

Abstract

The main objective of this thesis is to analyse the legal regimes of the Arctic and Antarctica and to compare them. The research question is whether and in what specific ways the legal regimes of these polar regions differ.

The thesis mainly uses the descriptive method, which describes the basic background and the applicable legal framework, and then the comparative method when comparing the two regimes. In addition to the introduction and conclusion, the thesis is divided into a total of seven chapters.

The thesis thus first defines the Arctic and Antarctic, introduces their history and outlines their geopolitical significance. The main parts of the thesis are devoted to the legal regime. In the case of the Arctic, which is mainly a frozen sea around the North Pole, the law of the sea relevant to this territory is discussed. Attention is given to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and its application to the Arctic Ocean. The thesis also describes the pending disputes in this area and the challenges that this legal regime poses not only for Arctic states. In the case of Antarctica, which is a continent, the complex treaty regime that was treaty-anchored in 1954 is discussed. Attention is also paid to the European Union's interest in these areas, as well as the Czech Republic's relationship to them.

The result of the work is a comparison of the legal regimes of the Arctic and Antarctica. Although at first glance the Arctic and Antarctica may seem similar, a comparison of their legal regimes shows that they are quite different regions in this respect, both in terms of the use of these areas and the claiming of parts of them.

A major difference in the area of state claims arises from the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty, which stipulates that no state may make claims to Antarctic territory during its validity, and that those that have been made in the past are frozen for the duration of the Treaty. The Arctic region is currently the focus of interests of the United States, Canada, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Great Britain and Finland, and there are active disputes over how the continental shelf, maritime boundaries and rules for navigation in the Arctic will be defined.