

# The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action: A Start to an End?

*An Evaluative Policy Analysis of the Iran Nuclear Deal*

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### **Executive summary**

The implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was the outcome of a long journey of nuclear disputes leading to the normalization of relations between Iran and the international community. This landmark agreement seems the first to have brought together historical antagonists to conclude in a compromise. The purpose of this dissertation is to analyse this nuclear deal to determine whether the policy is effective in various criteria. In doing so, the outcome of the research can determine whether the policy needs modifications or to be ceased. The central question of analysis was: Were the objectives of the JCPOA met? In order to answer this question, an evaluative policy analysis was conducted based on four criteria: Effectiveness, Responsiveness, Equity, and Adequacy. Research demonstrates that even though the policy encompasses weaknesses, the negotiators interests were taken into account, the nuclear issue with Iran is solved, and the goals of the policy were met. Additionally, the policy creates economic benefits. Moreover, concerns for a “sneak out” scenario or a nuclear arms race do not seem as legitimate as what has been claimed by the existing literature. However, research does demonstrate that the policy does not accomplish success in all four criteria. Where Effectiveness, Responsiveness, and Adequacy are sufficiently present, Equity falls behind. Therefore, it is suggested that the policy should improve on Equity. However, overall, the JCPOA presents a successful policy that should be upheld.

### **List of abbreviations**

EU – European Union

IAEA – International Atomic Energy Agency

JPOA – Joint Plan of Action

JCPOA – Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

MENA – Middle East and North Africa

NPT – Non-Proliferation Treaty

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

UK – United Kingdom

US – United States

WMD – Weapon of Mass Destruction

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## 1 Introduction

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2015, Iran, the European Union, three European countries – France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, in addition to the United States, Russia, and China, signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. An agreement which aims to limit Iran's nuclear capability and dismantle its nuclear facilities in return for the lifting of international oil and financial sanctions (Ali, 2018, p. 13). Reaching such an agreement has not been easy. In fact, it involved numerous negotiations. Moreover, the relationship between Iran and the international community had been tense ever since the Islamic Revolution took place in 1979. From then onwards, the United States has put several measures in place to isolate Iran. The rest of the international community followed suit but with a less hostile approach (Baxter and Akbarzadeh, 2008, p. 109). Due to years of tensions and hostility, the signing of the agreement and thus, a mutual interest, was exceptional.

On the day of the signing, the European High Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy – Federica Mogherini, and the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs – Mohammad Javad Zarif, released the following statement:

*With courage, political will, mutual respect and leadership, we delivered on what the world was hoping for: a shared commitment to peace and to join hands in order to make our world safer.... What we are announcing today is not only a deal but a good deal. And a good deal for all sides – and the wider international community. This agreement opens new possibilities and a way forward to end a crisis that has lasted for more than 10 years (European External Action Service (EEAS), 2015).*

This thesis aims to analyse whether the JCPOA is in fact, a good deal, and a good deal for all parties. This will be done by performing a policy analysis, hoping to answer the question whether the JCPOA has reached its objectives. By critically analysing the policy performance, the effectiveness of the JCPOA will be determined.

The importance of doing this research lies in the fact that the JCPOA has set regulations and standards on Iran's nuclear program. Besides reducing Iran's nuclear capability, it was designed to make the relationship between Iran and the International community less tense and more standard (JCPOA, 2015). Analysing the policy performance will outline whether the policy is effective or whether there should be alterations. This will give the International community and especially the EU, who is working hard to uphold the agreement, clarity on what lengths to go to uphold the relationship with Iran and the JCPOA.

In addition, analysing the JCPOA will determine the impact of the policy and whether the same type of agreement can be used for similar cases in the present.

## 2 Literature review

### 2.1 Iran and the International community

Before the introduction of the JCPOA, relations between Iran and the international community had been tense and uncertain. Even before the issue of nuclear proliferation the world would engage with Iran based on economic interests and human rights issues (Bergenäs, 2010, p.501). The literature examined builds on the idea that relations with Iran are determined by Iran's domestic political situation (Posch, 2016, p.1; Santini, Mauriello & Trombetta, 2009, p.65). However, there is a divide visible on the EUs approach with Iran and the US approach towards Iran. On relationship with other negotiating parties to the JCPOA, there is a lack of existing literature.

According to Garwin (2015) US-Iran relations are based on an ongoing distrust towards one another (Garwin, 2015, p. 1-4). Baxter and Akbarzadeh (2008) describe the US-Iran relation to have been hostile since the Islamic Revolution that served as a catalyst for the Iraq-Iran war in which the US supported Iraq (Baxter and Akbarzadeh, 2008, p. 109). Katzman (2009), in agreement with Baxter and Akbarzadeh (2008), continues by describing the lowest point in US-Iran relations to have been 1979, when the US embassy in Tehran was seized by pro-Khomeini radicals. Later known as *The Hostage Crisis* (Baxter and Akbarzadeh, 2008, p. 77; Katzman, 2009, p.2). Simbar (2006) notes that ever since, the US practices a policy of confrontation towards Iran. The US accuses Iran, amongst other things, as a state sponsoring terrorism and violent groups, and pursuing the creation of a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) (Simbar, 2006, p.74).

Ali (2018) describes that EU-Iran relations have also encountered periods of distrust, however, have been friendlier (Ali, 2018, p. 83). Literature describing the EU-Iran relationship before the issue of nuclear proliferation mainly focusses on the reason and effect of EU engagement with Iran. From Bergenäs's (2010) work it becomes clear that not only Iran's domestic situation effects EU-Iran relations as outlined by Posch (2016) and Santini et al. (2009). In fact, Bergenäs (2010) outlines four reasons for the difficult relationship. Firstly, Europe feared a domino effect of Iran's Islamic revolution throughout the Middle East. Secondly, the historic relationship between the EU and US stands in the way of EU-Iran relations; Bergenäs (2010) assumes that the EU would not ignore the US calls for a more militant stance towards Iran. Furthermore, Europe declared itself neutral in the Iraq- Iran conflict, however, France sold arms to Iraq while Germany upheld trade relations with Iran. The Member States seemed divided in their approach. Moreover, Iran sought for other alliances beyond Europe (Bergenäs, 2010, p. 500). The four reasons outlined by Bergenäs (2010) are also mentioned by Ali (2018) However, in addition,

Bergenäs (2010) mentions areas of common ground between the two: The US continued sanctioning Iran, therefore the EU grew to be one of Iran's best trading partners. Moreover, in the 1990's political ties between Iran and France are evolving. In addition, Iran normalizes relationships with Arab states. This takes Europe's fear for a domino effect of the Islamic Revolution away (Bergenäs, 2010, p. 501)

In the early 2000's, the focus on Human rights and economic interest started to shift towards the issue of Iran's uranium enrichment activities. Moreover, the EU's foreign policy approach is discussed by Hunter (2010) and Osiewicz (2018). They describe a shift from a 'Critical Dialogue' to a 'Comprehensive Dialogue' or 'recognizing the concerns of the US but have a more open attitude towards Iran on issues of concern to the EU' to a 'more positive attitude towards Iran' (Hunter, 2010, p. 84; Osiewicz, 2018, p. 154). In addition, Ali (2018), Santini et al. (2009) and Einhorn (2004) discuss the effectiveness of the EU's foreign policy. They consider the idea that the EU can only be effective in their foreign policy, if other important international players agree with their approach and are willing to cooperate (Ali, 2018, p.26; Santini et al., 2009, p.64; Einhorn, 2004, P. 21).

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the prominence of Iran's nuclear activities increased significantly. The concerns of the international community resulted in sanctioning Iran under amongst others, resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747, 1803, 1929 of the United Nations Security council, starting in 2006. Much literature focusses on these sanctions (Bergenäs, 2010; Osiewicz, 2018; Posch, 2016; Samore, 2015; Sebenius and Singh, 2012).

Moreover, three European countries, France, Germany, and the UK (EU3) became so concerned, that they initiated a diplomatic group. Later the EU3 were joined by China, Russia and the US, becoming the EU3+3 (Osiewicz, 2018, p.155; Sebenius and Singh, 2012, P.83). In this time period, Ali (2018) encounters a shift in EU-US Relations, namely, that the two are now cooperating where they were not in the past (Ali, 2018, p. 110)

A positive turning point in relation between Iran and the international community has been outlined by the literature examined. The situation changed when in 2013 Hassan Rouhani was elected president of Iran (Martellini & Zucchetti, 2016, p. 477; Ali, 2018, P. 87; Osiewicz, 2018, p.153). However, the distrust between Iran and the International community continued and is argued to be one of the reasons for why Iran would potentially acquire a nuclear weapon.



## 2.2 Iran's Nuclear aspirations

Chubin and Litwak (2003) discuss various reasons why Iran could feel the need to obtain a nuclear weapon. First of all, the gap in the Iranian society is assessed, with on the one hand the conservative elite and on the other hand the modern society. According to Chubin and Litwak (2003), this gap results in two different approaches for assessing Iran's defence and security needs, and the extent to which the country should seek cooperation on security measures with its neighbours and the international community. When more pressure is forced on Iran because of its nuclear activities, the disparity between the approach of the conservatives and modern society will become more evident (Chubin and Litwak, 2003, p.102). However, according to Gheissari and Nasr (2005), the issue of nuclear proliferation is one of the matters that enjoys both popular support and support from the conservative elite. Therefore, pursuing a nuclear programme is seen as extremely important in order to persist current policies (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 187).

