechanisms that share MIKTA's operational characteristics are likely to be short-lived and suffer from weak member commitment, resource constraints, forum-shopping risks, and a leadership vacuum. Some, however, may survive and become a new species of actor in a multiplex world".

As noted by Haug (2017), MIKTA discussed the implementation of SDGs in its 2017 Development Seminar and had all its members present voluntary reviews between 2016 and 2018. He emphasized the potential of MIKTA's alignment with South Korea in the implementation of global sustainable development programs, where South Korea's performance has been outstanding since 2011. An example is the creation of the RoK-UNDP SDGs Trust Fund in 2016 (UNDP 2016). Nevertheless, Haug (2017, 61) states that:

> "So far, MIKTA engagement with development-related issues has been mainly 'inward-looking', i.e., focusing on consultation and exchange among the five MIKTA countries themselves.

> MIKTA's 'outward-bound' engagement with global development – including cooperation with third countries and multilateral organizations – has just started to be discussed in more detail".

The author emphasizes the members' recognition of the partnership as a consultative body that improves mutual dialogue and common ties (Haug 2017). Indeed, it has developed joint projects until 2018 that, while limited to information exchange and strictly among the 5 members, embraced 4 SDGs (MIKTA 2020; South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018). This also reinforces the fact that MIKTA does not perform actual international cooperation in terms of assisting entities and supported beneficiaries.

## A Framework for Effectiveness in Global Governance Arrangements

### *Koenig-Archibugi's Framework for Effectiveness in Global Governance Arrangements*

This study compares IBSA to MIKTA regarding global governance arrangements' effectiveness. The broader discussion on why some arrangements turn out to be more effective than others is not new in the literature with the increasing complexity of global governance since the 1980s (Hasenclever et al 2000). When analyzing international institution-building, scholars understand the effectiveness of international institutions in terms of the achievement of founding objectives. Perspectives vary based on different schools of thought in IR.

While some Realists believe that effective regimes are highly affected by the distribution of power resources among actors, others underline the influence of relative power in the effectiveness of international regimes (Stephen and Zürn 2014). In turn, neoliberalists like Keohane (1982) see effectiveness as the degree of compliance to certain rules within explicit regimes. However, when it comes to informal institutions such as the ones studied by this paper, measuring it becomes difficult, as they do not necessarily follow formal structures. For Hasenclever, Mayer and Rittberger (2000, 2), "a regime is effective to the extent that its members abide by its norms and rules […] and […] that it achieves certain objectives or fulfils certain purposes. The most fundamental and most widely discussed of these purposes is the enhancement of the ability of these states to cooperate in the issue-area". Yet, the authors have not defined any measurement tool in this regard.

Focusing on the capacity of governance arrangements to achieve their objectives, Miles et al. (2001) examine why some international environmental regimes succeed in comparison to others by analyzing which institutional designs lead to greater effectiveness. Based on that, Koenig-Archibugi (2002) proposes a conceptual framework for a comparison between global governance arrangements, analyzing the way in which actors pursuing the same objectives interact and organize.

Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) framework seems relatively well-suited to address the present research problem, because he identifies three factors that influence effectiveness in global governance arrangements in diverse cases. The author does not establish any causal relation between effectiveness and these structures — which would indeed be quite deterministic, as several other aspects may also play an important role (Koenig-Archibugi 2002). He rather proposes a framework to grasp the diversity of global governance arrangements, identifying three main aspects of institutional variations which influence the performance of these institutions.

***i. Publicness***

**Publicness** stands for the nature of the active participants in the institution, as Koenig-Archibugi (2002, 50) refers to them as "governance-givers rather than governance-takers", or as suggested by Roger, "rule-makers, rather than rule-takers" (2019, 18). Koenig-Archibugi's choice of calling it publicness seems to reflect a realistic approach – perhaps due to his research timeframe, since he considers the state as the main services provider to societies. Moreover, private actors are conceived not only as businesses, but also NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs), all part of a same entity. The first dimension of publicness refers to the differentiation between public and private members, with decreasing values from the former to the latter (i.e. national governments or international arrangements, business associations, or NGOs). This study opts for the same conceptualization as Koenig-Archibugi (2002). Thus, publicness is measured in terms of the presence of public members in the institution, where groups composed purely of these kinds of actors score the highest values and vice-versa. It is measured by the percentage of public actors in relation to all members in the arrangement.

