

## ОҚЫТУШЫЛАРҒА КӨМЕК В ПОМОЩЬ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЮ FOR THE AID TO THE TEACHER

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### INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS OF THE NEW WAVE OF REGIONALIZATION

#### *Abstract*

The three main objectives of the study are to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the legal and institutional foundations of regionalization, identify the key characteristics and features of this phenomenon, and assess its impact on national legal systems and international relations. Although there are numerous publications devoted to local cooperation mechanisms around the world, most of them focus on political and/or economic integration and ignore the legal aspects of regional integration. The manuscript examines the key theoretical approaches, institutional mechanisms, and legal frameworks that ensure sustainable development of regional associations. It delves into the phenomenon of legal regionalization, highlighting various challenges that arise in specific regional contexts. The results of the study illustrate that the success of regionalism requires strong institutional structures, harmonization of legal norms, and consideration of socio-cultural factors. Eurasian cooperation is at the stage of regionalization, but has not yet developed into full-fledged regionalism, which is more formalized. The article contributes to understanding the dynamics and complexities of the new wave of regionalization, providing scholars, policymakers, and practitioners involved in international cooperation and integration with insights based on the analysis of integration processes. The manuscript enriches the academic discussion of regionalization by providing insights into its possible implications for international relations and international law.

**Keywords:** Eurasian integration, International law, International relations, Legal unification, Regionalization, Supranational structures.

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### АЙМАҚТАНУДЫҢ ЖАҢА ТОЛҚЫНЫНЫҢ ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛДЫҚ ЖӘНЕ ҚҰҚЫҚТЫҚ НЕГІЗДЕРІ

#### *Аңдатпа*

Зерттеудің негізгі үш мақсаты-аймақтандырудың құқықтық және институционалдық негіздеріне жан-жақты талдау жүргізу, осы құбылыстың негізгі сипаттамалары мен ерекшеліктерін анықтау, оның ұлттық құқықтық жүйелер мен халықаралық қатынастарға

әсерін бағалау. Дүние жүзінде жергілікті ынтымақтастық тетіктеріне арналған көптеген жарияланымдар болғанымен, олардың көпшілігі саяси және/немесе экономикалық интеграцияға бағытталған және аймақтық интеграцияның құқықтық аспектілерін елемейді. Қолжазбада аймақтық бірлестіктердің тұрақты дамуын қамтамасыз ететін негізгі теориялық тәсілдер, институционалдық механизмдер, құқықтық негіздер қарастырылған. Ол белгілі бір аймақтық контексте туындайтын әртүрлі мәселелерді бөліп көрсете отырып, құқықтық аймақтандыру құбылысын зерттейді. Зерттеу нәтижелері регионализмнің жетістігі күшті институционалдық құрылымдарды, құқықтық нормаларды үйлестіруді, әлеуметтік-мәдени факторларды ескеруді қажет ететіндігін көрсетеді. Еуразиялық ынтымақтастық аймақтандыру сатысында тұр, бірақ әлі толыққанды регионализмге айналған жоқ, ол неғұрлым формализацияланған. Мақала аймақтандырудың жаңа толқынының динамикасы мен күрделілігін түсінуге ықпал етеді, халықаралық ынтымақтастық пен интеграцияға қатысатын ғалымдарды, саясаткерлерді және практиктерді интеграциялық процестерді талдау негізінде түсініктермен қамтамасыз етеді. Қолжазба аймақтандыру туралы академиялық пікірталасты оның халықаралық қатынастар мен халықаралық құқыққа ықтимал салдары туралы түсінік беру арқылы байытады.

**Түйін сөздер:** Еуразиялық интеграция, Халықаралық құқық, Халықаралық қатынастар, Құқықтық бірігу, Аймақтандыру, Ұлттықтан жоғары құрылымдар.

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## **ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛЬНЫЕ И ПРАВОВЫЕ ОСНОВЫ НОВОЙ ВОЛНЫ РЕГИОНАЛИЗАЦИИ**

### *Аннотация*

Тремя основными целями исследования являются проведение всестороннего анализа правовых и институциональных основ регионализации, выявление ключевых характеристик и отличительных черт этого явления и оценка его влияния на национальные правовые системы и международные отношения. Хотя существует множество публикаций, посвященных местным механизмам сотрудничества по всему миру, большинство из них посвящены политической и/или экономической интеграции и игнорируют правовые аспекты региональной интеграции. В рукописи рассматриваются ключевые теоретические подходы, институциональные механизмы и правовые рамки, обеспечивающие устойчивое развитие региональных объединений. В ней рассматривается феномен правовой регионализации, освещаются различные проблемы, возникающие в конкретных региональных контекстах. Результаты исследования показывают, что успех регионализма требует сильных институциональных структур, гармонизации правовых норм и учета социокультурных факторов. Евразийское сотрудничество находится на стадии регионализации, но еще не переросло в полноценный регионализм, который носит более формализованный характер. Статья способствует пониманию динамики и сложностей новой волны регионализации, предоставляя ученым, политикам и практикам, занимающимся международным сотрудничеством и интеграцией, информацию, основанную на анализе интеграционных процессов. Рукопись обогащает научную дискуссию о регионализации, давая представление о ее возможных последствиях для международных отношений и международного права.

**Ключевые слова:** Евразийская интеграция, Международное право, Международные отношения, правовая унификация, регионализация, наднациональные структуры.

## **INTRODUCTION**

At the current stage of global development, the world is experiencing an intensification of regionalization processes. This trend is emphasized in several authoritative studies [1, 2]. Since the second half of the twentieth century, increasing regional activity has contributed to the emergence and evolution of interstate cooperation. This global movement, known as "new regionalism" [3], represents the development of regional relations in response to modern global challenges and threats. Countries are shifting from traditional interstate structures to more complex and multi-level development models.

The mid-1980s witnessed a significant increase in the number of integration projects in different regions worldwide, transforming regionalism into a global phenomenon with a substantial impact on the global economic architecture and security systems [4].

Currently, over 150 regional organizations are functioning, holding summits and forums that vary in both areas of interaction and the nature of the legal acts they adopt [5].

In our view, new regionalism differs from traditional forms of regional cooperation in several key characteristics that reflect the dynamic and complex nature of modern international relations.

First, the increasing intensity and proliferation of regional organizations. In recent decades, the number of regional organizations has grown significantly, highlighting the rising importance and demand for regional cooperation. These organizations operate across diverse domains, ranging from economic and political integration to security and cultural collaboration.

