

Abstract

Even though nuclear energy was one of the first areas in which European countries started integrating their policies through the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), the question of nuclear installations safety was only addressed by the EU in the context of the impending enlargement of the Union in 2004. In 2003, the European Commission submitted the first-ever proposal for a European directive on nuclear safety. However, the Council rejected it the following year, opening a five-year-long debate leading to the drafting of a new directive proposal, which was subsequently adopted in 2009. Only two years later, in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima disaster, amending this directive became necessary. Discussions resulted in adopting the amended legislation in the summer of 2014. This master's thesis analyses the main factors influencing the Council's decision-making on either rejecting or adopting the proposed directives in 2004, 2009 and 2014. The analysis is based on the following five scope conditions supposed to lead to integration acceptance by EU member states, as defined by authors Manuele Citi and Martin Rhodes: policy failure and availability of a successful alternative, external influence emanating from foreign countries hardly manageable by the individual states, functional interdependence and trans-boundary effects among the member states, consistency of the proposed legislation with the existing national and international framework, and lastly, domestic public acceptance.