The other dimension of publicness relates to the diversity in the nature of the interaction between actors of different degrees of publicness. Here arrangements have either homogeneous or hybrid participation in terms of access to non-state actors. The more an institution counts on public actors in a homogeneous interaction, the higher the values for this dimension. The continuum goes from "state-centered arrangements with no access for private actors, state-centered arrangements with private actor access […], private-public partnerships (PPPs), private governance with public supervision, and purely private regimes" (2002, 7-8). According to the adaptation proposed by this study, this dimension is measured by the level of participation of public actors in comparison to private ones and is indicated by the continuum that goes from state-centered with no access for private actors, state-centered with access for those agents, PPPs, private governance with public supervision, to completely private regimes. The ones that limit their membership to state actors score the highest values; the ones exclusively composed of private agents, the lowest.

### *ii. Delegation*

**Delegation** refers to the functions' assignment bodies, i.e. departments within the arrangements created to perform specific functions. According to Koenig-Archibugi (2002), one dimension concerns what the arrangement can do in terms of its scope of functions, alluding to the separation of powers that can be delegated to the departments that compose arrangements. This study also understands delegation as referring to functions' assignment bodies within the arrangement and, regarding the institution scope, it is also measured by the presence of specialized functions within and indicated by the presence of functions differentiation in the organization chart. However, these functions do not allude to the separation of powers here, considering that informal arrangements do not have conventional, formal procedures of elaborating, applying, and enforcing laws. Instead, informal arrangements focus on agreement on recommendations and implementation of cooperation initiatives. Thus, this study makes an adaptation and measures this dimension by the presence of relatively independent bodies created to address specific purposes in the group. The more specialized functions arrangements have, the higher their values in the measure of delegation.

The other dimension of delegation is independence, referring to how much autonomy the actors embraced by an institution have within its area of competence. This relates to the agent's autonomy in relation to the principal,[16] or inter-governmentalism versus supra-nationalism. According to Koenig-Archibugi (2002, 8), "when the implementation of policies is left to national administrations, delegation is lower than when this task is performed by independent agencies". Thus, values increase from arrangements where all policies are decided via negotiation and implemented by the members themselves, like the G20, to the ones where autonomous agencies perform relevant legislative, executive, or judicial functions, like the European Union. This paper follows Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) logic for this variable, measuring the existence of policies negotiation and implementation mechanisms by the institution itself which signifies indirect management by agents. This is indicated by the presence of bodies led by agents that are not the direct representatives of the participating members, such as committees, assemblies, or summits, through which these actors perform their roles. This dimension assumes higher values when autonomous agencies perform relevant legislative, executive, or judicial functions and lower values when principals directly assume this role.

[16] In International Organizations, the principal-agent theory refers to agents' empowerment in detriment to state members themselves (Nielsen and Tierney 2003).

### *iii. Inclusiveness*

For Koenig-Archibugi (2002), **inclusiveness** refers to power distribution in an arrangement's decision-making. The first aspect is access, related to the active influence of the actors constrained by the rules, policies, or decisions made by the arrangement. Values grow as shares of their participating power increase. In this study, power access is measured by the degree of active participation of the actors to whom the initiative was made, the ones achieved by their settlings – which may or may not be the same entity. However, no formal decision-making process takes place in informal institutions. Thus, power distribution is indicated by the existence of any procedure that allows the participation of internal and external actors affected by the arrangement's settings, with values increasing with higher numbers of these actors.

The other aspect or inclusiveness is weight, which refers to the equality of influence of the active members within an arrangement. The continuum of this aspect of the measure of inclusiveness goes from unilateral, to minilateral, and finally the multilateral power distribution level, in ascending order. Examples are the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Group of the 7 (G-7). In turn, according to the present analysis, weight stands for the equality of power distribution within the arrangement, measured by the degree of hierarchy between members and indicated by the classification of the arrangements as unilateral, minilateral, or multilateral. Equality rates increase from the first to the latter ideal type.

### *Limitations of the Theoretical Framework*

A generalist conception of private actors is used as both groups analyzed in this study are only comprised of state actors. There would be no reason to go deeper into this differentiation here. The adaptation of Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) state-centered approach in this study is not meant to perform any value judgement with regards to state and non-state actors as agents in current global governance.

It should also be clear that theoretical frameworks, such as the one presented above, are simplifications of reality, so the existence of other features that influence institutional effectiveness should also be considered. Consequently, instead of establishing causality between these features and institutional effectiveness, this framework is used to simply establish the relation between features of global governance arrangements and their effectiveness.