Second, multidimensionality, characterized by the diversity of cooperation spheres. New regionalism encompasses all aspects of public life, including economics, politics, culture, security, science, technology, logistics, and beyond. Participating states engage in multilateral agreements designed to foster comprehensive development and strengthen intergovernmental and transnational ties.

Third, a defining characteristic is multi-vector engagement, which entails the simultaneous participation of states in multiple regional organizations. Across various regions, countries frequently hold memberships in multiple international regional alliances, enabling them to adopt a more flexible and effective approach to addressing challenges and capitalizing on opportunities across a wide spectrum of cooperation areas. This strategic positioning allows states to optimize their foreign policy and economic strategies while adapting to the rapidly evolving global landscape.

Fourth, multi-format governance, reflected in the existence of various levels and mechanisms of interaction. Regional organizations encompass intergovernmental structures as well as sectoral governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations, facilitating cooperation between state and non-state actors in pursuit of shared objectives.

Fifth, the concept of a "region" is undergoing a profound transformation within the framework of new regionalism. The traditional geographic definition is giving way to a more flexible interpretation, emphasizing shared interests and common objectives that unite states and territories regardless of their geographic proximity. Modern regions often exhibit a transboundary nature, emerging from strategic considerations that enhance their ability to respond effectively to global challenges and opportunities. This shift, in turn, stimulates the development of new forms and mechanisms of international cooperation.

For example, a contemporary interpretation of regionalism may encompass entities such as the Euro-Atlantic region, which integrates North America and Europe, or the Eurasian region, which connects countries from the post-Soviet space and Asia, akin to organizations such as BRICS or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Similarly, the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) unites member states based on linguistic and cultural identity, illustrating how regionalization processes are increasingly shaped by strategic, cultural, and identity-driven factors rather than strict geographic boundaries.

In our view, one of the most significant trends in global development is the consolidation of new centers of power, including global regions that are becoming fundamental components of the 21st-century international system. This phenomenon is not merely a geopolitical shift but rather a

profound and structural transformation of the global order, encompassing all levels of international relations.

The aim of this study is to examine the legal and institutional frameworks of regionalization as a process of regional interaction, which involves the integration of states to foster cooperation in various spheres of public life that are of mutual interest and contribute to the formation of a distinct regional space or governance structure. This research seeks to identify the key characteristics and defining features of this phenomenon and assess its implications for national legal systems and international relations.

### ***Literature Review***

Regionalization as a scientific concept has gained broad recognition through the works of scholars such as Van Langenhove [6]. In their studies, they conceptualize regionalization as the process of forming economic and political blocs that seek deeper integration and coordination at the regional level

Classical theories of regionalization, as presented in the works of Söderbaum [7], Hirata et al. [8], establish the theoretical foundation for understanding contemporary regionalization processes. Their research underscores the significance of supranational structures and intergovernmental cooperation in the context of globalization. It is argued that regionalization functions as a response to global challenges and is aimed at reinforcing regional ties to enhance the competitiveness of regions in the global arena.

The institutional foundations of regionalization have been extensively examined in the works of Acharya [9], who introduce the concept of complex interdependence and consider regional institutions as key elements of the evolving international system. It is emphasized that successful regionalization necessitates strong institutional structures capable of ensuring sustainable development and managing integration processes. Particular attention is given to the European Union as a model of effective regional integration, as well as to less successful cases such as ASEAN and MERCOSUR [10].

The institutional aspects of regionalization have also been explored by Costa Buranelli [11] and Koremenos et al. . These scholars highlight the importance of establishing effective institutions that promote stability and sustainable regional development. Koremenos et al. [12] specifically identify five key institutional characteristics – membership, scope, centralization, control, and flexibility – and analyze their variations in relation to cooperation challenges, including distribution, number of participants, enforcement, and uncertainty.

The regionalization and fragmentation of international law have become critical areas of international legal studies. Theoretical analyses of this phenomenon can be found in the works of Shongwe [13]. However, there has been insufficient scholarly attention given to the institutional and legal mechanisms that facilitate the formation of unified regional international legal spaces and their impact on national legal systems within states participating in regional intergovernmental organizations and unions.

Given this gap, the present study focuses on the institutional and legal foundations of regional international legal spaces, the characteristics of institutionalized regional integration processes, and the role of treaty-based legal unification within regional frameworks. The examination of these processes, which involve the development of an institutional and legal framework and the application of both "hard" and, more frequently, "soft" international law, is fundamental to understanding the evolving nature of international legal relations.

The legal dimensions of regionalization are analyzed in the works of Preston et al. [14], who assess the role of legal norms and institutions in the formation of regional associations.

Legal attributes of regionalization, including international treaties, agreements, and legislative frameworks aimed at strengthening regional cooperation, are widely discussed in the literature. Notable studies include assessments of the legal structures governing the European Union, ASEAN, and other regional organizations. The works of Riegner [15] emphasize the importance of legal institutions and regulatory frameworks in the formation and governance of regional structures.

The legal foundations of regionalization have been examined in the works of De Lombaerde & Rodriguez [16]. These scholars explore the legal mechanisms that ensure the effective functioning of regional integration associations. Their studies underscore the importance of international law and legal norms regulating cross-border cooperation and interactions between regions. Kembayev [17] further illustrates how legal harmonization and standardization contribute to the deepening of regional integration.

The economic dimensions of regionalization are extensively analyzed in the works of Frankel [18], which examine the impact of regional integration on economic growth, trade, and investment. These studies demonstrate that regionalization facilitates the reduction of trade barriers, increases capital flows, and stimulates economic development. However, they also highlight potential risks, particularly concerning the unequal distribution of benefits among participating states.

The socio-cultural components of regionalization are examined in studies assessing the influence of regional integration on cultural identity, migration, and social cohesion. Key sources include the works of Meyer [19] and Otmazgin [20], which explore the formation of regional communities and their interaction with national identities.

A comparative analysis of different regionalization models allows for the identification of key factors contributing to the success or failure of regional integration processes. The studies by Söderbaum [3] propose a comparative approach to examining regional associations, analyzing their institutional structures, legal frameworks, and economic implications. Their findings suggest that the success of regionalization is contingent on the level of institutionalization, the presence of common objectives, and the degree of economic interdependence. Comparative studies of regionalization across different global regions, conducted by Telò [10], provide valuable material for analysis. These studies reveal both differences and similarities in regionalization approaches in Europe, Asia, and the Americas.