According to Gheissari and Nasr (2005), Iran wants to acquire a nuclear weapon for multiple reasons. Firstly, they mention the issue of sovereignty. Moreover, Gheissari and Nasr (2005) discuss that Iran wants to possess a nuclear weapon for the reason that the international community is pressuring Iran for their nuclear activities. Iran feels that there is no foreign power that should and can deny them the access to nuclear technology. In addition, they add that feelings of superiority and Iranian nationalism play an important role in the search for nuclear weapons. They argue that the acquisition of nuclear weapons is seen as a matter of international prestige and confirms Iran's superior status amongst regional actors (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 187). This idea is in accordance with Clarke (2013) who analyses Iran's powerful belief in the superiority of the Persian civilization (Clarke, 2013, p.493). Chubin and Litwak (2003) however, disagree with Gheissari and Nasr (2005) and Clarke (2003) on a superior feeling as a motive. They do agree with the idea of nationalism (Chubin and Litwak, 2003, p. 102). In addition, Clarke (2013) argues that nuclear weapons serve as a symbol for the states technological progress and modernity (Clarke, 2013, p. 497). The sanctions put in place by the international community strengthen these feelings even more. Despite the sanctions and pressure Iran is experiencing, they still practice their nuclear technology (Clarke, 2013, p. 495). However, even though these feelings add to the idea that Iran needs a nuclear weapon, according to Gheissari and Nasr (2005), Chubin and Litwak (2003) and Waltz (2012), security is the main motive for pursuing the creation of nuclear weapons (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 187; Chubin and Litwak, 2003, p. 101; Waltz, 2012, "Power Begs to be Balanced" para.10). Gheissari and Nasr (2005) blame this on the Iraq-Iran war, in

which Iran was hit by several missile attacks. This has led to the believe that Iran should have sufficient deterrence against outside forces in order to protect themselves (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 187).

Clarke (2013), promotes the idea that Iran's nuclear motives are the result of a combination of factors including security and normative/status-derived nuclear motivations. In accordance with Gheissari and Nasr (2005), the long-established sense of vulnerability to regional and international actors presents an important motive to pursue the creation of a nuclear weapon. Iran's Geopolitical location adds to the feeling of vulnerability (Clarke, 2013, p. 495., Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p.188). Clarke (2013) discusses that historically, the western superpowers have always sided against Iran with the example of western support for Iraq during the Iraq-Iran war. In addition, Iran is a country of Shi'ism surrounded by countries of Sunni Islam. According to Clarke (2013) this gives Iran a feeling of isolation and therefore self-reliance and independence (Clarke, 2013, p. 495). Moreover, the presence of the US in the region and their antagonistic relationship with Iran since the Islamic revolution in 1979, contributes to Iran's security policy (Clarke, 2013, p.496). According to Waltz (2012), the sanctions put in place by the international community, make Iran feel more vulnerable, which gives Iran feeling that they need a nuclear weapon as the ultimate form of protection (Waltz, 2012, "Power Begs to be Balanced" para.3). In addition, Clarke (2013) blames the abiding sense of national humiliation at the hands of foreign powers for Iran's quest for nuclear weapons (Clarke, 2013, p. 493).

Moreover, as reported by Gheissari and Nasr (2005) there is a strategic appeal of pursuing the acquisition of nuclear weapons for the Iranian government. Because of US talks of regime change in Iran, the current regime feels that a nuclear weapon serves as a "viable strategy for survival" (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p.188).

Furthermore, Chubin and Litwak (2003) link Iran's aspirations for a nuclear weapon with their resistance against Israel and their support for Palestine. Israel is another regional actor in possession of WMD, acting with the support of the US. The threat posed by Israel is used by the Iranians to justify their need for a nuclear programme (Chubin and Litwak, 2003, p.103). Waltz (2012) describes this same matter. According to him, power needs to be balanced, but at the moment Israel enjoys a regional nuclear monopoly that causes instability in the Middle East. The time it has taken for a creator of balance to emerge has been longer than expected but could restore stability. Waltz (2012) views the potential existence of an Iran with a nuclear weapon as the final stage in the Middle Eastern nuclear crisis that

will only end when a balance of military power is reached (Waltz, 2012, "Power Begs to be Balanced" para. 8).

### **2.3 Iran's nuclear weapon capabilities**

Strauss (2006) outlines that the details of Iran's nuclear programme are unknown and that the international community is not even sure Iran is in fact pursuing a nuclear weapon (Strauss, 2006, p.4). However, according to Bruno (2016), Iran has built a broad network of uranium mines, enrichment facilities, conversion sites, and research reactors. Among these sites, various are considered to be major nuclear sites that produce material used in the Natanz enrichment facility. At this facility, first-generation centrifuges produce low enriched uranium at a rapid pace (Bruno, 2016, p. 4). Albright, Brannan and Shire (2009), outline that Iran is producing 2,77 kg of low enriched uranium daily in 2009 (Albright et al., 2009, p.1). Fitzpatrick's study (As cited in Bruno, 2016) shows that If Iran would stockpile the low enriched uranium, they would be able to produce 25 kg of high enriched uranium. Bruno (2016) remarks that this uranium provides the main ingredient for power production and weapon capability (Bruno, 2016, p.4). Samore (2015) mentions that in this scenario, Iran would be able to create a bomb within a few months only (Samore, 2015, p.3). This is in accordance with Kerr (2009) who outlines that Iran would have been technically able to produce enough high enriched uranium somewhere between 2010 and 2015. From then onwards, Iran's break out time has been estimated to be somewhere between 2 to 3 months (Ker, 2009, p.14).

### **2.4 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**

Globally several measures have been taken to control and oversee nuclear activities. The most prominent measure that has been taken, is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) initiated in 1968. Moffatt (2019) outlines that the NPT consists of three pillars: Non-Proliferation, peaceful use, and disarmament (Moffatt, 2019, p.13). The first pillar of non-Proliferation entails the obligation of the nuclear weapon states not to acquire or control nuclear weapons. According to Moffatt (2019) the prevention of acquiring nuclear weapons is the main objective of the treaty (Moffatt, 2019, p. 13). However, Moffatt (2019) outlines the right of all parties to pursue various activities associated with the peaceful purpose of nuclear energy, encompassing the second pillar (Moffatt, 2019, p.15). Parties are, however, prohibited to provide certain materials unless it will be subject to safeguards (Moffatt, 2019, p. 16). Goldblat (1992) describes the nuclear safeguards of the NPT that control compliance of the parties to the agreement by concluding safeguards with the IAEA (Goldblat, 1992, p. 5). These safeguards provide timely detection of significant quantities of nuclear material (Goldblat, 1992, p.6).

Furthermore, the NPT is subject to review conferences every five years. The treaty has been reviewed in much literature mainly on the successes and failures of these review conferences (Einhorn, 2016; Dunn, 2009; Dhanapala and Duarte, 2015).

Einhorn (2016) criticizes the NPT by the review conferences outlined in Art. 8 (3) NPT. According to Einhorn, this article provides the only guidance in the treaty. It does however, not give any direction on how the past years should be reviewed, or what type of written outcome the members should produce (Einhorn, 2016, p.15). Dunn (2009) discusses that the NPT has become an essential and irreplaceable tool for the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. However, Dunn (2009) in agreement with Dhanapala and Duarte (2015) and Einhorn (2016) recognize that the NPT fails to draft successful final documents after the review conferences (Dunn, 2009, p.167; Dhanapala and Duarte, 2015, p.8; Einhorn, 2016, p.15). Einhorn (2016) incriminates the members of the NPT. He remarks that consensus has been possible to achieve in at least five out of nine review conferences, and that at first, the members were all highly interested in promoting the treaty's main goals. Yet, all parties prioritized different needs for meeting the main goals. The highly different views of the parties involved have made it impossible to set comprehensive goals (Einhorn, 2016, p.15). Dunn (2009) in accordance with Ruzicka and Wheeler (2010), trace the failure back to the several countries seeking for nuclear weapons under the cover of the peaceful use of nuclear energy (Dunn, 2009, p. 167; Ruzicka and Wheeler, 2010, p.1). Dhanapala and Duarte (2015) argue that the countries seeking for nuclear weapons under the cover of peaceful activities, is the outcome of the non-nuclear weapon states in the NPT failing to compose an effective and legally binding deal in which the possessors of nuclear weapons are committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Furthermore, Dunn (2009) adds that the goals fall short of what was expected by the NPT (Dunn, 2009, p.167).

Dhanapala and Duarte (2015) identify the NPT as of 'discriminatory character'. The treaty is built on the vision of the political situation and power relationships of the 1960s and is therefore, not adequate for the present situation. There seems to be a big gap between the promises made and the enforcement of effective measures (Dhanapala and Duarte, 2015, p. 10). Ruzicka and Wheeler (2010), however recognize that trust is the key factor in the creation and existence of the NPT. They believe that the members of the NPT must trust each other to a certain degree, otherwise the members would not have continued the treaty (Ruzicka and Wheeler, 2010, p. 84).