Additionally, this study has found no study in IR literature applying this or any similar framework to the specific cases of middle power arrangements – perhaps, due to their relatively recent emergence in global governance. To mitigate these limitations, a rather inductive approach is proposed, with the revision of assumptions – also referred to as probabilities, or expectations.

### *Expected Results of the Study*

While transposing Koenig-Archibugi's framework to the cases of IBSA and MIKTA and considering Kirton's (1999) remarks regarding thematic domain and timeframe definitions, the notion of institutional effectiveness here consists of the capacity of states to cooperate in the achievement of the goals proposed by the institution in which they participate. As proposed by Castañer and Oliveira (2020), cooperation means the communication between partners oriented to achieve common goals through coordination. Yet, in addressing the question of why some arrangements manage to be more effective than others in addressing their objectives, this analysis focuses on the case of middle powers.

This study examines the area of sustainable development between 2015 and 2018, considering the salience of this issue in global governance nowadays (Fukuda-Parr and Muchhala 2020; Lee 2018; Xavier and Fonseca 2018). The study expects that more specialized arrangements i.e. the ones that score higher levels in terms of delegation, tend to be more effective in this domain. After all, this seems to enable a better administration of multiple functions.

## Investigative Technique

### *The Cases of IBSA and MIKTA*

With regards to sustainable development, IBSA and MIKTA are chosen as cases for this study as they are partnerships composed of middle powers in the current global governance context. Moreover, both have sustainable development as their priorities. After all, as previously pointed out by several authors, the conception of development as involving social, economic, and environmental sustainability only became a global consensus with the launching of the SDGs.

Nevertheless, the two groups produced different outcomes in terms of the initiatives delivered when approaching the SDGs, as IBSA demonstrated to be more effective than MIKTA in this regard. Thus, these cases are also selected as they seem appropriate to understand which characteristics of new global governance arrangements lead to greater effectiveness in addressing sustainable development. The timeframe of this study starts in 2015, when the SDGs were casted, and ends in 2018, when both have the same official data available.

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

The study relies on data from primary and secondary bibliographical sources, including official documents — statements and reports from their websites — from IBSA, MIKTA, and the UN, as well as core scholarly literature on global governance, middle powers, and sustainable development. The data collection considers the topicality of the materials. Moreover, it pays attention to the diversity of authors' nationalities to express the points of view of scholars from

member countries of these groups, as these nations have been seeking more influence not only in global governance, but also in scholarly literature.

In this context, the research begins with an analysis of the progress of both groups in their approach towards the SDGs, in terms of the nature of initiatives held, the number of goals approached, and the number of countries assisted by the initiatives of both arrangements. Table 1 contrasts the cases by depicting how publicness, inclusiveness, and delegation may have led them to different levels of effectiveness in approaching the SDGs.

## Empirical Discussion

This section aims at analyzing effectiveness in IBSA and MIKTA in terms of the three abovementioned structures of global governance arrangements. Analyzing both groups' degrees of publicness, inclusiveness, and delegation reveals whether the delegation of more specialized functions in an institution explains the difference in effectiveness between these arrangements.

### *IBSA: Trilateral Dialogue Forum*

Many believe that IBSA originates from BRICS, an acronym coined by O'Neill in 2001 that represents Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. The latter represented great perspectives at the beginning of the millennium, as agreements between members were signed in several fields. However, China and Russia have not shown interest in systemic changes[17] over time and have diverged in their interests advocated within the group given their more advanced conditions and positions in some domains of the global agenda, such as military and economic power (Reis et al. 2016; Nye 2009).[18] In this context, IBSA Dialogue Forum was created to contribute to a new international architecture, gathering the three countries' voices on global issues and intensifying their ties in various domains (IBSA 2003; IBSA 2020). The group is also known as Group of the 3 or G-3, alluding to the several configurations of country groupings (Reis 2015).

IBSA's mission states that "the strength of IBSA is the shared vision of the three countries that democracy and development are mutually reinforcing and key to sustainable peace and stability" (IBSA 2020). The latest declaration emphasized that, by "recalling the commitments and the means of implementation for the development agenda, IBSA stresses the centrality of the SDGs" (South Africa 2018, 1). Thus, the priority areas of IBSA are agriculture, culture, defense, education, energy, environment, health, human settlements, transport, infrastructure, public

[17] For Gilpin (1981), there are three types of international system change. The most fundamental, although rare, is called system change: altering the nature of the system itself. In turn, a systemic change involves a modification in the form of governance of the international system. Finally, the interaction change concerns the transformation of rules, rights, and processes among actors in the system.