The literature highlights that the new wave of regionalization may lead to shifts in the global balance of power, the strengthening of economic partnerships, and enhanced political stability within regions. However, regionalization also presents risks, including the intensification of regional conflicts and disparities in development.

The implications of regionalization for nation-states and the international system as a whole are examined in the works of Van Langenhove [6], Mittelman [21]. Mittelman argues that regionalization may result in a redistribution of power at the international level, strengthening the influence of regional power centers.

Scientific research demonstrates a broad spectrum of perspectives, deepening the understanding of regionalization mechanisms in the context of global transformations. For a more precise assessment and the formulation of regional cooperation policies, it is essential to consider the institutional, legal, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions of regionalization. A comparative analysis of existing regionalization models enables the identification of both positive and negative consequences of these processes, facilitating the adaptation of best practices to the specific conditions of each region.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The specificity and complexity of this research topic necessitate the application of a comprehensive set of general and specialized scientific methods of inquiry, including analysis, synthesis, comparison, analogy, deduction, induction, abstraction, as well as the comparative legal method, the formal legal method, and the method of political and legal modeling.

Grounded in the principle of comprehensiveness, this study examines both the political and socio-economic dimensions of the formation and development of international regional law. The analysis of international legal regulation concerning the subject of this study is conducted in a systematic correlation with the examination of the organization and functioning of international institutional systems.

A secondary data analysis was performed, incorporating existing sociological studies, reports, and publications on the development of regional integration associations. A comparative analysis was employed to assess various international practices and regionalization strategies. The integration of data from multiple sources—including sociological research, international case studies, statistical data, and empirical findings—enabled the construction of a holistic perspective on the dynamics and transformation of the new wave of regionalism.

Forecasting future trends and evaluating the impact of legal developments support the formulation of recommendations for the establishment of a distinct branch of international law—regional law—as well as the codification of Eurasian legal frameworks. The application of document analysis methods, including the review of official documents and policymakers' statements, facilitated an in-depth examination of the formation and evolution of Eurasian integration and the prospects for further cooperation between the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and external actors in global governance.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Institutional Foundations of Regionalization**

Regionalization, as a process of forming and strengthening political, economic, and cultural ties within geographic regions, exerts a profound impact on both global and national developments. As a relatively recent phenomenon that emerged in the 20th century, regionalization has significantly shaped the evolution of the international relations system. Institutional mechanisms play a crucial role in this process, as they establish the rules and norms governing interactions among members of regional associations.

The institutional system functions as the infrastructure underpinning the broader regionalization framework. While it plays a supportive and subordinate role, it ensures the effective operation of the system as a whole. The institutional dimension of regionalization is central to coordinating the interplay between international and national law, establishing mechanisms for their integration and mutual influence within the framework of legal regulation. This system comprises various institutions that, on the one hand, facilitate state compliance with international obligations in the realm of cooperation and, on the other, contribute to the development and adoption of universally recognized standards through legislative processes. These institutions manifest externally in the form of international organizations and governing bodies, which play a pivotal role in shaping and maintaining the structure of institutional interactions.

The binding nature of decisions adopted by international organizations for their member states is determined by their supranational or intergovernmental legal status. Supranational structures evolve by identifying and implementing the most effective international legal instruments aimed at fulfilling state objectives within the framework of global organizations. This process not only adheres to the principle of legal equality among sovereign states but also acknowledges their inherent asymmetries.

In the context of international organizations, supranationality is reflected in their organizational structure, which grants them broad powers that enable the effective implementation of their statutory goals and objectives as enshrined in their founding documents. This legal attribute is directly linked to the development of regulatory acts essential for achieving the organization's fundamental objectives.

Supranationality is characterized by a set of structural, functional, and procedural features that establish the primacy of an international organization's authority over the national competencies of its member states in specific policy areas. A fundamental aspect of supranationality is the capacity of an international organization to adopt legally binding decisions applicable to all member states [22, 23].

Thus, the attributes of supranationality and intergovernmentalism are directly reflected in the functions and mechanisms of international organizations. These mechanisms are based on the voluntary participation of states, whereby they delegate certain sovereign powers to the organization, recognizing its decisions as both binding and legally preeminent. While some scholars

argue that ceding sovereign rights to an international organization reduces a state's direct governance capacity, it also demonstrates that intergovernmental cooperation fosters conditions for more effective global governance [24].

Regional institutions have gained increasing prominence in global politics. Their characteristics and effectiveness vary considerably—some are highly bureaucratic, while others are informal and flexible. They also differ in terms of inclusivity, decision-making procedures, and adherence to the principle of non-interference [9]. Like international organizations, regional bodies also possess supranational and intergovernmental attributes, which enable them to formulate binding decisions for member states and monitor their implementation. These characteristics are widely acknowledged in academic literature [25].

The institutionalization of regionalization involves the creation of effective mechanisms for interaction and decision-making. This process includes the development of legal frameworks, the establishment of common standards and norms, and the promotion of institutional transparency and accountability. The legal foundations for regional institutions are established through international treaties, agreements, and conventions, which define the rights and obligations of member states, dispute resolution mechanisms, and decision-making procedures.

A key component of the institutionalization of regionalization is the establishment of common standards and norms across various sectors. These may include standards in trade, environmental protection, education, healthcare, energy, pharmaceuticals, logistics, and technical regulations, all of which facilitate policy harmonization and enhance intergovernmental cooperation among states.

The institutionalization of regionalization, in our view, is based on several theoretical approaches, including neofunctionalism, the intergovernmental approach, and the theory of regional dominance. These theories provide distinct explanations for the formation of regional blocs and the legal mechanisms that ensure their stability and development.

1. Neofunctionalism is a key theoretical approach in the study of regional integration, emphasizing the role of supranational institutions in political and legal integration. The core principle of neofunctionalism is that economic cooperation among states gradually fosters political integration, necessitating new governance structures at the supranational level. This phenomenon, known as "spillover," suggests that integration in one domain (e.g., deepening trade relations) creates pressure for further integration in other areas (e.g., the harmonization of rules and regulations). Supranational institutions, such as the European Commission within the EU, advance this process by proposing policy measures that prioritize the collective interests of the union over those of individual member states.