## 2.5 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – Implementation

Entessar and Afrasiabi (2016) describe that after the 2015 NPT review conference turned out to be a disappointment, due to the fact that nuclear and non-nuclear states were again unable to set their differences aside and reach a final agreement on the abolition of nuclear weapons, the international community was pessimistic on the reaching of an agreement with Iran. However, in November 2013 nuclear negotiations with Iran led to the signing of an interim agreement – the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA). This provided hope in the international community (Entessar and Afrasiabi, 2016, p. 177-178). The signing of the JPOA has led to the signing of a more comprehensive deal two years later – The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Katzman and Kerr (2016) outline that during negotiations leading up to the JPOA, Iran had already stopped expanding its enrichment and heavy water reactor programme. Moreover, under the JPOA, Iran agreed to discontinue any expansion of activities at several facilities and agreed to provide the IAEA with additional information on the nuclear programme (Katzman and Kerr, 2016, p. 6). Katzman and Kerr (2016) describe that the goals of the JCPOA were similar to the JPOA, however, the agreement contains more extensive restrictions to reach these goals. The JCPOA sets restrictions on the scope and level of Iran's enrichment activities, the capacity and location of the facilities, and the size and composition of Iran's enriched uranium stocks for a certain period of time. In return, international sanctions imposed on Iran will be lifted (Katzman and Kerr, 2016, p.8). Albright and Stricker (2010) and Ali (2018) outline the main goals of the policy: To ensure the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and to normalize relations between Iran and the international community (Albright and Stricker, 2010, p.8; Ali, 2018, p.136). Katzman and Kerr (2016) mention that after the reaching of the JPOA, a year was given for the reaching of the JCPOA. However, not enough progress was made to meet the initial deadlines. When on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July the JCPOA was still not finalized, a 60-day review period was triggered (Katzman and Kerr, 2016, p.8). Jan (2016) specifies that during this review period numerous debates arose on whether the deal should be formally implemented. Jan (2016) mentions that especially in the US there was a lot of disagreement between the Republicans, who were against the JCPOA because they believed it would officially recognize Iran's nuclear programme, and the Democrats who argued in favour of the nuclear deal (Jan, 2016, p.18). Jan (2016) further outlines that similar debates in the Iranian government arose, where the strongest resistance was presented by the idea that the deal would bring the Iranian sovereignty at risk. The president, in favour of the deal, however eventually convinced the parliament to vote in favour of the deal (Jan, 2016, p. 19). Nephew (2016) discusses that the deal entered into force all the way, when the IAEA released a report displaying

that Iran had taken the first necessary steps in order to abide by the first JCPOA commitments (Nephew, 2016, p.6).

## 2.6 provisions

Scholars describe that the JCPOA consists of three major components: Physical constraints, monitoring procedures, and sanction relief. Fitzpatrick (2017) and Samore (2015) concentrate on the physical constraints. These set limits on Iran's ability to produce fissile material for a nuclear weapon. Fitzpatrick (2017) outlines that Iran is required to dispose all of its useable enriched uranium and 98% of its enriched uranium stock. In agreement with Fitzpatrick (2017), Samore (2015) mentions that Iran is to reduce and limit stockpiles to 300 Kg for 15 years and dismantle two thirds of its installed centrifuges (Fitzpatrick, 2017, p. 23; Samore, 2015, p. 3). Finally, Fitzpatrick (2017) describes that for 15 years, Iran can only enrich uranium up to a maximum of 3.67% which is needed to fuel power reactors. Enrichment can only continue in first-generation centrifuges, and enrichment-related research and development is limited for eight years, after which expansion will happen gradually on agreed terms (Fitzpatrick, 2017, p. 24). Samore (2015) continues by outlining that under the agreement, it will not be possible to produce large amounts of plutonium at the Arak heavy water reactor, as the reactor will be redesigned and rebuilt based on a design agreed by the international community. The reactor will facilitate research and radioisotope production for medical and industrial purposes, however, no weapon grade plutonium will be generated. For the lifetime of the reactor, all spent fuel will be shipped out of Iran and Iran is not allowed to build other heavy water reactors for at least 15 years (Samore, 2015, p. 3). These provisions block all pathways for Iran to develop a nuclear weapon, and after 15 years, when most measures end, the time Iran would need to create a nuclear weapon would be prolonged to at least a year (Samore, 2015, p. 3).

According to Mousavian and Mousavian (2018) and Fitzpatrick (2017), the JCPOA contains the most intrusive transparency and verification mechanism in the history of the NPT, as well as the maximum level of obligations within the NPT (Mousavian & Mousavian, 2018, p.184; Fitzpatrick, 2017, p.24). Mousavian and Mousavian (2018) refer to the enhanced safeguards provided for in the JCPOA, described by Martellin and Zucchetti (2016) as the Dispute Resolution Mechanism, safeguards and additional transparency measures. The Dispute Resolution Mechanism which is controlled by the ad hoc Joint Commission, comprised of all members to the JCPOA, is set up to solve potential inconsistencies and IAEA concerns about undeclared nuclear materials and activities (Mousavian and Mousavian, 2018, p.170; Martellini and Zucchetti, 2016, p.478). Martellini and Zucchetti (2016) outline that in case of

non-compliance, and no fitting solution, the sanctions imposed on Iran before the signing of the JCPOA could be reinforced (Martellini and Zucchetti, 2016, p. 478). Albright and Stricker (2015) describe an additional mechanism. They label it as one of the most complex monitoring provisions of the JCPOA - the Procurement Channel. They describe it as a new international entity and a set of procedures for states to make proliferation-sensitive sales. According to Albright and Stricker (2015), the channel will help detect any efforts to violate the JCPOA. The Procurement Working Group, overseen by the JCPOA's Joint Commission, is to make decisions regarding sales of nuclear related goods (Albright and Stricker, 2015, p. 1-6). In addition, Martellini and Zucchetti (2016) describe measures of enhanced access to nuclear sites and continuous surveillance of centrifuge manufacturing plants (Martellini and Zucchetti, 2016, p.479). Fitzpatrick (2017) mentions that under the JCPOA, Iran would temporarily apply the IAEA Additional protocol, the ratification will however, depend on the Iranian Parliament (Fitzpatrick, 2017, p.24). Mousavian and Mousavian (2018) outline that adopting the Additional Protocol allows for the highest level of transparency (Mousavian and Mousavian, 2018, p. 171). Moreover, Martellini and Zucchetti (2016), describe that the Roadmap for Clarification of Past and Present Outstanding Issues agreed with the IAEA must be fully implemented. This Roadmap highlights issues of concern related to Iran's nuclear programme (Martellini and Zucchetti, 2016, p. 482). Finally, Fitzpatrick (2017) mentions that Iran will allow the IAEA to observe implementation of the voluntary measures and implement transparency measures. This encompasses a long-term IAEA presence in Iran, a 25-yearlong IAEA monitoring of uranium ore concentrate, a 20-year inspection of centrifuge rotors and bellows, use of IAEA approved modern technologies, and a 15-year mechanism to ensure fast IAEA access in case of concerns (Fitzpatrick, 2017, p. 24).

As described by Moarefy (2016), Iran has suffered from imposed sanctions by the UNSC, the US, and EU (Moarefy, 2016, p. 13). However, mentioned by Fitzpatrick (2017), is that if the IAEA had ascertained that Iran had met the steps required to reduce its stockpile and remodel the Arak reactor, sanctions would be relieved (Fitzpatrick, 2017, p.25). Moarefy, (2016) outlines that relieving sanctions will include all UNSC sanctions and multilateral and national sanctions related to Iran's nuclear programme. Moarefy (2016) emphasizes that all parties to the JCPOA were quick in unwinding the sanctions except for the US that took a limited approach (Moarefy, 2016, p. 13). Fitzpatrick (2017) points out that the UNSC will replace its seven resolutions imposing sanctions, with a new resolution that allows for sanction relief. However, sanctions could be restored by a majority vote in the council, without the right of Veto being able to impose (Fitzpatrick, 2017, p. 25). Moreover, Moarefy (2016) mentions that the US will only lift secondary sanctions. This results in the general trade and investment embargo imposed by the US to

continue. This embargo prohibits US persons from conducting trade with Iranian entities (Moarefy, 2016, p. 14).

## 2.7 Concerns

Even though the components of the deal seemed satisfactory, concerns were raised. Rezaei (2018) specifies three specific concerns. The first concern outlined is known as the “sneak out scenario” and entails that while Iran agreed to the terms of the JCPOA, they will secretly pursue nuclear activities in order to produce nuclear weapons (Rezaei, 2018, p.169). This concern is also raised by Rafique and Erum (2016), who outline that Iran has always stated that their nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes. However, according to Rafique and Erum (2016) this cannot be guaranteed (Rafique and Erum, 2016, p.156). A closely linked concern mentioned by Rezaei (2018), is that many believe that the JCPOA would not pose a long-term solution, and that after a view years Iran would pursue its nuclear activities (Rezaei, 2018, p. 171). Another concern raised by Rafique and Erum (2016) is in accordance with the second concern raised by Rezaei (2018). This second concern stems from the international relations theory of proliferation and argues that neighbouring states will start developing a nuclear arsenal in response to the JCPOA. The JCPOA could be the driving force behind nuclear ambitions of regional states and eventually lead to a nuclear arms race (Rafique and Erum, 2016, p. 156). Rezaei (2018) outlines that the states in concern are Israel, the only country in the region with a nuclear weapon and the main opposition to Iran’s nuclear programme, and Saudi Arabia and Egypt, who have had a long history of animosity with Iran (Rezaei, 2018, p.178 – 187). Rezaei’s (2018) final concern, in accordance with Huang (2016), is the idea that with the money Iran would acquire due to sanction relief, they will expand its regional ambitions through revolutionary exports involving direct and proxy involvement in conflicts. This would include support for terror groups, the Syrian regime of President Assad and actors like Hezbollah. Huang (2016) describes the fear that this could further destabilize the region and end up in a conflict (Huang, 2016, p. 13). However, Rezaei (2018) does outline that the exact amount of money Iran would receive is not known, and therefore only assumptions can be made (Rezaei, 2018, p.188). Rezaei (2018) concludes by specifying that out of the three concerns, the third seems most likely to happen (Rezaei, 2018, p. 193).