[18] Nye (2009) differentiates between traditional hard power, which would consist of material resources of power, easily measurable, as they are more concrete, and soft power, which would be the forms of power that are, in his view, more subtle, but also determinants of the capabilities of states.

administration, revenue administration, science, technology, social development, trade and investment and tourism (IBSA 2020).

In this context, the group developed 23 projects in 18 developing countries located in Asia, Africa, and Latin America between 2015 and 2018. Annex 1 details what these initiatives are, where they are targeted, and why they are significant. As illustrated in Figure 1, they approach 8 SDGs: 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere; 2 – Zero hunger; 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; 6 – Ensure access to water and sanitation for all; 7 – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy; 8 – Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all; and 12 – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns (UN 2020).

Figure 1: SDGs in IBSA




Source: Author, based on UN (2020).

Moreover, IBSA Visiting Fellowship Program, an annual academic exchange program, was launched in 2016. IBSA Visiting Fellowship Program was supported by India's government, with the objective of enhancing cooperation in the social sciences and economics between the three members. It focuses on institutional coordination to "support and enable sustainable development globally; joint research for cooperation and exchange of information in the fields of macro-economy, trade and development" (RIS 2020).

Considering that, the structures suggested by Koenig-Archibugi (2002) are next analyzed as per the adapted framework proposed by this study: publicness, delegation, and inclusiveness. Starting with member's nature, IBSA has a state-centered nature as it is a mechanism of communication, coordination, and cooperation composed solely by public actors. In the words of the institution:

> "The establishment of IBSA was formalized by the Brasilia Declaration of 6 June 2003, which mentions India, Brazil and South Africa's democratic credentials, their condition as developing nations and their capacity of acting on a global scale as the main reasons for the three countries to come together. Their status as middle powers, their common need to address social inequalities within their borders and the existence of consolidated industrial areas in the three countries are often mentioned as additional elements that bring convergence among the members of the Forum" (IBSA 2020).

IBSA has no headquarters or permanent executive secretariat. It is an informal arrangement with no separation of powers or legally binding procedures Nevertheless, by adapting Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) framework to this kind of institutions, IBSA seems to present function differentiation, meaning that it has relatively independent functions created to address specific purposes in the group. IBSA counts on a trilateral forum that used to rely on formal summits up to the last decade, headed by member states' presidents or prime ministers. Since 2012, IBSA only organizes ministerial level meetings which take place biannually (IBSA 2020). In this case, institutional autonomy delegation seems to have undergone a shift from principals to agents, notably concentrated in the latter actors during the timeframe examined by this paper.

However, the functions within the group seem to be significantly diversified for an informal arrangement. IBSA is supported by 14 sectorial working groups that focus on several SDGs, a people-to-people forum with non-state actors like the civil society, and a Trust Fund for financing international cooperation projects. This latter mechanism was established in 2004 and began operations in 2006. It is dedicated to the accomplishment of the SDGs, in particular poverty, hunger, and partnerships for development, and invests in actual cooperation projects on a demand-driven basis for developing countries by working together with local governments, national institutions and implementing partners via the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Each member sponsors projects according to the proportion of their contribution to the Fund (IBSA 2020). Until 2018, it had received over $35 million in its budget (UNOSSC 2020b). The Fund's management is delegated to the UNDP's Office for South-South Cooperation, following IBSA guidelines as well as UN standards (UNOSSC 2020a):

> "Governments requesting support by this Fund initiate discussions with focal points appointed among IBSA countries' officers around the world. These focal points submit proposals to the IBSA Board of Directors for review. If a proposal receives favorable review, UNDP's UNOSSC, which acts as the fund manager and board of directors' secretariat, initiates contact with a potential executing agency to advance a project formulation, and to facilitate the project's implementation.

> […] The IBSA Fund Board of Directors comprises the Ambassadors, Permanent Representatives and Deputy Permanent Representatives, of India, Brazil and South Africa to the United Nations in New York. The Board approves summary proposals and detailed projects and continuously provides strategic direction to IBSA projects to ensure their successful implementation."