Supranational institutions serve as fundamental mechanisms for the implementation and sustainability of integration processes. They exercise functions that extend beyond national jurisdictions, including legislative authority, regulatory oversight, and judicial competence. The EU exemplifies the effective application of neofunctionalist principles. The establishment and consolidation of institutions such as the European Commission and the European Court of Justice have significantly advanced integration in key policy domains, including trade, agriculture, competition law, and environmental regulation.

While neofunctionalism has been criticized for its overly optimistic assumptions regarding the ability of supranational institutions to override national interests [26], its theoretical contributions remain fundamental to understanding regional integration dynamics. Events such as the Eurozone debt crisis and Brexit illustrate that national sovereignty and cultural differences can slow down or even reverse integration processes. Thus, neofunctionalism remains a fundamental theoretical framework for understanding the dynamics of international integration and the role of supranational institutions in this process. While prevailing political and economic conditions may limit the applicability of neofunctionalist principles, its contribution to the development of integration theory and practice remains undisputed.

2. The intergovernmental approach to regionalization provides a conceptual framework for analyzing international integration and cooperation. Unlike supranational methods, where regional

organizations hold significant authority, this approach emphasizes the central role of national governments in shaping regional policies. This approach is particularly relevant in the context of political integration, economic cooperation, and the resolution of transboundary issues, where states seek to safeguard their sovereignty and retain control over foreign policy.

The intergovernmental approach is founded on the premise that national governments are the principal and most influential actors in international politics. These actors engage in cooperation to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes while simultaneously striving to avoid any diminution of their national sovereignty. The key principles of the intergovernmental approach include: voluntary agreements based on consensus and the right to veto; diplomatic negotiations as the primary mechanism of decision-making; restrictions on the authority of international organizations.

In practice, the intergovernmental approach is evident in the operations of organizations such as the Council of Europe, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). These organizations adhere to principles of consensus and non-interference in domestic affairs to promote regional cooperation and integration. This framework serves to uphold the sovereignty and independence of member states while enabling them to collaborate on regional matters.

3. The theory of regional dominance argues that leading states are the primary actors in creating and sustaining regional integration structures. These dominant states leverage their economic, political, military, and cultural resources to shape regional governance frameworks that align with their strategic interests.

This theory differs from more traditional approaches, such as neofunctionalism or the intergovernmental approach, in that it emphasizes the asymmetric nature of power in regional systems. The theory of regional dominance is based on the premise that leading states utilize their economic, political, military, and cultural resources to shape regional structures that advance their national interests. Individual states may incentivize or compel other countries within the region to cooperate by establishing institutions that promote stability and predictability in their interactions. Regional dominance can have both positive and negative implications for regional integration. On the one hand, dominant states can provide the necessary resources and leadership to address collective challenges. On the other hand, such dominance may lead to imbalanced development and an increased dependence of smaller states on major powers.

In the contemporary world, regional integration serves as a significant catalyst for development. While the European model remains the most prominent example, comparable institutional structures exist in other regions, fostering integration and cooperation at the international level.

On the African continent, three major regional intergovernmental organizations play a pivotal role in integration: the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) – which maintains a joint regional military force – and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which operates a common currency. These organizations contribute to the development of legal frameworks through international legal harmonization and unification.

A particularly notable institution is the African Union (AU), which functions as the primary integration mechanism for the continent. Notably, the AU has modeled its development on the European Union (EU). Its institutional architecture includes the Pan-African Parliament, which is envisioned as the future legislative body of the continent, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Peace and Security Council, as well as various technical committees and sectoral bodies that shape legal regulation and reinforce regional integration. According to the Agenda 2063 framework, the AU plans to establish key financial institutions, including the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund, and the African Investment Bank. These institutions are expected to facilitate regional integration and socio-economic development by playing a central role in resource mobilization and financial sector governance.



Integration processes are also ongoing in North and South America, albeit at varying levels of intensity. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) – which replaced NAFTA – provides for the harmonization of technical standards, sanitary and phytosanitary regulations, as well as dispute resolution mechanisms, including recourse to international trade arbitration. While North American integration operates without supranational regulatory institutions, South American regional organizations remain in the early stages of development. In the Asia-Pacific region, the most influential and strategically significant regional organization is the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Meanwhile, on the Eurasian continent, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) plays a key role in regional integration, promoting economic cooperation among its member states.

The institutional bodies of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) hold the greatest scientific and practical relevance for this study.

Across Eurasia, approximately twenty regional structures operate, encompassing a broad spectrum of organizations, forums, and programs. The integration processes in this region exhibit distinct characteristics, shaped by historically established ties and a shared historical heritage among participating states. Cultural, social, educational, and linguistic commonalities provide favorable conditions for the deepening of integration processes. For the purposes of this study, the "Eurasian space" refers to the geopolitical and institutional boundaries of organizations such as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY), as well as other subregional international organizations within the Eurasian continent.

These organizations differ in membership composition and primary areas of activity. Within their respective frameworks, member states seek to offset slowdowns in integration within certain sectors by advancing cooperation in others. Frequently, states joining one regional organization incorporate provisions in their founding documents that encourage collaboration with other similar regional structures. In this context, states affiliated with one regional organization may simultaneously participate in others, including those operating within a competitive dynamic in the same geographical region.

The EAEU is evolving as an international legal entity, possessing a legal foundation that aligns with international norms and standards. Its institutional framework is designed to continuously support integration processes across diverse sectors among its member states. The institutional architecture of the EAEU comprises key governing bodies, including the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council, the Eurasian Economic Commission, and the Court of the EAEU. These institutions form the cornerstone for the effective coordination and regulation of international relations among member states.

Each EAEU institution plays a critical role in reducing legal uncertainty and establishing a stable governance framework for interaction among regulatory bodies, member states, and their economic entities. The EAEU governing bodies shape a legal environment that ensures regulatory oversight of the union's functions and objectives. The economic institutions of the EAEU provide the structural foundation for the functioning of both national economies and the union as a whole, addressing the political and economic needs of its population. To enhance institutional efficiency, key legal instruments have been developed, including customs and monetary legislation, effective public administration mechanisms in various economic sectors, and regulatory frameworks governing external and internal trade. The EAEU's institutional mechanisms are supported through continuous cooperation between political and economic institutions, aimed at coordinating development programs and integration strategies. All EAEU participants share an interest in maintaining a harmonized institutional framework, making institutional evolution an integral component of the union's development.