### 3 Methodology

This thesis takes form of a descriptive policy analysis. Patton, Sawick, and Clark (2016) identify that a policy analysis is both a process and a product. They describe the concept of policy analysis as “The process through which we identify and evaluate alternative policies or programs that are intended to lessen or resolve social, economic or physical problems” (Patton et al, 2016, p. 21). The product is according to them, the outcome of the analytical process. Together, the process and product are a form of persuasion through which the analyst seeks to inform others about the insight gained during examination of the policy problem (Patton et al, 2016, p. 21).

According to Patton et al. (2016), the descriptive policy analysis is either the historical analysis of past policies or the evaluation of a new policy as it is implemented. The first referring to a retrospective policy analysis based on the question *what happened?* And the latter, an evaluative policy analysis answering the question *were the purposes of the policy met?*

For this thesis, the evaluative policy analysis has been chosen. For this purpose, the thesis aims to answer the question: Were the objectives of the JCPOA met? As described by Patton et al. (2016), in the descriptive policy analysis the implemented policy must be monitored and evaluated in order to decide whether to continue or modify the policy. This information will be useful for the purpose of potentially adopting similar policies in the future when a similar problem occurs (Patton et al, 2016, p. 23).

Desk research will be the main method used in order to acquire information. Moreover, this thesis will rely on both primary and secondary data. Primary sources in the form of governmental publications such as binding and non-binding legal acts in form of regulations, directives and international agreements. In addition, policy paper and progress reports will be consulted supplementing information on websites of governments and international organizations. Furthermore, statements from the EU High Representative and Foreign Affairs Ministers from several states will be reviewed. Additional information will be retrieved from international organizations such as the IAEA and the UNSC. Secondary sources will consist of academic books, journals and papers as well as international newspaper articles, which will be essential to understand the various positions of the stakeholders.

The analytical process will be divided into four steps abiding by the European Training Foundation framework. The sections in this paper will be arranged accordingly. The first step outlined by the European Training Foundation is framing and understanding the problem (European Training

Foundation, 2018, p. 11). Conforming to Patton et al. (2016), a good policy analysis addresses an important problem in a logical, valid, and replicable manner (Patton et al, 2016, p.24). The introduction- and literature review chapter in addition to the first sub-question, describing why there was a need for a new policy, will serve to outline the problem.

The second- and third step in the European Training Foundation framework are the collecting and describing of evidence and interpreting and analysing the evidence (European Training Foundation, 2018, p. 14-16). These steps will comprise most of the body of this thesis. At this stage, a stakeholder analysis is of importance. It will identify the key stakeholder's position in the agreement. In addition, this part of the study will identify the goals of the policy and obstacles encountered. The following criteria for evaluation will be used: *Effectiveness*; have the goals been achieved, *Responsiveness*; do the policy outcomes satisfy the interests of the stakeholders, *Equity*; were benefits distributed fairly amongst the stakeholders, and *Adequacy*; did achieving the goal of the policy solve the problem.

The final step will be the conclusion and the formulation of recommendations (European Training Foundation, 2018, p. 19). It will provide decision makers with information on whether the agreements solved the problem or whether the policy needs modifications.

While performing desk research, constraints were encountered. The most prominent constraint was finding quality information on Iran and its position from impartial sources without a prejudice or bias. Moreover, existing literature often describes the position of dominant stakeholders such as the US and the EU, however little is written on the position of China and Russia. Therefore, describing the position of these negotiators required thorough research for facilitating a valuable conclusion on the interests.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 In search of a solution

Over the years, many efforts have been made by the international community to convince Iran of ending its nuclear programme and negotiate an agreement (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 146). However, the international community's uncertainty and fear of a nuclear Iran, and Iran's persistence have driven most negotiations to end unresolved. This has led to several sanctions put in place by the international community. However, the sanctions did not facilitate an end to the fear, and a more effective solution was desired.

Iran's nuclear programme dates back to the 1950s, when under the leadership of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran began research on the use of nuclear energy. In 1957 an agreement was signed between Iran and the US, in which the US would provide Iran with technical and economic assistance for research on nuclear energy and development projects for purchasing nuclear power plants (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 142). 11 years later, Iran signed the NPT (Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 122). When oil prices soared in the 1970s, the Iranian government decided to invest even more in nuclear energy development. Whilst continuing the Atoms for Peace agreement with the US, the Iranian government made deals with Germany and France on the distribution of nuclear equipment (Bruno, 2010, p. 2). The Shah had made much efforts to develop a nuclear programme, however, when in 1979 the Islamic Revolution took place, efforts were halted (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 143). By this time, one nuclear reactor, Bushehr one, was 90 percent completed, while Bushehr two was 50 percent completed. Yet, the regime discontinued the nuclear programme (Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 123). Moreover, the revolution led to a change in the relationship between Iran and the US and their allies (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 143).

When between 1980-1988 the Iraq-Iran war took place, the Iranian regime had a change of heart. After the war, Iran's need for electricity bolstered significantly, which led the regime to the decision of continuing the nuclear energy projects. International technical assistance was much desired and sought for in various countries. However, the US's dual containment policy blocked these attempts (Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 123). Though, due to assistance from Russia, Iran was able to rebuild and continue its nuclear activities. In 1995, an agreement between the two was signed over the finishing of the Bushehr reactors, technical assistance, and the training of Iranian nuclear scientists (Bruno, 2010, p. 4). However, parallel to the nuclear activities, Iran advanced their missile delivery capabilities. This caused the international community to question the peaceful nature of the nuclear programme and consider the weaponization of the nuclear activities (Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 123). This suspicion became

heightened when in 2002 an Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance, accused Iran of hiding an uranium-enrichment facility at Natanz and a heavy-water plant at Arak. In response, the Iranian Vice-President and President of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran stated that Iran is against the possession of WMD and the Iranian nuclear programme is still for peaceful purposes only. Moreover, it was announced that Iran would allow IAEA inspections (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 144., Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 123). In 2003, the Director General of the IAEA visited the sites and concluded that: "Iran has failed to meet its obligations under its Safeguards Agreement with respect to the reporting of nuclear material, the subsequent processing and use of that material and the declaration of facilities where the material was stored and processed" ("Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran", 2003, P.7). Even though Iran allowed stricter IAEA inspections and the IAEA concluded by stating that there was no evidence of a military nuclear programme, the international community remained sceptical of the idea that Iran's nuclear programme was for energy production rather than military purposes (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 144., Katzman, 2014, p.23., Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, P.123). Especially the US was convinced of a military nuclear programme based on four arguments outlined by Özcan and Özdamar (2009). Firstly, Iran is in possession of great amounts of fossil-fuel reserves while they do not need nuclear energy in the short and medium long term. Secondly, it is questioned why Iran would keep the nuclear programme a secret if it was for peaceful purposes only. Additionally, the parallel missile developments and studies on weaponization caused suspicion. Lastly, domestic enrichment from an economic perspective was not perceived as logical (Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 124). Due to these suspicions and distrust, France, Germany and Britain visited Iran in 2003 in order to mediate between Iran, the US and the rest of the international community. After this visit, Iran announced that it would fully collaborate with the IAEA, suspend uranium enrichment activities, and sign the Additional protocol to the NPT. The EU3 offered economic grants, if the conditions were met - named the Paris Agreement (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 144., Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 124). However, when in 2005 a new president was elected in Iran, the proposal was rejected, and nuclear activities continued. The IAEA declared that Iran was acting in violation of the NPT. When a year later, Iran broke IAEA seals at the Natanz facility, the matter was referred to the UNSC (Özcan and Özdamar, 2009, p. 124). The UNSC gave Iran an ultimatum of 30 days to stop the uranium enrichment activities, yet, Iran continued. Thus, by December 2006, Resolution 1737 of the UNSC was adopted. The first UNSC Resolution to impose sanctions on Iran for continuing uranium enrichment activities, in a series of resolutions to be followed. The EU and US imposed additional sanctions (Bruno, 2010, p.7). However, the unilateral sanctions to compel Iran to end nuclear enrichment have not been enough to change Iran's behaviour (Aghazadeh, 2013, p. 145). Thus, when

President Rouhani expressed desires for diplomatic talk on the issue of nuclear weapons, the international community responded immediately.

## 4.2 Negotiating Parties

After complex negotiations and various provisional agreements, the JCPOA was signed in July 2015 due to the efforts of China, the EU/EU3, Russia, the US, and Iran (Westra, 2017, “introduction”, para.4). Even though all had different interests, they were able to reach a compromise. This chapter outlines the interests of the five negotiators.

### 4.2.1 China

Historically, the Chinese attitude towards nuclear weapons has been led by the idea that the development of such weapons is a state’s right and a decision to be made at the sovereign state level. Because of this, China was willing to believe that Iran’s nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes. However, today, China seems more aware of the significant impact of proliferation on international stability and security (Wuthnow 2011, P. 174). As a permanent member to the UNSC, China therefore allowed for sanctions that were not directly aimed to target the Iranian people or harm Chinese interests in the country (Johanson, 2019, p.162).