Several official soft law[19] documents define the scope of IBSA's summits, ministerial meetings, and fund board. Between 2015 and 2018, the group produced declarations, agreements, memorandums of understanding, joint communiqués, and joint statements. Nevertheless, no evidence was found in the period researched concerning the beneficiaries of countries' participation in these gatherings oriented to set up IBSA's priorities and operation (IBSA 2020). Yet, considering the adaptation of Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) framework to informal institutions with no actual decision-making process, IBSA's demand-driven projects consist of a means of including beneficiaries' interests in the arrangement's agreements. Moreover, the openness of some lower-level meetings (academy, business, or communication-related) to civil society also aggregates in this regard. Finally, all participating states assume equal positions in terms of their share of power, characterizing minilateralism.

***MIKTA: New Innovative Partnership***

The power fragmentation in a multipolar international system, together with the geopolitical uncertainty entailed by the global economic crisis in the late 2000's, led to the creation of MIKTA within the UN General Assembly in 2013. Previously, in 2005, O'Neil indeed popularized the grouping of Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, and Turkey under the name of MIST, based on predictions from the Bank Goldman Sachs that these states would "occupy an increasingly imperative place in the global economy towards 2050" (Cooper 2006; Gok and Gok 2016). Due to their relatively major role in the G20 after the global economic crisis, the group was created together with Australia, having the vision statement signed in 2015 (Kim, Haug and Rimmer 2018). MIKTA represents an alliance of countries with rapidly growing economies (MIKTA 2020). As an alliance comprised of only middle powers, the partnership is a consultative platform that offers space for its member countries to engage in dialogue independently of the big powers. The *raison d'être* of the group is defined below:

> "Today, the international community is faced with various challenges […] but these cannot be easily resolved by the efforts of only a few countries. Also, reforming the global governance has emerged as a new challenge due to changes in the international environment. At times like these,

[19] "Soft law" is here is seen as norms that consist of recommendations, the content of which, unlike "hard law", leads to conduct that do not incur sanctions for non-compliance. (Shelton, 2000).

> the roles of countries that take the lead in tackling global issues with as much commitment to advancing the public good as their own interests are becoming more important. MIKTA was launched to advance discussions on various global agendas and to seek practical and creative solutions to global and regional challenges" (South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018, 10).

With the mission of promoting development in specific target areas, enhancing global governance and fostering regionalism, MIKTA develops projects in conformity with the SGDs. The founding priorities of the group as of 2016 are: "reform of international energy governance and the promotion of energy access; counter-terrorism and security; peacekeeping; trade and the economy; gender equality; good governance, human rights and democracy; and sustainable development" – in the pure sense of climate (South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020, p. 212). MIKTA's Agenda 2030 emphasizes the goals of improving tax and fiscal systems; ensuring gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, improving the effectiveness of development cooperation; enhancing data capacity, scaling up development cooperation with middle income countries, and establishing an evaluation mechanism.

MIKTA's initiatives include workshops, lectures, and experts' meetings, many as part of wider multilateral fora, like the UN. In addition, the group realized 10 initiatives of this kind between 2015 and 2018. Moreover, MIKTA promoted 4 professional exchange programs in the same period, some oriented to young people, other to diplomats. All initiatives are intended to strengthen relations among members (MIKTA 2020). Annex 2 shows what these initiatives are, where they are targeted, and what the relevant SDGs approached are. Though these following goals are not explicitly attributed to specific activities. MIKTA's internal agenda defined in 2016 and priorities ranked in 2018 target the following goals, as shown in Figure 2: 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; 7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; and 16 – Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies (MIKTA 2020).

In this context, the analysis of MIKTA's structures according to Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) adapted framework is essential to verifying the argument of this study about the lower effectiveness of this arrangement in addressing the SDGs, as compared to IBSA. In terms of the nature of the group's membership, since its foundation till now, it is composed of state-actors. Accordingly, MIKTA has a state-centered membership nature.

Figure 2: SDGs in MIKTA




Source: Author, based on UN (2020).

Regarding the group's organization, it is a flexible platform, with no headquarters or secretariat and with a rotating executive management. MIKTA is chaired by foreign ministers of each member state. This means that there has always been full delegation of institutional autonomy to agents. They rotate yearly, according to voluntary candidacies and consensus among all members. Between 2015 and 2018, the chair countries were South Korea, Australia, Turkey, and Indonesia, respectively (South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018). The group has never counted on summits, which are considered more high-level meetings, since these are generally led by heads of state/government, which lead to stronger agreements (Cooper 2015). Instead, the group holds annual meetings that involve foreign ministers, senior officials, and spokesmen. It also hosts one of G20 Sherpa's meeting (MIKTA 2020). However, the present analysis identifies a lower delegation of functions within the institution, as the group seems not to go beyond a consultation platform, with no specific roles transferred to a separate management body.

