

## **Abstract**

This PhD thesis seeks to establish a multi-layered definition of the principle of loyal cooperation in EU law in its current form. It focuses on four fundamental ways of describing this principle. The first one is a linguistic analysis of the term "principle of loyal cooperation" itself. The thesis looks at its equivalents in all official languages of the EU and applies various linguistic (etymology) and non-linguistic research tools and findings from the study of history, social psychology and philosophy to understand and delimit the principle of loyal cooperation in EU law. In a second step, the principle is examined at three separate levels. At the first level the situation and significance of the actors bound by loyalty is explored. At the second level the paper focuses on the differences between the principle of loyal cooperation, the way commitments are met in international public law, and the mechanisms of ensuring loyalty in countries with a federal structure. Lastly, the third level of analysis looks into the ways the principle of loyal cooperation and its operation vary according to the area of competence.

**Keywords:** principle of sincere cooperation, European Union law, theory of federalism, European studies