Even though China and Iran have two different and somewhat competing political systems, their relationship has been beneficial to both. For China, Iran has been an important supplier of oil which allows the Republic to continue economic growth (Park and Glenn, 2010, p.2). In addition, due to US pressure, other states started reducing trade and investments in Iran, this allowed China to become Iran’s largest trading partner by 2007 (Johanson, 2019, p. 161). For Iran, China became a significant source for economic development and modernization due to their technological advances (Hong, 2014, p.412). Moreover, international sanctions gave Iran limited access to external finance and specialists needed to develop its natural gas and oil reserves. Relations with China were therefore vital for Iran (Johanson, 2019, p. 161). Sino-Iranian relations became marked by technical cooperation and exchanges (Currier and Dorraj, 2010, p.58)

Due to their mutual interest and cooperation, China developed an understanding of Iran’s nuclear programme and supported the idea of a diplomatic solution (Currier and Dorraj, 2010, p. 61). This mainly because of their own interests; if something were to cause a power shift or provoke regional instability, China would likely suffer from higher oil prices and supply issues (Johanson, 2019, p. 161).

Even though China might not have played a leading role in the negotiations of the JCPOA, their role as a stakeholder has been important to reach an agreement. China's good relationship with Iran has been convenient in influencing Iran's standpoint on potential economic and political benefits in case of an agreement. In addition, China has fulfilled a mediating role and ensured Iran's right to the peaceful enrichment of uranium (Garver, 2016, p.1).

#### 4.2.2 The European Union

For the EU, Iran was allowed to pursue the peaceful use of nuclear energy under the NPT. As long as no evidence was presented of Iran building a nuclear weapon, there was no reason for the EU to back US accusations (Ali, 2018, p. 53). But, when in 2002 Iran's undeclared nuclear facilities were detected, the EU shifted all its attention to Iran's controversial nuclear programme. Due to its ties with both the US and Iran, the EU felt the pressure to mediate between the two to prevent a Middle Eastern war (Sauer, 2008, p. 280). Over the years, the EU continued negotiations with the aim of cooperation between Iran and the international community (Ali, 2018, p. 102-103; Posch, 2016, p. 4). However, due to multiple rejections by Iran, the EU eventually imposed self-determined economic and financial sanctions on Iran, which were only to be lifted after the signing of the JCPOA (European Council, 2019, "EU Sanctions", para. 1-4).

The EU's main interest in the negotiations leading up to the JCPOA was to find a comprehensive long-term solution that would prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, while it guaranteed the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme (Ali, 2017, p.158). In the interests of the EU, such a solution would be achieved by means of diplomacy (EEAS, 2015).

The EU played a crucial role in the negotiations of the deal. Britain, France and Germany took the diplomatic lead on nuclear negotiations with Iran (Osiewicz, 2018, p.155). It was due to these efforts that the US was brought back to the negotiation table. Something the US mentioned never to do since the Hostage Crisis. This can be regarded as one of the EU's main achievements in the nuclear crisis (Posch, 2016, p. 1).

Another important factor in which the EU took the lead, was to restart diplomacy after Hassan Rouhani was elected president in 2013. It tried to fulfil the demands of the US, China and Russia (Sauer, 2008, p. 280). Due to those efforts, the interim agreement or Joint Plan of Action was able to be signed that same year. In 2014, The EU represented by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security

Policy, Federica Mogherini, continued negotiations. A year later, the JCPOA was announced (Posch, 2016, p. 5).

#### 4.2.3 Russia

Ever since Iran decided to resume its nuclear activities in the 1980s, Russia has been the main supplier for nuclear technology and fuel (Aras and Ozbay, 2006, p. 133). In addition to the development of Iran's nuclear industry, Russia supported its regional activities (Esfandairy and Tabatabai, 2018, p.7). After Iran was being isolated by the international community, Russia took advantage of this political and economic isolation. By the time UNSC sanctions were imposed, Russia, along with China, came to build successful ties in various industries, such as infrastructure and technology. (Larkins, 2017, p. 39). Russia provided political support, defence assistance and, economic ties. Iran gained from this by having allies and thus having some kind of barrier against western efforts of isolating the state. For Russia, this generated benefits in the form of access to an important market and ties to a critical regional power in access of important resources (Esfandairy and Tabatabai, 2018, p.3).

Yet, within Russia there have been debates on the potential consequences of a nuclear deal. Iran is seen as a territory of potential growth for Russian companies in the energy sector. If an agreement would be reached, Iran would no longer be subject to sanctions and thus no longer be economically isolated (Larkins, 2017, p. 40). This would decrease the chance of Russian companies in the region. In addition, Russia and Iran both pursue oil production activities. Better ties between Iran and Europe could hurt the Russian market (Drummond, 2017, p.13; Larkins, 2017, p.40).

However, Russia's security and geostrategic concerns have led to the signing of the JCPOA. Firstly, the deal is perceived as if it will provide stability. A stabilizing force in the region is at Russia's interest, due to its proximity to Iran and the Middle East (Paulraj, 2016). Moreover, it is important for Russia to develop friendly, diplomatic ties with Iran, as it is an influential power in the MENA region. Finally, Iran's weapon capabilities reach Russia. Limiting a nuclear risk is therefore at Russia's best interests (Drummond, 2017, p. 14). Additionally, both Russia and Iran disregard the current balance in the international system. They both hunt for recognition of their powers in the international community and seek for autonomy (Larkins, 2017, p. 39). By assisting the negotiations towards a successful international agreement, Russia demonstrates that it is capable of an internationally appreciated form of diplomacy, instead of Putin's reputation of a regressive negotiation style. Russia regards this as a step closer towards the status of power (Drummond, 2017, p. 14).

Moreover, it is argued that Russia has played a crucial role in the negotiations due to their relationship with Iran. It is believed that Iran would have been less willing to start negotiations would Russia not have been present (Drummond, 2017, p. 15).

#### 4.2.4 The United States

A year after President Obama was elected, a shift in the attitude of the US towards Iran was encountered. Instead of isolating Iran, President Obama contended that there was a potential of rebuilding US-Iran relations by persuading Iran of limiting its nuclear programme (McCain, 2015, p. 20). It was also acknowledged that Iran had the right to pursue peaceful nuclear activities in compliance with the NPT. This deviated from the USs previous interests of making sure that Iran would end the nuclear programme as a whole (Katzman, 2017, p. 19).

In March 2013, the US started a series of talks with Iran in order to develop better communication. In the eyes of President Obama, this could pave the way for formalized nuclear negotiations (Sterio, 2016, p. 72-73). When in that same year Rouhani was elected president of Iran and expressed a desire to take up negotiations with the west on the nuclear programme, the first formal conversation between Iran and the US since 1979 took place (Katzman, 2017, p. 19). Several factors are debated to have caused a shift in the USs desire to negotiate with Iran.

Firstly, as mentioned above, the election of President Obama has resulted in major changes in the US approach towards Iran. Obama's foreign policy approach, in which he directly talked to Iran and recognized their rights, has been crucial in changing the relationship and signing the JCPOA (Katzman, 2017, p. 19). By signing the JCPOA, President Obama showed an awareness of the need for a compromise (McCain, 2015, p. 20).

Secondly, the US realized that the sanctions imposed on Iran in order to persuade them to stop their nuclear enrichment activities, had failed to meet its purposes. Despite the sanctions, Iran continued nuclear activities. Without any form of agreement, Iran would unrestrictedly pursue its programme which could result in military actions taken by the US or other regional states and eventually a Middle Eastern war (Hurst, 2015, p.2). President Obama, in a speech given at the American University in 2015, stresses the importance of diplomacy over military action and thus stresses the benefits of an agreement ("Full text: Obama gives a speech about the Iran nuclear deal", 2015).



Finally, the USs policy towards Iran was receiving little support from the international community. The Obama administration recognized that a multilateral approach would be more effective. Therefore, the US had to alter their policies in order to comply with that of the majority of the international community (Hurst, 2015, p. 2).

Thus, the US interests have shifted from no diplomacy and isolating Iran, to negotiating an agreement that would prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear bomb and prevent military action in the Middle East. This would accommodate the USs primary interests of security within the US and Iran not being able to obtain a nuclear weapon ("Full text: Obama gives a speech about the Iran nuclear deal", 2015). While historically the US interest was to have an Iran without any form of nuclear activities including peaceful activities, it recognized the need for a compromise on agreeing to an Iran with a peaceful nuclear programme as it was believed to be the best possible agreement (Drummond, 2017, p.27).

#### 4.2.5 Iran

*In order to get an understanding of the interests of Iran on the nuclear issue and the signing of the JCPOA, an understanding of the political spectrum of Iran is required. Therefore, this section will be differently structured than that of the other negotiating parties. It will serve to outline Iran's interests and driving factors to sign the JCPOA by looking at the perspectives of the different factions within the Iranian political spectrum.*

The post-revolutionary Iranian political system is characterized by factionalism, with the Moderates and Principalists as the two main factions. Each have two sub-factions: The Moderates can be divided into Reformists and Pragmatists and the Principalists include the Conservatives and Neo-conservatives (Moks, 2017, p.21). Each group strives to promote its own interpretation of policies (Moslem, 2002, p. 3). As the Pragmatists and Conservatives are the most influential amongst the factions, they will be further analysed.

President Rouhani and his cabinet are the head of the Pragmatists group and control the presidential office and the foreign ministry led by Mohammed Zarif. Their main influence is in the Supreme National Security Council however, half of this council is composed of Conservatives who were directly appointed by the Supreme leader of Iran (Moks, 2017, p.21). In addition, the Conservatives control the Parliament and various informal bodies, which makes them the most influential faction. Their support is needed for all major decisions, including the decisions on Iran's nuclear programme (Etheshami, 2002, p. 294).