These meetings only led to the creation of joint statements and joint *communiqués* which are less enforcing than declarations or agreements in international law (MIKTA 2020; ECCHR 2020). During the timeframe analyzed, they only counted on the participation of MIKTA's members, which means for this study that the group leaves no power access to other countries that may be potentially affected by its agreements. In turn, as there is no hierarchy between the participants within the arrangement in that same sense, this indicates that it relies on a minilateral power distribution.

***IBSA and MIKTA Effectiveness in Contrast***

As evidenced, both middle power arrangements score the highest values for the nature of membership, with 100% of participation coming from the public sector, being entirely composed of state-actors. IBSA and MIKTA also have the same highest values for the interaction within the arrangement since they are only composed by the same kind of members. They both also score 100% due to a homogeneous interaction among public members. Thus, both are similar in terms of publicness.

Nevertheless, IBSA and MIKTA differ in their delegation of functions. At first glance, both groups have open and flexible structures with no headquarters or a permanent executive secretariat. However, IBSA presents a more complex functions assignment, especially considering that the group's Fund, very oriented towards the SDGs, had been reinforcing its role in international cooperation for development during the period analyzed. Conversely, MIKTA does not have specialized functions and differentiated managerial bodies. Its initiatives also do not reach the status of cooperation, only communication. Thus, whereas IBSA scores more in terms of functions delegation, MIKTA scores lower. Yet, both equally achieve the same results in terms of the autonomy delegated to agents in charge; after all, during the period studied, they have been led by indirect representatives of their member states.

Concerning inclusiveness, IBSA scores the highest values for giving a certain power access to its member countries' civil societies and the less developed nations embraced by the projects to influence their settlings. On the other hand, while MIKTA has a less active participation of beneficiaries from its actions However, minilateralism characterizes the power relation among the participating states in both arrangements. It puts the two groupings in the midway when referring to the power weight, since all members have the same intermediate level of hierarchy between members within both institutions. However, while IBSA involves cooperation, MIKTA remains a communication platform. Moreover, seeing both organizations' approach to the SDGs, this study understands that this kind of partnerships can, like formal, standing institutions, have a significant role in sustainable development despite the uncertainty raised by some of the abovementioned scholars.

Table 1 summarizes the discussion above. Considering the relations between global arrangements structures and their levels of effectiveness, higher delegation of functions and higher inclusiveness in power access seem to have been relevant aspects that led to more effectiveness in a middle power arrangement's performance towards addressing the SDGs. Therefore, it is probable that, as proposed by this study, that enhanced effectiveness in these institutions is influenced by the delegation of more specialized functions within them. However, it also likely that IBSA has presented higher numbers of projects, SDGs approached, and countries reached during its operation between 2015 and 2018 due to different levels of inclusiveness. Still, it should be emphasized that this is not sufficient to draw a causal relation between features of middle power arrangements and their effectiveness with regards to sustainable development. After all, other features of global governance arrangements not considered here may also have an influence in this regard as well.

Table 1: IBSA and MIKTA structures

| | | | | Cases | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | IBSA | MIKTA |
| Structures | Dimensions | Measures | Indicator | Value | Value |
| PUBLICNESS | MEMBERS NATURE | PUBLIC (+) | % of public members/All members presence | 100% | 100% |
| | | PRIVATE (-) | | | |
| | INTERACTION NATURE | HOMOGENEOUS PUBLIC (+) | Level of public members/private members presence | State-centred | State-centred |
| | | | | | |
| | | HYBRID | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | HOMOGENEOUS PRIVATE (-) | | | |
| DELEGATION | FUNCTIONS DELEGATED | SPECIALIZATION (+) | Existence of functions differentiation | More | |
| | | NO SPECIALIZATION (-) | | | LESS |
| | AUTONOMY DELEGATED | AGENTS IN CHARGE (+) | Presence of leadership by indirect representatives | More | More |
| | | PRINCIPAL IN CHARGE (-) | | | |
| INCLUSIVENESS | POWER ACCESS | ACTIVE BENEFICIARIES' PARTICIPATION (+) | Existence of procedures for participation in settlings | More | |
| | | WEAK BENEFICIARIES' PARTICIPATION (-) | | | LESS |
| | POWER WEIGHT | MEMBERS EQUALITY (+) | Level of hierarchy between members in settlings | | |
| | | | | Minilateralism | Minilateralism |
| | | MEMBERS INEQUALITY (-) | | | |

Source: Author, based on Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) framework and the empirical findings of this study.

