

Abstract

During the eastern enlargement of the EU four emerging countries of the Visegrád Group - Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary - joined the community of European states. This significant event notably affected not only the transformation process in the countries mentioned above but also their relations with the EU member states. The aim of this master thesis is to research the impact of the eastern enlargement of the EU on economic relations between C.E. countries and Germany, and to answer the question whether the EU accession was the main decisive factor for the dynamic development of economic cooperation between the above mentioned states. The analysis of economic relations focuses on two key dimensions: trade relations and direct investment. The government's policy of supporting the investment activities both in Germany and C.E. countries is also taken into account. The thesis is divided into three parts. The first chapter intends to analyze the integration process of the C.E. countries in the '90s and its influence on the dynamic development of the economic cooperation between Germany and Visegrád Group. The second section deals with the theoretical aspects of international trade and foreign direct investment. This part intends to provide comparative criteria that will help in answering the research question regarding the impact and benefits of EU- membership of the four Visegrád states for their economic relations with Germany. The last section consists of four comparative studies on economic cooperation between Germany and Visegrád Group and examines the situation before and after their accession to the EU.