However, in regard to foreign policy and nuclear negotiations, the Conservatives oppose any diplomacy with the west. Hence, in order to sign the JCPOA, a shift in the perspective of the Conservatives was needed (Moks, 2017, p. 22).

#### **4.2.5.1 Conservatives**

The Conservatives perceive the nuclear programme as a symbol of sovereignty and pride since the Islamic Revolution (Moks, 2017, p. 23). This perception was established due to two main events: The rule of the Shah before the revolution, and the Iraq-Iran war. Due to a coup that was set up by the US and UK in 1953 in Iran, the political powers of the Shah enhanced. The Shah was therefore seen as a means of western domination of Iranian politics. Moreover, his leadership was characterized by suppression of political dissidence. The period between 1953 until the revolution is marked as a period of foreign domination in which a sense of victimhood was created amongst the Iranians (Stanley, 2006, p. 18). This sense of victimhood was used to establish a new identity after the revolution. The new established identity can be defined by resistance to foreign domination and mistrust of the international community (Moks, 2017, p. 23). When in 1980 Iran was invaded by Iraq, the feeling of victimhood increased, along the idea that the international community was not to be trusted and was trying to bring down the Islamic regime. The Conservatives translated these feelings in the idea that they could only rely on themselves for survival (Rezaei, 2017, p. 617).

Hence, when after the revolution the US tried to force Iran to stop their nuclear programme, it was perceived as if the US was trying to dominate Iran. Giving in to the demands of the west to stop enhancing their nuclear programme would undermine Iran's independence. Negotiations with the west would lead to vulnerability and weakness of the regime (Moks, 2017, p. 24). Furthermore, the Conservatives believed it was their right to continue peaceful nuclear activities as a member of the NPT. Additionally, the nuclear programme created a sense of pride and technological progress that the west would try to undermine (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 188). In order to uphold the values of the identity of the revolution, the Conservatives favoured Iran's isolated position in the world (Moks, 2017, p. 25).

Even though the Conservatives acknowledge that Iran's place is insecure, they do not believe a nuclear weapon would solve this. On the contrary, the Conservatives stress the idea that the possession of a nuclear weapon could provoke a military reaction from the US and its allies. However, because of Iran's relatively weak conventional forces, the Conservatives wanted to keep the nuclear option by having all

components of a nuclear bomb readily available. If Iran would be subject to an attack or invasion, the components could quickly be built into a nuclear bomb (Moks, 2017, p. 27).

The Conservatives therefore, initially preferred not to sign the JCPOA. Because of Iran's weak deterrence and a strong security threat, a nuclear bomb should remain an option in the case it would be needed (Moks, 2017, p. 28). The conservatives enjoyed support from the population. However, when sanctions were imposed, and the regime could no longer ensure economic prosperity, employment, and an adequate standard of living, they realized that the sanctions had to be lifted. Especially since they started to lose their legitimacy amongst the population. On the verge of economic collapse, the Conservatives considered whether the price of having a nuclear programme was higher than the benefits it provided (Razaei, 2017, p.623). The nuclear programme that previously served as a symbol for pride and independence, now became the source of economic hardship. Thus, the Conservative had to re-evaluate their policies. When the opposition grew stronger and the economy declined, the Conservatives decided to back negotiations (Moks, 2017, p.29).

#### **4.2.5.2 Pragmatists**

The Pragmatists had a difference stance from the Conservatives on the isolation of the state. They argued that isolation was leading to public discontent, especially amongst the younger generations of Iranians (Moks, 2017, p. 25). If the regime would uphold its revolutionary ideology and isolationism, it would result in hostility towards the regime. According to the Pragmatists, the discontent of the citizens could end if Iran would integrate with the international community. This would also boost economic growth. Putting an end to the nuclear debate and the multilateral economic sanctions became an important goal for the Pragmatists (Ehteshami, 2002, p. 302).

However, due to Iran's history of foreign intervention, the Pragmatists also recognize a feeling of insecurity. As well as the Conservatives, the Pragmatists believe in the necessity of a deterrent against outside forces (Razaei, 2017, p.623). Nonetheless, the Pragmatists in accordance with the Conservatives do not believe that a nuclear bomb would facilitate security. Instead, they stress the importance of having closer relations with the international community. This would decrease military threats. However, a civilian nuclear program as a signatory of the NPT, is Iran's right (Moks, 2017, p. 27). Yet, when economic sanctions were imposed and threatened the regime to collapse, the Pragmatists re-evaluated their idea of unrestricted uranium enrichment. As the Conservatives, the Pragmatists believed that the cost for an unrestricted nuclear programme and not signing the JCPOA were higher

than the benefits it would provide. Therefore, they ended up supporting the negotiations for a JCPOA (Razaei, 2017, p.623).

#### 4.3 Threats and Assets

Asset	Threat
No possibility of creating a nuclear weapon	Time limits
Reliance on light water instead of heavy water	Part of monitoring/transparency power in hands of Iranian authorities
Increased breakout time	
Transparency and monitoring	
Improved international relations	

The provisions of the JCPOA bear advantages as well as detriments. Due to the limitation on all uranium enrichment and related activities, Iran is not able to produce and stockpile high enriched uranium. This causes the nuclear capabilities not being able to expand (Samore, 2015, p.3). Moreover, as a result of the redesign of the Arak heavy water reactor, Iran will not produce plutonium or heavy water for 15 years. Instead, Iran will rely on light water for power generation (Albright, 2010, p.169). A consequence of these limitation is the increase of Iran's breakout time (Rezaei, 2018, p. 169).

Moreover, due to the application of the Additional Protocol, the adoption of the Roadmap for Outstanding issues, IAEA inspections and monitoring and cooperation in accordance with the Procurement Channel, transparency measures improve significantly (Mousavian & Mousavian, 2018, p.184). The Procurement Channel does not only provide for better transparency but also regulates nuclear related imports for a time period of 10-years. This eliminates the possibility of Iran secretly importing components of a WMD (Albright, 2015, p. 6).

Finally, the JCPOA makes sure that Iran is no longer isolated. This allows the international community and Iran to improve their relationship which results in Iran becoming re-engaged in the international arena (Sterio, 2016, p.78)

However, the main threats consist of the time limits imposed on the provisions. The agreement does not ensure that Iran will not expands its nuclear weapon capabilities after 15 years, when most uranium enrichment limitations end. It can be argued that the agreement only postpones the matter (Sterio,

2016, p.77). In the same light, there is the possibility of a relapse of Iran's breakout time after about 10 years. Allowing the breakout time to return to two to three months instead of a year (Samore, 2015, p. 4).

Additionally, Iran must apply the Additional Protocol, however, the timeline for implementation is decided by the Iranian parliament without restrictions. This could result in Iran postponing and thus trying to limit inspections and transparency (Albright, 2015, p.9). Moreover, the inspectors of the IAEA have unlimited access to the declared nuclear sites, however, to gain access to the non-declared nuclear sites, permission must be granted by the Iranian authorities. The granting of access could take time which allows Iran to hide or remove forbidden nuclear activities (Sterio, 2016, p. 79).

#### **4.4 From Foes to Friends**

The signing of the JCPOA establishes a construction for consecutive cooperation between the international community and Iran. However, continuing to manage cooperation is a complicated and fragile undertaking. Yet, most negotiating parties seem to uphold their commitments and potentially even cooperate with Iran beyond the provisions of the JCPOA (Shirvani and Vukovic, 2015, p. 89).

As the agreement has been implemented, Iran has limited its uranium enrichment activities, narrowed the number of centrifuges, transported stockpiles to Russia, and modified the Arak heavy water reactor. Furthermore, Iran implemented the additional protocol and agreed to additional inspections. Moreover, the IAEA has repeatedly confirmed Iran's compliance with the deal (Cronberg and Erästö, 2017, p. 2). However, the agreement presents additional benefits to the goals set.

The economic sector might be the sector benefiting the most from the conclusion of the JCPOA. Sino-Iranian relations before the JCPOA were mainly economic and due to the lifting of international sanctions were expected to benefit significantly from the agreement. In the interests of both, relations remain built upon economic factors after the implementation of the JCPOA. Due to better access to the Iranian market after the JCPOA, Chinese companies benefit significantly (Wuthnow, 2016, p. 1). However, the benefits of this economic relationship are not only in favour of China. Iran gains from this relationship too. Shortly after the implementation of the JCPOA, in January 2016, Iran and China decided to establish a comprehensive partnership including a 25-year roadmap for strategic partnership consisting of a plan for significant increase of trade to \$600 billion over the coming 10 years (Chaziza, 2019, para. 3). This comprehensive partnership highlights a priority relationship between the two countries, placing Iran in the same position as other regional states such as Saudi Arabia, and Australia

(Wuthnow, 2016, p.3). In addition, China remains a prominent investor in the Iranian market. Mainly in the fields of energy and transportation. The Chinese government, for example, has protracted a loan of \$10 billion to domestic companies for building power generators, dams, and other infrastructure in Iran (Vatanka, 2019, para. 8).