## Conclusion

Since the Second World War, alternative forms of institutions have emerged as alternatives to address global issues within the recent global governance environment (Kim, Haug and Rimmer 2018). Middle powers became key actors in this context and are thus considered by this study as influential agents in areas of global governance where they do not compete with major powers. With the aim of rebuilding existing power structures, they build partnerships as tools for power redistribution and recognition (Jordaan 2003).

In parallel, with the beginning of the 20th century, states became aware of the importance of sustainable development which gained momentum with the launch of the SDGs by the UN in 2015 (Fukuda-Parr and Muchhala 2020). States became aware of the importance of the inclusion of SDGs as a priority in their national and foreign policies, influencing the performance of global governance arrangements in which they participate. Considering the tendency and importance of middle powers in addressing new demands, as potential drivers in global governance institution-building (Yoshihide 2012), sustainable development became an interesting opportunity for groups like IBSA and MIKTA. The approach to this key global demand stimulates middle powers to invest in their development agenda and organizational thrusts, as a means to reach greater representation in global governance.

To understand the structural characteristics of middle power arrangements that enable some of them to be more effective than others in the sustainable development domain, Koenig-Archibugi's (2002) model was adapted to the cases of IBSA and MIKTA between 2015 and 2018. Based on the observation that the former has shown to be more effective than the latter in this sense, an inductive analysis on empirical data was conducted to verify the expectation that enhanced effectiveness in middle power arrangements addressing sustainable development is influenced by the delegation of more specialized functions within the institution.

IBSA and MIKTA have similarities regarding publicness but differ in terms of delegation and inclusiveness, so the expectation proposed by this research seems to hold: IBSA presented higher functional specialization relative to MIKTA. The former group's more diversified power access is another aspect to be considered as well. In any case, it is possible to affirm that these middle power arrangements have been contributing to institution-building and sustainable development promotion, each one at its own pace.

Further study is necessary to enhance academic knowledge on global governance arrangements and to elucidate causal relations between institutional characteristics and effectiveness. Moreover, no study applying a framework similar to the one used by this paper to the case of middle powers was found. Therefore, it is important to expand this analytical

perspective to these arrangements, given the importance of the emergence of these new powers for achieving the SDGs (Cooper 2015; Guerrero 2018; Haug 2017; Husar 2016).

