

Abstract

The aim of master's thesis "Attitudes to the UK membership in the European Union (1993-2016)" is to analyse the individual theoretical and political attitudes towards the UK membership in the European Union. In particular, the thesis focuses on the period after the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, during the governments of Conservative Prime Minister John Major (1990-1997), Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair (1997-2005) and Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron (2010-2016), who called a referendum on "Brexit" in 2016. Since the beginning of its membership in the EU, the United Kingdom has been more inclined towards an intergovernmental approach and worried about the delegation of power to supranational authorities as well as federalist tendencies. Due to the large number of approaches and theories related to the European integration, the thesis will focus in detail on federalism theory, to which the United Kingdom has always strongly defined itself, contrary to the model of multilevel governance that characterizes the current political system in Britain. In the past, the British political system was based on the so-called Westminster model, however, since the 1980s it has gradually transformed into a model of multilevel governance. The core of the thesis is to classify the relations between Great Britain and the EU by analysing the individual attitudes and approaches of British Prime Ministers and their governments towards the European integration. In an effort to identify the reasons that contributed to the British election to leave the EU, the final part of the thesis deals with the comparison and analysis of two ongoing "Leave" and "Remain" election campaigns preceding the 2016 „Brexit“ referendum.