The economic relationship between the EU and Iran also increased in the light of sanction relief. In 2017, the EU exported over €10.8 billion worth of goods to Iran which marks an 31,5% increase comparing to the previous year. The EU imported over €10.1 billion worth of goods from Iran which indicates an 83.9% increase compared to the previous year. The EU now belongs to one of Iran's main trading partners (European Commission, 2019, "Trade Picture", para. 1). Moreover, the EU relies on Russia's monopolistic gas supply. Ever since the annexation of the Crimea and thus a deterioration of EU-Russia relations, the EU wishes to decouple itself from this and find new gas suppliers. Cooperation with Iran on the field of energy supply is thus favourable and poses an opportunity that could improve economic relations even further (Shirvani, 2015, p. 84).

The US will mainly benefit from the agreement on the sale of passenger aircrafts and related parts (Tarock, 2016, p.89). This agreement gives the US the ability to compete with Europe in selling civil passenger aircrafts to Iran. Moreover, the deal opens doors for diplomacy which might lead to future agreements on other issues between the US and Iran (Dobbins and DiMaggio, 2017, para. 12).

Russia seeks to benefit from the agreement by exporting military equipment to Iran. In 2015, Russia announced the sales of advanced S-300 air defence missiles to Iran (Katz, 2015, p.4). Moreover, in March 2017, the Eurasian Economic Union began preparations for a free-trade zone with Iran. The implementation of the JCPOA made Iran a potential member of the Eurasian Economic Union led by Russian influence. Iranian membership could strengthen ties between Russia and Iran and potentially lead to a unified energy front (Larkins, 2017, p.42).

For Iran, the lifting of sanctions meant access to \$100–\$150 billions of their own money held in the west (Tarock, 2016, p. 1418). Moreover, exporting surpluses of gas supplies could result in rapid economic development (Shirvani, 2015, p.89). The International Monetary Fund reports a GDP growth of 12.5% in the first year of implementation, where the year before it was -1.6%. Inflation was at a level of 9.1% in 2016, a 2,8% decrease compared to the prior year (IMF, "Islamic Republic of Iran"). In addition to the direct economic benefits, the EU supports Iran in becoming a member of the WTO (Terris, 2017, p. 897).

Besides the economic benefits, Iran gains from strengthened political ties. As the EU supports Iran in becoming a WTO member (Terris, 2017, p.897), China encourages Iran's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to improve collective security in Central Asia (Wuthnow, 2016, p.3).

Overall, the provisions of the JCPOA have been achieved and continue to expand to benefits not directly imposed by the signing of the agreement. While the economic sectors encompass most gains for both Iran and the signatories of the JCPOA, there are additional benefits for Iran in form of membership to international organizations.

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Effectiveness

For the purpose of determining whether the JCPOA is an effective policy, it is necessary to analyse whether the desired goals of the policy were met.

The foremost goal set out in the deal and as mentioned in the literature review, encompasses the limitation of Iran's nuclear programme (Katzman and Kerr, 2016, p.8). This is guaranteed by the physical constraints set out in the provisions of the agreement. Moreover, as mentioned in the literature review, the NPT's pillar of non-proliferation also imposes restrictions on its members (Moffatt, 2019, p.15). However, the constraints and obligations accepted by Iran under the JCPOA go beyond the obligations of the NPT. For example, the maximum level of uranium enrichment, the limitation of stockpiles, and the disassembling of centrifuges. Without these restrictions, Iran would be able to produce nuclear weapons at a rapid pace, but due to the limitations, it can be ensured that Iran's nuclear programme will not grow.

Moreover, ensuring the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme was a prominent objective of the deal (Albright, 2010, p.1). The monitoring procedures arranged under the JCPOA accommodates this particular concern. Once again, the JCPOA safeguards exceed the safeguards of the NPT. Transparency measures and control mechanisms have considerably improved under the JCPOA (Martellini and Zucchetti, 2016, p. 480; Mousavian & Mousavian, 2018, p.184; Rezaei, 2018, p. 169). Under the JCPOA, the IAEA has the right to verify nuclear weaponization work that does not involve nuclear materials. This is the first time such activity is granted to the IAEA (Fitzpatrick, 2015, p.49).

Finally, the literature review outlines the third goal of a normalized relationship between Iran and the international community (Ali, 2018, p.136). The lifting of sanctions facilitates a strengthened relationship as they are now able to engage with one another.

Even though the provisions have a certain time limits, within this time frame, the IAEA can make sure that Iran's nuclear programme is for the peaceful purposes only. This takes the fear of the international community of a nuclear Iran away and hence ensures the main goal of the JCPOA. The limits on nuclear activities do end after 10-15 years of the agreement, however the obligations and commitments remain in place. This makes the production of nuclear weapons unattainable (Fitzpatrick, 2015, p. 47). And even if the agreement would only postpone the obtainment of a nuclear weapon, this result holds more



advantages than the situation before the agreement, in which Iran almost already possessed a nuclear weapon. Moreover, the lifting of sanctions and the ongoing IAEA inspections enhance the possibility of Iran not returning to the pre-JCPOA situation. Furthermore, due to the successful implementation of the agreement, the faith in diplomacy restored (Sterio, 2016, p. 78). In conclusion, the JCPOA is an effective policy.

## 5.2 Responsiveness

The negotiating parties to the JCPOA all had their own interests before the signing of the agreement. In order to decide whether the JCPOA is a responsive policy, examining whether the deal responds to the interests of the negotiating parties is necessary.

Many interests, such as preventing Iran from being able to acquire a nuclear weapon (Katzman and Kerr, 2016, p.8), the guaranteed peaceful nature of its nuclear programme (Albright, 2010, p.1), and the normalization of relations (Ali, 2018, p.136), coincide with the goals of the agreement. This indicates that regarding these specific interests, the policy is responsive: The agreement includes the interests of the negotiators in the provisions discussed for the deal. However, more interests were presented individually by certain negotiating parties.

Firstly, the importance of a diplomatic solution was stressed (Albright, 2010, p.1). This interest associates with the interests of not having to intervene in the nuclear crisis militarily (Hurst, 2017, p.2). Due to the implementation of the JCPOA, the Iranian nuclear crisis was settled peacefully.

Additionally, China desired to keep a meaningful economic relationship with Iran (Johanson, 2019, p. 161). Due to sanction relief, trade and foreign investments were able to increase significantly. In the figure of the Observatory for Economic Complexity below, it is visible that China is Iran's largest trading partner in 2017 with 31%. It can be regarded that the JCPOA is responsive to China's interests, as economic ties between China and Iran were kept after the implementation of the agreement. Moreover, there is the possibility for them to increase (Wuthnow, 2016, p. 1).

(Source: OEC, retrieved 2 December 2019).





Moreover, Russia hoped to be recognized as a great power status by the international community after the achievements of the JCPOA (Drummond, 2017, p. 14). Right after implementation, President Obama stated: “We would have not achieved this agreement had it not been for Russia’s willingness to stick with us and the other P5-Plus members in insisting on a strong deal.” (“Full text: Obama gives a speech about the Iran nuclear deal”, 2015). This statement recognizes Russia’s importance in the negotiations leading up to the JCPOA. Even though it does not directly acknowledge Russia as a great power, it does state that without Russia’s cooperation, a deal might not have been reached.

Finally, Iran’s interests included an end to isolation, while being able to pursue peaceful enrichment activities (Moks, 2017, p.30). The JCPOA allows Iran to pursue enrichment activities subject to limitations and safeguards (JCPOA, 2015). In addition, the signing of the deal and the imposition of sanction relief has allowed Iran to increase (economic) ties with the international community.

The figure below presents a schematic representation of the negotiation parties and their interests and whether the policy is responsive to these interests.

Negotiating party	Interest	Responsive?
China, EU, Russia, US	Prevent Iran from being able to acquire nuclear weapons	✓
EU and US	Guarantee the peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear programme	✓
Iran	Lifting international sanctions	✓
EU, US, Iran	Normalize relations between Iran and the international community	✓
China, EU, Russia, US, Iran	Diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis	✓
US	No need for military intervention in the nuclear crisis	✓
China	Keep good economic ties with Iran	✓

<b>Russia</b>	Recognition of power	
<b>Iran</b>	Continue enrichment under the rights of the NPT	
<b>Iran</b>	End isolation	

In conclusion, the JCPOA satisfies the interests of the negotiating parties. The interests expressed during the negotiations have been answered in the provisions of the agreement. Hence, it is a responsive policy.

### 5.3 Equity

The JCPOA has been accepted by all negotiating parties, even though the agreement includes advantages as well as concessions on the side of Iran as well as the International community (Sterio, 2016, p.79). Compromises had to be made in order to persuade all parties to sign and keep the agreement. Iran, for example, has given up many of its own demands and accepted some demands never expected they would (Fitzpatrick, 2015, p.47). On the other hand, the international community has allowed Iran to continue some enrichment activities. An unanticipated compromise (Sterio, 2016, p. 79). In this regard, both parties have made major concessions. However, the question remains whether benefits are being distributed fairly amongst the negotiators.

As previously noted, the agreement is responsive. The provisions outlined in the literature review compared to the interests of the negotiating parties conclude in the fact that all interests are considered in the agreement. In this regard, the deal contains equity. However, when considering the indirect benefits, they can be regarded disproportionate.

The EU comes out as the main beneficiary of the deal (Tarock, 2016, p.89). Beyond the loss of fear for a nuclear Iran, European companies benefit economically as outlined in the results section of this paper. Moreover, Europe can now start to rely on Iranian gas imports instead of Russia's (Shirvani, 2015, p. 84).