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# Annex 1

| IBSA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sector (SDG | Actions | Nature | Target Countries | Partners |
| 1 | Digital Financial Services 33 | Project | SIERRA LEONE | Sierra Leone's Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, National Bank, and United Nations Capital Development Fund. |
| 1 | Poverty Reduction through Livestock Development 21 | Project | SAINT LUCIA | Saint Lucia's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Cooperatives, and Food and Agriculture Organization. |
| 1 | Promote the Socioeconomic Integration of Vulnerable Children and Youth 19 | Project | HAITI | Haiti's Ministry of social Affairs and Labour and International Labor Organization; Viva Rio. |
| 2 | Conservation Agriculture, Permaculture and Sustainable Fisheries Management 25 | Project | TIMOR-LESTE | Timor Leste's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Food and Agriculture Organization; Naterra Association; Conservation International. |
| 2 | Enhancing Agricultural Capacity 14 | Project | COMOROS | South Africa's Agricultural Research Council; Comoros' UN Development Program. |
| 2 | Enhancing Inclusive Sustainable Economic Development through Coconut-sector Development | Project | KIRIBATI | Kiribati's Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives; UN Development Program Pacific Office in Fiji. |
| 2 | Leveraging Zambia's Agro-industry Potential in Rural Areas through Enhanced Soya Bean Production and Processing | Project | ZAMBIA | Zambia's Ministry of Agriculture and International Fund for Agricultural Development; Smallholder Productivity Promotion Programme; Muchinga Agricultural development Company. |
| 2 | Support to Integrated Irrigated Agriculture in Two Districts in Bolikhamxay 51 | Project | LAO | Bolikhamxay's Department of Planning and Investment and Department of Irrigation; Lao's UN Development Program. |
| 3 | An Innovative e-Learning Approach for Health | Project | VIET NAM | Viet Nam's Ministry of Health and World Health Organization; Hai Phong University of Medicine and Pharmacy. |
| 3 | Construction and Equipping of a Centre for Persons with Severe Intellectual Disabilities 56 | Project | PALESTINE | Palestina's National Authority and Ministry of Social Affairs; UN Development Program Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People. |
| 3 | National Health Insurance Scheme Support Project 31 | Project | GRENADA | Grenada's Ministry of Health; Barbados' UN Development Program; Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. |
| 3 | Reconstruction of Atta Habib Medical Centre in Gaza City 60 | Project | PALESTINE | Palestina's National Authority and Ministry of Health; UN Development Program Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People. |
| 3 | Rehabilitation of the Cultural and Hospital Centre (Phases I and II) 58 | Project | PALESTINE | Palestina's National Authority and Red Crescent; UN Development Program Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People. |
| 3 | Strengthening Infrastructure and Capacity to Combat HIV/AIDS 36 | Project | BURUNDI | Burundi's Ministry of Health, Society for Women and AIDS, UN Development Program, and United Nations Population Fund. |
| 5 | Empowering Rural Women | Project | FIJI | Fiji's Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Community Centred Conservation, Gender Climate Change Alliance, and United Nations Office for Project Services; Grace Trifam Ministry; Global Environment Facility. |
| 6 | Increased Access to Water, Improved Livestock Production and Post-drought Food Security 30 | Project | BOLIVIA | Bolivia's Ministry of Rural Development and Land and UN Development Program; Autonomous Departmental Government of Beni; Federation of Ranchers of Beni; municipalities; Indigenous Communities. |
| 7 | Rural Electrification through Solar Energy Systems | Project | GUINÉ BISSAU | Guiné Bissau's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, UN Development Program, and 25 villages; Central Electronics Limited. |
| 8 | Creation of Job Opportunities for Youth in Sudan through Labour-intensive Work Opportunities 23 | Project | SUDAN | Sudan's Ministry of Labour and Administrative Reform, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of International Cooperation, and UN Development Program; Khartoum State. |
| 8 | Poverty Reduction among Youth | Project | CAMBODIA | Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and Volunteering Network; UN Volunteers. |
| 12 | Solid Waste Management Improvement Project 17 | Project | GUYANA | Guyana's Ministry of Communities and UN Development Program. |
| Agenda 2030 | Academic Exchange | Exchange | IBSA | N/A |
| Agenda 2030 | Academic Exchange | Exchange | IBSA | N/A |
| Agenda 2030 | Academic Exchange | Exchange | IBSA | N/A |

Source: Author, based on IBSA (2018).

# Annex 2

| MIKTA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sector (SDG) | Actions | Nature | Target Countrie | Partners |
| 5 | Measures taken on eliminating violence against women | Workshop | Open | UN Office on Drugs and Crime, UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice |
| 7 | Gas Security in the MIKTA Countries | Workshop | MIKTA | United States, Poland, Slovakia, International Energy Agency |
| 9 | Removing barriers and promoting public-private cooperation in disaster risk reduction | Workshop | MIKTA | N/A |
| 9 | Workshop on Electronic Commerce | Workshop | Open | UN Conference on Trade and Development, World Trade Organization, World Economic Forum, Consumer Unity & Trust Society |
| 9 | Workshop on Trade and Investment | Workshop | MIKTA | UN Conference on Trade and Development, World Trade Organization, World Economic Forum, Consumer Unity & Trust Society, World Bank, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| 16 | MIKTA in Malasya | Workshop | Malasya | N/A |
| 16 | Prevention of Narcotic Drug Abuse in MIKTA Countries | Workshop | Open | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| Agenda 2030 | Exchange Program of Journalists | Exchange | MIKTA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea, Korea Institute for National Unification |
| Agenda 2030 | I Policy Planning Consultation | Workshop | MIKTA | N/A |
| Agenda 2030 | II Development Cooperation Workshop | Workshop | MIKTA | N/A |
| Agenda 2030 | III Development Cooperation Workshop | Workshop | MIKTA | N/A |
| Agenda 2030 | Training Program for Diplomats | Exchange | MIKTA | Diplomacy Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey |
| Agenda 2030 | Young Leaders' Camp | Exchange | MIKTA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea |
| Agenda 2030 | Young Professional Camp | Exchange | MIKTA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea, Korea Foundation |

Source: Author, based on MIKTA (2020) and South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018).

# Politikon

the IAPSS Journal of Political Science

**ISSN 2414-6633**

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