It remains premature to assert that EAEU institutions operate under a supranational model. Although Article 6 of the Treaty on the EAEU stipulates that decisions and directives issued by the

Supreme Eurasian Economic Council and the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council are binding on member states, their implementation remains subject to national legislative procedures. This indicates that EAEU member states remain dependent on their national governments, and in certain cases – particularly concerning acts of the Eurasian Economic Commission – member states may propose amendments or annulments if such acts conflict with national priorities.

The primary challenges facing the EAEU institutional framework stem from disparities in socio-economic development and variations in resource potential among member states. Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that the EAEU was established primarily as an economic union, with the objective of enhancing the development and competitiveness of its members' national economies. As outlined in the Treaty on the EAEU, the institutions of the union primarily address economic issues, whereas political matters remain secondary and are likely to evolve in accordance with the deepening of integration over time.

The key objective in strengthening the EAEU's institutional framework is the harmonization and unification of member states' legislation in priority areas of integration. To establish an efficient institutional environment, the EAEU must align legislative and regulatory frameworks in the economic, political, and social spheres, as well as implement mechanisms grounded in market principles and fair competition. Expanding the competencies of the Eurasian Economic Commission or establishing additional EAEU bodies designed to address the challenges of deeper integration would enable the union to transition to a more advanced stage of development, benefiting both the EAEU as a whole and its individual member states.

Thus, the institutional framework of regionalization plays a critical role in establishing stable and effective regional organizations. Theoretical approaches, institutional structures, and practical implementation mechanisms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, creating the necessary conditions for advancing integration processes. The examination and development of institutional mechanisms within regionalization allow for the accommodation of national specificities and contribute to the effective implementation of joint initiatives and projects.

The institutional system operates as an organizational infrastructure, ensuring the regulation of interactions between international and national legal systems and identifying discrepancies in their application within domestic legislation. This system encompasses a range of institutions that not only ensure state compliance with international obligations but also facilitate the development and adoption of internationally recognized legal standards through normative processes. Among the primary external manifestations of such institutions are international organizations and entities vested with supranational authority.

### **Legal Foundations of Regionalization**

Interstate activities are conducted not only within universal cooperation frameworks but also through regional organizations and multilateral and bilateral agreements. Regional cooperation should be regarded as a significant complement to global efforts, allowing for the adaptation of international standards to specific national conditions and contexts. This approach not only strengthens international engagement but also provides effective mechanisms for developing strategies that promote the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms while safeguarding the interests of individual states.

In practice, the legal foundations of regionalization primarily encompass the functioning of regional international organizations. These organizations establish comprehensive legal frameworks that regulate the political, economic, and social dimensions within member states. Additionally, they rely on framework agreements and declarations as the basis for cooperation and integration, emphasizing state sovereignty and gradual integration mechanisms.

According to contemporary legal scholarship, international organizations play a substantial role in shaping international legal norms. Their involvement ranges from facilitating the negotiation and conclusion of multilateral treaties to the independent adoption of normative legal instruments. Consequently, the legislative functions of international organizations encompass a broad range of

processes and mechanisms. From our perspective, a third dimension of international organizations' participation in the development of international law should be recognized – the formulation and justification of policy recommendations that guide the strategic development of states in accordance with universally recognized standards of social relations and human rights protection. This function facilitates the harmonization of domestic policies in specific areas, serving as a crucial instrument for integration.

International organizations play a pivotal role in the evolution of legal systems through two primary functions: law-making (normative activities) and law enforcement (application and interpretation of norms). These processes have been extensively analyzed in international legal scholarship.

It is essential to underscore that the primacy of international legal instruments must be harmonized with the constitutional frameworks of individual states, particularly regarding the conditions under which international law prevails over domestic legislation. This underscores the need to balance state sovereignty with the obligations arising from membership in international organizations. Accession to an international organization places an obligation on a state to harmonize its domestic legal framework and institutional structures with the standards established by the organization in a specific sphere of public governance. In some organizations, such alignment requires compliance with mandatory criteria to obtain membership status, whereas in others, it entails adherence to more flexible standards that member states are expected to progressively implement.

As a general rule, in accordance with national constitutional provisions, the legal acts of international organizations ratified by states take precedence over domestic legislation. Furthermore, decisions of international organizations and their governing bodies prevail over national law if the organization was established under treaties ratified by its member states and if its founding treaty explicitly stipulates the binding nature of its decisions on member states.

This legal framework affirms the equivalence in legal force between a ratified international treaty and the acts of an international organization in which a state holds membership, provided that the treaty establishing or governing the organization has been duly ratified by the state and explicitly designates the organization's acts as legally binding on its member states. At the same time, the founding legal instruments of most international organizations explicitly confirm the binding nature of their decisions for their member states.

Moreover, the conclusion of international treaties, which establish rules and standards for intergovernmental cooperation, constitutes the second fundamental component of the legal framework of regionalization. Notable examples include the Schengen Agreement and the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), both of which govern specific aspects of political and economic relations among their respective signatory states. An examination of the implementation mechanisms of universal and regional international human rights agreements provides valuable insights into the theoretical foundations of this process. International bodies operating at the interface of national and international legal systems play a pivotal role in facilitating the effective integration of these legal frameworks. At the same time, they uphold the fundamental principles of state sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs, thereby ensuring a delicate balance between international obligations and national interests.

Regional interactions are governed by legal norms that, while functioning within a specific regional framework, are rooted in the fundamental principles of international law and possess the status of international legal standards. This underscores their significance and universal applicability within the global legal system.

The key legal challenges in regulating regionalization include issues related to national sovereignty, the divergence of national legal systems, and potential conflicts between regional standards and global legal norms. Future developments in this field involve enhancing dispute resolution mechanisms, advancing sectoral integration, and establishing new forms of transboundary cooperation.

The legal foundations of regionalization play a pivotal role in ensuring regional stability and fostering international cooperation. The effectiveness of regional organizations depends on the depth and robustness of legal mechanisms that regulate relations among member states. A comprehensive understanding of these processes is crucial for assessing both current and emerging trends in global politics and economics. Therefore, continued research into the legal dimensions of regionalization is expected to be highly valuable, providing new avenues for strengthening international cooperation.

### **Formation of International Regional Law**

The development of international law within the context of regional international integration inevitably results in its fragmentation, arising from the adaptation of general international legal norms to specific regional needs based on regional particularities. In contemporary international legal doctrine, the concept of "autonomous regimes" has gained prominence, reflecting the tendency of regions to diverge from established global standards in the application of international law. This phenomenon underscores the inevitability of the evolution of regional international law, which contributes to legal fragmentation and may pose a challenge to the unity and coherence of the broader international legal order [27].