As a consequence of the EU's benefits, Russia has the most to lose by the agreement. Russia could lose its export market of primary resources to Iran. Even though the two could form a unified energy front as outlined in the results chapter, this would still mean Russia would have to share its market with Iran, losing its dominant export position in Europe. Moreover, any form of market share loss for Russia, could

be perceived as a loss in Russia's political leverage internationally (Larkins, 2017, p. 40). Something Russia wished to increase by the agreement.

Iran, on the other hand, benefits economically, by being able to export their primary resources and by having access to the international market (Shirvani, 2015, p.89). Yet, even though, oil production is near pre-sanction level, oil prices decreased between 2013 and 2014 and continued to be low after the implementation of the JCPOA (Larkins, 2017, p. 24-26). Hence, the Iranian economy is growing due to the implementation of the JCPOA, however, growth might not be as high as predicted.

Moreover, Sino-Iranian relations before the JCPOA were beneficial and remain to be after the JCPOA (Wuthnow, 2016, p. 1). Besides the insurance of a peaceful nuclear Iran, not a lot will change in the relationship between the two states.

Finally, the US and Iran could significantly benefit, politically and commercially, from establishing relations facilitated by the JCPOA (Tarock, 2016, p.89). However, there has been no reconciliation between the two states. Iran is open to the entry of US firms, however, the US averts engagement (Larkins, 2017, p. 53).

Thus, the agreement encompasses concessions, benefits and for some potential drawbacks. The EU comes out as the main recipient of the agreement, while Russia could hurt the most. Hence, when regarding the additional benefits generated by the agreement, the JCPOA does not contain a high level of equity.

#### **5.4 Adequacy**

in order to establish if the JCPOA is an adequate policy, the question whether the deal solved the problem is to be asked.

The roots of the problem lie in the various reasons for why Iran would want to acquire a nuclear weapon outlined in the Literature review. These reasons in addition to past events, led the international community to question the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. However, the proposition of a JCPOA has resulted in the consideration of the Iranian regime of its interests and caused Iran's nuclear aspirations to shift. The JCPOA makes sure that Iran is not able to create a nuclear weapon and thus takes the fear of a nuclear Iran away. The keeping of the deal, based on Iran's interests, seems the best option for the state.

The literature review outlines that one of the reasons for Iran to pursue a nuclear programme was the idea that it enjoyed support from the different groups within the state. Moreover, it was a means for the Iranian regime to gain support from the population and therefore the regime had no intentions of limiting the programme (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 187; Mayer, 2004, p.38). However, when the sanctions imposed by the international community began to disrupt the Iranian economy, the regime started to lose the public's support (Razaei, 2017, p.623). The JCPOA posed an outcome as it was the only way sanctions on Iran would be lifted. The maintenance of the deal is important as the re-imposition of sanctions is the alternative, bringing the Iranian economy and the position of the Iranian regime in danger.

In addition, the Literature review provides that Iran's nuclear programme is a protection against the international community's interest of a regime change in Iran (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p.188). However, as mentioned above, the economic sanctions could result in this particular outcome. The JCPOA lifts the sanctions and causes economic stability in the country. This results in a content electorate.

Furthermore, in the literature review, security is discussed as a reasoning behind Iran's nuclear programme. The programme would provide deterrence against outside forces (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 187; Chubin and Litwak, 2003, p. 102). Especially the presence of the US in the region caused Iran to think such a deterrent was needed (Clarke, 2012, p. 495). The nuclear deal provides the normalization of relations between Iran and the International community due to the limitations on Iran's nuclear programme. The limiting of Iran's nuclear programme and an agreement with key members of the international community, including Iran's main antagonists results in lesser security threats forestalling military action against Iran. Additionally, it provides the chance for Iran to develop alliances.

Finally, the Literature Review indicates that a nuclear aspirant is Iran's belief that there is no one that has the right to refuse them the access to nuclear technology (Gheissari and Nasr, 2005, p. 188). The JCPOA provides Iran these rights it has under the NPT, however it limits activities that could result in a nuclear weapon. This provides a compromise in the interests of both parties.

Moreover, several concerns were outlined in the literature review. These concerns do not seem as evident as claimed by the existing literature. The first concern, the "sneak out scenario", can be abrogated by the fact that the JCPOA sets provisions to lengthen breakout time and imposes strict

inspections. The secret creation of a nuclear weapon would doubtlessly be detected (Martellini and Zuccheti, 2016, p.480; Razeai, 2018, p.191). The second concern raised is overruled by the US providing the states of concern with Anti-Ballistic Defence Systems. The possession of such systems would make nuclear weapons of no need. In addition, the states in concern would not jeopardise their alliance with the US by creating a nuclear weapon (Rezeai, 2018, p. 191). The JCPOA could even promote a Middle Eastern nuclear weapon free zone (Beck, 2018, "Institutionalism", para.1). Finally, the third concern can be discarded by regarding that Iran will need to stabilize its own economy first. Furthermore, the revenues received are not as high as expected (Larkins, 2017, p.25).

In conclusion, the JCPOA is an adequate policy. By meeting and continuing to meet the goals of the agreement, the problem can be disregarded.

## 6 Conclusion and Recommendation

Referring back to the statement of Federica Mogherini and Mohammed Zarif, this thesis aimed to analyse whether the JCPOA is a good deal and a good deal for all parties by questioning whether the agreement meets its objectives. By considering the Effectiveness, Responsiveness, Equity and Adequacy, it can be concluded that the targets of the agreement were met and that the EU High Representative and Foreign Minister of Iran were correct in their statement.

Abiding by the four steps of the European Training Foundation Framework, this thesis outlines that due to years of tensions between Iran and the international community on the nuclear issue, an effective policy was needed for the purpose of ensuring the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. In the process of developing such a policy, the interests of negotiating parties were of importance. China, the EU, Russia, the US, and Iran all stressed different interests, of which most were considered in developing the provisions of the policy. This constituted to a responsive policy.

Moreover, the agreement encompasses several strengths existing of the imposition of limitations and restrictions on enrichment activities, stockpiles, and facilities in addition to enhanced transparency measures. Furthermore, the relationship between Iran and the international community is no longer subject to barriers due to sanction relief and research demonstrated that the concerns raised in the existing literature do not pose legitimate threats to the agreement. Notwithstanding that the policy does contain threats in the form of time frames imposed on certain provisions, the policy objectives were met, and the Iranian nuclear crisis can be regarded solved. In other words, the JCPOA is both an effective and adequate agreement.

Furthermore, beyond the intentional outcomes of the policy, additional benefits can be identified. These benefits include (potential) economic gains for China, the EU, the US and Iran. Additionally, cooperation in other fields such as membership for Iran in various international organizations is ought possible due to the conclusion of a successful agreement.

However, the policy does not attain success in all four criteria. Where the policy contains prominent levels of Responsiveness, Effectiveness, and Adequacy, Equity can be debated to fall behind. The policy addresses the interests of all parties in its immediate goals and outcomes. In this regard, the policy does contain equity. Yet, when analysing the outcomes beyond the interests set by the negotiating parties, this research clearly illustrates that the policy is not as beneficial for Russia as the others.

Based on this conclusion, the recommendation can be drawn up that the policy could improve on equity. However, predominantly, the policy encompasses considerable achievements and should therefore be continued. Additionally, as this thesis regards the JCPOA as a successful policy, similar cases could potentially benefit from similar arrangements.



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## 8 Appendix

## Students Ethics Form



## European Studies Student Ethics Form

**Your name:** Mirka Murgia

**Supervisor:** A. Funk

**Instructions:**

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). If you are planning research with human subjects, you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

- a. Read section 2 that your supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
- b. Complete section 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
- c. Ask your project supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and ask him/her to sign the form.
- d. Always append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation. This is a knock-out criterium; if not included the Final Project/Dissertation is awarded an NVD.

**Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)**

(i) **Title of Project:** The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action: A start to an End?

**(ii) Aims of project:**

This Bachelors Dissertation aims to analyse whether the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action has met the objectives set by the agreement by looking at four criteria: Effectiveness, Responsiveness, Efficiency, and Adequacy. By doing so, it will determine whether the policy needs modifications or should be discontinued. Moreover, it will give policy makers insight in whether similar policies could be used in similar cases.

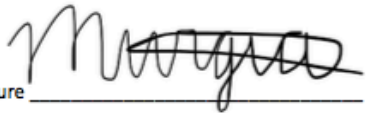
(iii) **Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)**

No

If yes: you should complete the section 2 of this form.

If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your supervisor. You have completed this form.

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects. I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature  Date 17-12-2019

**Section 2 Complete this section only if you answered YES to question (iii) above.**

**(i) What will the participants have to do? (v. brief outline of procedure):**

**(ii) What sort of people will the participants be and how will they be recruited?**

**(iii) What sort of stimuli or materials will your participants be exposed to? Tick the appropriate boxes and then state what they are in the space below**

- ☐ Questionnaires
- ☐ Pictures
- ☐ Sounds
- ☐ Words
- ☐ Other

**(iv) Consent:** Informed consent must be obtained for all participants before they take part in your project. By means of an informed consent form you should state what participants will be doing, drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. You should also state how they can withdraw from the study at any time and the measures you are taking to ensure the confidentiality of data. A standard informed consent form is available in the Dissertation Manual. Appendix the Informed Consent Form to your Final Project/Dissertation as well.

**(vi) What procedures will you follow in order to guarantee the confidentiality of participants' data?**

Student's signature:



Date 17.12.2019

Supervisor's signature:



Date 19. 12. 2019

(if satisfied with the proposed procedures)