

Abstract

The thesis deals with the topic of Irish neutrality in the context of European integration and verifies the statement that Ireland participated in the processes of European integration in the 21st century only in a way that did not threaten its neutrality. The main part of the thesis focuses on three specific events, specifically the approval of the Lisbon Treaty, the Treaty of Nice and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). These are the three most crucial moments of the 21st century European integration, which involved the issue of Irish neutrality. The thesis uses these three cases to prove that Ireland's involvement in the European integration architecture was in line with Irish political neutrality and without posing any threat to it. Worries about neutrality in Ireland result from EU cooperation in the area of CFSP and concerns about the creation of a European army, searching in all the monitored ways. The Treaty of Nice was not approved in the first referendum and the public sought confirmation that the Treaty of Nice will not threaten or affect Irish policy of neutrality from both Irish Government and other Member States. Only then did they accept the Treaty in the second referendum. A similar situation occurred in the case of Lisbon Treaty, which was not approved until the second referendum, when Ireland was guaranteed neutrality through Irish guarantees. The adoption of PESCO did not take the form of a referendum, but the founding documents of this cooperation include assurances about respecting specific foreign policies of the Member States, which in the case of Ireland means neutrality. Opponents of PESCO were still convinced that this Cooperation threatens Irish neutrality, even after it was already approved, but as the opinion polls suggest, the public did not share this view. The majority of Irish population agrees with European integration in the form of PESCO.