However, both the regionalization and fragmentation of international law are intrinsically linked to the level and depth of regional integration, which, in this context, serves as a primary consideration for states, while international law functions as an essential regulatory instrument for integration processes. This is particularly evident in the European Union, where the unification of integration law closely resembles the harmonization of federal legislation within the competencies of a federal state.

Regional law constitutes a body of legal norms applicable within a specific geographical region, governing interstate relations among member states. The theoretical foundations of regional law are based on key legal principles such as sovereignty, integration, and subsidiarity. Legal scholarship has extensively examined the formation of "integration law" [28] and "regional integration law" [17]. Additionally, academic perspectives have emerged suggesting that distinct regional international legal systems [5] and regional legal orders are developing within the broader framework of international law. These perspectives reflect the evolution of legal principles at the regional level, emphasizing their significance and distinctiveness in the context of globalization and the deepening of international integration.

The legal discourse surrounding the concept of legal integration remains subject to debate; however, within each regional organization, a dynamic legal interaction among states is evident. Regional integration in the legal sphere is manifested through active processes of harmonization and unification of national legal systems, facilitating the convergence of distinct legal frameworks and serving as the foundation for the establishment of common regulatory rules. The nature, scope, pace of development, and underlying drivers of legal integration may vary significantly depending on the region and specific circumstances.

A key characteristic of these processes is their simultaneous implementation at two levels: the international level, through founding treaties and other legal instruments of regional organizations, and the national level, through the incorporation of these norms into the domestic legal systems of member states. Legal interaction at the regional level requires states to adopt various legal instruments, which may be either advisory or binding on member states, thereby contributing to the development of regional international norms.

The founding treaties of most regional organizations emphasize the importance of legal cooperation, which may involve various mechanisms, including reception, harmonization, unification, and standardization. Furthermore, some regional organizations aim to establish a unified legal space, ensuring the uniform regulation of social, economic, foreign policy, and other legal dimensions within the region.

At more advanced stages of integration, regional norms may be incorporated into the national legal systems of member states, fostering greater coordination and consistency in legal regulation

within the region. This raises a complex theoretical and practical issue regarding the concept of a unified legal space, as international legal unification constitutes its primary political and legal foundation. The regional unification of international law is often not merely an extension of globalization but rather an alternative to it. Accordingly, multiple unified legal spaces may emerge not only at the universal level (where such plurality arises from distinct areas of legal regulation, such as trade law, energy law, and criminal law) but also at the regional level. Moreover, this multiplicity of legal spaces may even exist within a single region, as exemplified by the legal space of the Council of Europe and the legal space of the European Union.

The core element of the concept of "legal space" is primarily defined by the socio-economic relations among states within a specific territorial framework. These relations must not only develop organically among states but also be actively maintained by them. In our view, the commonality of socio-economic relations, as a key factor in regional integration, is also a fundamental determinant in the process of regional legal unification.

Furthermore, in conceptualizing "international legal space," scholars emphasize the significance of socio-cultural ties among the members of an integration entity, as well as the recognition of law as a fundamental value within these societies [19]. A legal space is premised on a shared understanding among participants of an international association regarding the importance of law as a unified and universally accepted regulatory framework for common integration processes. Consequently, at the regional level, the existence of socio-cultural unity is considered an essential precondition for legal unification, potentially surpassing economic factors in significance. Notably, one of the key drivers behind the political and economic integration of European states was their shared socio-cultural foundation. The European nations that adopted the Statute of the Council of Europe recognized democracy-grounded in the protection of human rights—as a fundamental shared value. Similarly, the establishment of the European Union (EU), codified in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, explicitly stipulated that membership in the Union was restricted to states with democratic governance structures that uphold human rights.

A critical consideration in the development of a unified legal space is the preservation of the distinct legal identity of each participating entity, a concern frequently raised by legal scholars. While this issue may not be of primary relevance in the context of universal (global) legal unification, it is far from peripheral in the context of regional legal unification. The extent to which this issue is politically and legally sensitive can have a substantial impact on the prospects for deepening integration processes. At the same time, underdeveloped intergovernmental socio-economic ties are unlikely to foster a cohesive international legal space, thereby reducing the necessity for extensive legal unification procedures. The so-called flexible models of legal unification largely preserve national legal identity, yet they fail to facilitate deeper international legal integration. This aspect is critically significant not only for the future trajectory of international legal unification but also for the harmonization of domestic legal frameworks in conformity with international law.

Traditionally, the implementation of international legal norms requires states to adapt their national legislation and regulatory frameworks in accordance with international agreements. This process entails the incorporation of international obligations into domestic legal systems, thereby facilitating the harmonization and standardization of legislative and administrative norms at the international level. The process comprises several key stages: incorporation of international norms into national legislation, harmonization of existing national laws with international standards, and the adoption of administrative procedures and mechanisms to ensure compliance with international obligations. However, this approach faces several limitations, including national priorities, divergences in legal systems, and the absence of effective enforcement mechanisms.

The establishment of an institutional and legal framework for unified international legal regional spaces necessitates the creation of specialized compliance bodies or international judicial institutions within the structures of relevant international organizations. These institutions serve as key mechanisms for the unification and harmonization of both international and national legal systems.

A distinguishing feature of such regional legal spaces is the extensive use of "soft law" instruments, which enhance the effectiveness of international treaties. This is achieved through the application of the "living law" doctrine, allowing legal norms to be adapted to evolving conditions.

To ensure compliance with international law, regional organizations must establish mechanisms for international legal accountability in cases of non-compliance. Although international organizations and courts possess limited enforcement powers to compel states to adhere to international standards, they play a critical role in monitoring and promoting compliance. To facilitate the implementation of treaty obligations by member states, regional integration organizations establish specialized compliance bodies endowed with monitoring and oversight functions.

Such compliance mechanisms operate within both regional and universal international organizations and generally do not exhibit significant structural differences. Notable examples include monitoring bodies overseeing compliance with universal international treaties in the fields of human rights protection and transnational crime prevention.

Among the most prominent judicial institutions within regional integration frameworks are the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR), the Court of Justice of the Andean Community, the Permanent Review Tribunal of MERCOSUR, the Caribbean Court of Justice, the Central American Court of Justice, and the Court of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA Court). Additionally, judicial bodies operate within regional organizations such as COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa), ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States), and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States).

