This theses analyses the development policy of a member state of the European Union. It examines the development policy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Its development policy is explored through the expectations of the multi-level governance theory. According to this theory the governance in European Union is carried out on several different levels. This applies to european politics, polity and also for policies. And one of the European policies is also development policy.

This theses argues that the UK exercises its development policy on several different levels. Its traditional bilateral development policy shows aspects of "path dependency". More than half of its development assistance gives the UK to its former colonies associated in Commonwealth. Along with this traditional bilateral development policy the UK exercises its development policy also on the European level when it tries to influence the European governance. Another level is also the subnational level of the local government. Because of the restricted scope of my theses I didn’t focus on the local level.

Also many players are engaged in the cooperation of the UK and EC development policy. Along with the government and executive, the British Parliament and civil society are engaged in this cooperation. This is in accordance with the expectation of the multi-level theory, that speaks not only about the multi-level governance, but also about the multi-actoreness of the European governance.

According to the Treaty of the EU three important rules govern the relationship between national and community development policy. The three rules are complementarity, coordination and coherence. These principles are valid from the year 1993, but their application is very complicated, especially in the case of the coherence principle. The UK is one of the strong advocates of keeping the coherence principle in the European development policy, which applies to its own national development policy, as well as to the development policy of the European Community.

The UK is very active in the development policy, which prove the initiatives that the UK initiated in development policy, like the International Finance Facility or the Commission for
Africa. This may be explained by its historical colonial links with the developing countries, but it became even more visible from 1997, when the Labour party took over the government. The Labour Party puts greater emphasis on the moral aspects of the foreign policy and part of this emphasis was also establishment of a special Ministry for International Development in 1997.

Cooperation of this Ministry with European Community is governed by Institutional Strategy Papers and Public Service Agreement. They declare cooperation with a wide range of European Community institutions - European Commission, European Council, European Parliament and others.

Group of the so called „like-minded countries“ was developed in the European development policy. These countries share similar views in development policy. Along with the UK it is constituted mainly by northern countries. These countries are so called pioneers in the development policy.

Even if the development policy is in competence of the UK, the relations with developing countries are also influenced by some other external policies that are in competence of the European Community. This applies especially to the Common agriculture and Common trade policies of the EU. These policies strongly influenced developing countries and very often they are not coherent with the development policy of the EU. The UK emphasises this incoherence and advocates greater coherence between EC development policy and EC agriculture and trade policies.

Since 1997 the UK introduced some initiatives that influenced the European development policy. Important were the Commission for Africa, International Finance Facility, initiatives during the Presidency of the EU and G8 in 2005. Also principles supported by the UK are consistent with the principles of the Development Assistance Committee OECD and they lead the way for the future direction of the European development policy. Important among them are untyning of aid, aid effectiveness, cancelation of debts for the highly indebted poor countries, support of fragile states, cooperation with Africa, and so on. Thus the UK strongly influences creation of the European development policy.