The unification of international and national law seeks to establish a coherent legal space where international norms and standards not only complement but also integrate into domestic legal frameworks. This process necessitates that states subordinate national priorities to global legal objectives. The concept of legal unification involves the development and implementation of standardized legal norms and frameworks that operate at both international and national levels. This strategy aims to harmonize national legal systems, ensuring coherence and interoperability among diverse legal traditions on a global scale.

Given the limitations of the traditional approach and the challenges associated with full-scale legal unification at the international level, the phenomenon of legal regionalization has emerged. Legal regionalization involves the integration of legal systems within specific regions, considering their distinct legal, political, and socio-economic characteristics.

In the contemporary international legal order, legal regionalization has become increasingly widespread. This process entails the formation of distinct regional legal spaces, each defined by its own regulatory framework and legal traditions. The degree of legal integration among states within a given region profoundly influences the interaction of legal actors. To fully comprehend this phenomenon, it is crucial to examine the specific features of legal integration unique to each region. Without a comprehensive analysis of these characteristics, it is impossible to accurately assess, interpret, or explain the patterns of legal regionalization. A systematic approach to studying regionalization allows for the development of informed projections concerning the future trajectory of intergovernmental and interregional legal relations. This, in turn, forms the basis for strategies of legal and political cooperation at the international level.

Legal regionalization represents the formation of regional legal systems, which reflect the unique legal, cultural, and economic characteristics of the states involved. This process varies across regions and is influenced by geographical, cultural, and economic factors. For instance, the European Union (EU) exhibits a high level of legal integration, supported by a robust judicial framework and a comprehensive body of legislation governing relations between member states and EU institutions. The African Union (AU) aspires to legal integration but faces significant challenges due to political instability and economic disparities among its member states. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopts a flexible approach to legal integration, emphasizing state sovereignty and non-interference, which slows the process of legal unification.

The process of legal integration presents several key challenges, including: tensions between national sovereignty and international obligations, requiring a delicate balance between state autonomy and compliance with international legal norms; reconciling universal legal principles with regional specificities, ensuring that international norms are effectively adapted to national legal frameworks; institutional and legal divergences among states, which complicate the harmonization of regional legal systems; weak or underdeveloped regional institutions, which hinder the enforcement and implementation of regional legal norms; conflicts of interest between national and regional priorities, particularly in matters of economic cooperation, security, and governance; a lack of political will and reluctance to compromise, obstructing the development of regional legal frameworks.

The process of legal regionalization and the unification of international and national legal norms is complex and multidimensional. Effective integration requires not only revisions to domestic legislation but also the establishment of mechanisms to harmonize national legal systems with international legal standards. Success in this endeavor depends on the consideration of socio-cultural, economic, and political factors within each region. Achieving value-based integration between international and national law necessitates a nuanced approach that balances legal harmonization with regional autonomy.

The development of regional law encompasses several fundamental areas:

1) Regulation of trade, commercial relations, investment activities, and competition. These domains represent the core pillars of a stable and well-functioning regional legal system. The creation of a unified economic space requires the harmonization of legal norms and procedures to ensure consistency, predictability, and legal certainty across the region.

2) Development of social law, including labor relations, social security, migration, and education. The primary objective is to establish uniform legal standards and equal conditions throughout the region, thereby promoting social cohesion and economic mobility.

3) Regulation of environmental protection and sustainable resource management. This necessitates the adoption of common legal frameworks and regional environmental standards aimed at preserving ecosystems and fostering sustainable development.

4) Incorporation of human rights norms into regional legal systems. This process strengthens democratic institutions, enhances the protection of fundamental freedoms, and facilitates the harmonization of legal systems based on universally recognized principles, including human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The convergence of legal frameworks through shared normative values contributes to the long-term sustainability of regional legal systems.

Building on an analysis of these areas, it can be asserted that international regional law constitutes a distinct and specialized branch of international law. This field encompasses the regulation of various legal relations, including the establishment and dissolution of regional organizations, as well as the governance of interactions between such entities and their member states. A defining characteristic of international regional law is its role in coordinating intergovernmental cooperation within established regional structures, which operate across various sectors as defined in their founding treaties. Within this framework, the interaction of institutional structures plays a pivotal role in facilitating deeper legal and political integration, thereby enhancing regional governance and the achievement of common objectives.

The establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) has served as a catalyst for the development of a distinct body of regional and national legal acts, marking the emergence of a new legal domain – Eurasian law. This development underscores the necessity of adapting and harmonizing legal frameworks to ensure coordination and coherence within regional integration processes. This evolving legal field comprises a system of legal principles and norms that regulate economic, social, and other intergovernmental relations among EAEU member states. A distinctive feature of Eurasian law is its capacity to integrate diverse national legal systems into a unified legal order, thereby fostering deeper economic integration and enhancing the effectiveness of intergovernmental cooperation within the Union. As of today, more than 7,500 legal instruments have

been adopted within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) framework, encompassing both binding legal acts, such as decisions, directives, and international treaties, as well as soft law instruments, including recommendations, which collectively constitute the legal foundation of the Union. The significant volume of normative acts within the EAEU legal system confirms the structured consolidation of Eurasian law within the broader framework of international regional law.

The evolution of Eurasian law – both towards its recognition as an independent legal order and its continued function as a regional subsystem of international law—is shaped by the interplay of political, economic, and social factors within the integration process. Given that Eurasian integration remains an evolving legal framework, its conceptual model may take various forms, leading to multiple theoretical interpretations of its nature. At this stage, Eurasian integration represents a developing body of regional international legal norms aimed at the creation of a unified economic space among EAEU member states. This reality necessitates the consolidation of legal norms regulating Eurasian integration into a coherent legislative system and the establishment of a new legal discipline – Eurasian law. This concept has been supported by various scholars who have examined different aspects of Eurasian integration [22, 29]. The development of theoretical and methodological foundations for the further advancement of Eurasian law remains a pertinent and promising area of legal research. The systematization of any legal field is a critical academic and practical task. In this context, the systematization of Eurasian law emerges as a key area of research and an academic discipline warranting greater scholarly attention. There is a growing demand for legal professionals with specialized expertise in Eurasian law. However, the current approach – wherein Eurasian legal regulation is studied only as a subsection within broader legal disciplines – is insufficient. Eurasian law is a multifaceted legal system, with each sectoral legal subdivision exhibiting distinct characteristics that require in-depth academic analysis.

To meet this growing academic and professional demand, it is proposed to develop and integrate a specialized academic module or course on Eurasian law within higher education curricula. This course should be comprehensive, covering various dimensions of Eurasian integration, including a detailed analysis of both the EAEU legal framework and broader international integration experiences. At the current stage of development, the focus should not only be on the legal aspects of state interactions within specific regional organizations but also on the broader interconnections of regional legal frameworks within the international legal system. Such an approach would enable students to gain a deeper understanding of global trends in regional integration, identify common patterns, and distinguish the unique features of state interactions within each specific regional context.

A specialized course on Eurasian law should cover the study of legal instruments and institutional frameworks of key regional organizations, including the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Union State of Russia and Belarus, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Additionally, it should examine other significant international forums operating within the Eurasian region, as well as bilateral legal cooperation mechanisms among EAEU member states. Furthermore, the course should address the legal obligations undertaken by EAEU member states within universal international organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). This comprehensive approach would provide an in-depth understanding of regional legal regulation and the principles governing Eurasian integration.

Undoubtedly, it would be erroneous to assume that the mere existence of challenges, in itself, justifies the creation of a distinct branch of law. Given the irreversible and inherent nature of regionalization and integration issues in contemporary societies, the legal formalization of these processes through a separate legal framework may be insufficient for their effective resolution. At the same time, integration processes in Eurasia necessitate not only instrumental approaches but also an in-depth legal analysis of these dynamics.

A comparative study of regional interactions between the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regions reveals that the latter lags behind in several critically important aspects. In the Euro-Atlantic region, well-developed legal institutions actively promote the dissemination of democratic values.



Organizations such as the Venice Commission and the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) operate not only in Europe but also in the Americas through the Inter-American Juridical Committee (CJI). Regional judicial bodies play a crucial role in this domain, including the European Court of Human Rights, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, whose jurisdiction extends across Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. However, proposals for the establishment of an Asian or Eurasian Human Rights Court, as well as a Eurasian Human Rights Charter, remain at the developmental stage. This underscores the critical need to strengthen legal mechanisms for human rights protection in the Eurasian region to bridge existing gaps compared to more advanced legal systems.

The development of regional law is a complex and multifaceted process that requires the consideration of multiple factors and interests. Despite numerous challenges, the successful evolution of regional law contributes to strengthening regional cooperation, fostering economic integration, and ensuring social stability. The experiences of various regions demonstrate that the effective formation of regional law is feasible when institutional support, political will, and a shared commitment to common objectives are present.

The advancement of regional law and legal regionalization has become a fundamental component of modern international law. The traditional approach to the implementation of international norms within domestic legal systems is no longer sufficient to ensure effective legal regulation. The harmonization of legal systems, while accounting for the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of different regions, facilitates successful integration and further development of international law. Identifying the specific features of legal integration within each region allows for a deeper understanding of these processes and enables more precise forecasting of their future trajectory.

## **CONCLUSION**

The processes of regionalization exert a significant influence on multiple aspects of public life, including economics, politics, law, social structures, and the cultural and civilizational characteristics of nations. These transformations facilitate the emergence of new forms of international cooperation and interaction, thereby fostering the development of a multi-tiered global governance system.

Virtually all states are affected by regional processes. Political changes involve the strengthening of supranational and regional institutions, which play an increasingly significant role in international affairs. Legal policies are evolving toward the harmonization of domestic legislation with the regulatory frameworks of regional organizations. Social factors, such as migration, cultural exchange, and transnational movements, contribute to the formation of a global civil society. Cultural and civilizational factors are reflected in the dissemination of cultural values and norms, leading to the gradual formation of a global cultural identity. These processes present both challenges and opportunities for states, requiring them to adapt to the rapidly changing conditions of the globalized world.

Several key observations characterize contemporary regional integration processes.

Regional unification is inherently linked to international regional integration structures established through international law. In the modern world, regional integration has become a powerful driver of development.

The advancement of regional integration has led to the establishment of intergovernmental organizations aimed at deepening integration processes. This, in turn, necessitates the creation of an international legal framework that addresses the needs of states within a given region. As demonstrated in most cases, international treaties not only define political and economic trends but also shape the legal trajectory of integrated intergovernmental entities.

Regionalization creates a demand for international legal unification, initiated by regional integration structures, necessitating further harmonization and alignment of national legal systems. This process leads to the development and implementation of international legal and institutional mechanisms that support integration efforts.

Within the framework of international regional integration, international law serves as one of the key instruments ensuring the sustainability of these processes. Recognizing the importance of shared values among regional integration organizations, it is evident that the legal framework itself constitutes a fundamental principle in shaping common regional legal spaces. The introduction of judicial mechanisms to safeguard legal spaces governed by unified integration law is designed to uphold the primacy of integration law, thereby establishing a legal order that grants each state the freedom to integrate within legally sound principles that do not contradict the treaty-based foundations of integration.

A distinctive feature of regional international legal unification is the expanded use of "soft" legal instruments. Regional unification is particularly associated with the concept of ongoing unification, whereby compliance bodies, through their long-standing practices, ensure the effectiveness of their respective international treaties based on the doctrine of "living law." This phenomenon is a natural consequence of the nature of regional integration organizations, which are established as international structures to address the priority social, economic, and political concerns of states within a given region. Accordingly, evolving regional priorities necessitate the continuous development of international legal infrastructure within integration organizations.

Thus, the ongoing necessity for cooperation provides states with an objective basis for maintaining treaty-based legal relations and effectively adapting reciprocal treaty rights and obligations to changing circumstances. As a result, regional treaty-based legal unification tends to be more comprehensive and substantive than most examples of universal international treaty-based unification. Consequently, the impact of such unification on the national legal systems of member states is often more pronounced.

It can be concluded that the creation of unified international legal spaces, which form the foundation of autonomous regional international legal entities, occurs as a result of the convergence of specific conditions. The fundamental elements of the concept of "legal space" primarily include the socio-economic relations among states within a defined territorial framework, the recognition of the legal framework as a core value, and the existence of socio-cultural ties among participating states. These relationships must not only develop organically among states but also be actively maintained. As a consequence, the subsequent necessity to align national legal systems with the legal frameworks of autonomous regional international legal entities and their unification inevitably leads to legal convergence.

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