

# Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

<b>Student:</b>	<b>Tomáš Mitro</b>
<b>Advisor:</b>	<b>Doc. Petr Janský, Ph.D.</b>
<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>Impact of the smoking ban on food and beverages services sector sales in the Czech Republic</b>

## **OVERALL ASSESSMENT** *(provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):*

### **Contribution**

Tomáš Mitro wrote a good empirical thesis on the impact of the smoking ban on food and beverages services sector sales in the Czech Republic.

His ambitious objective was to find out whether the smoking ban implemented in May 2017 has had any impact on sales in the Czech Republic's food and beverages services sector. He is one of the first one to attempt to answer this question and in this lies also his main contribution. Although he collects the best data sets available to him, their insufficient quality and level of detail do not provide him with the opportunity to answer the research question with sufficient confidence. Although I consider his empirical results inconclusive, mainly due to the limitations of the data, he provides new analytical insights on an important research question of relevance to policy debates and public discussions in the Czech Republic.

### **Methods**

Given, the data limitations, the methodology seems adequate for the questions at hand and Tomáš applies them well.

Tomáš has no access to firm-level or high-frequency other detailed data. Given the data limitations, it is natural that Tomáš uses only relatively less advanced, but appropriate methods. Another important challenge that Tomáš cannot cope with is that in the months before the start of the smoking ban an online registration of sales (known as EET) has been introduced. This is obviously a confounding factor since both smoking ban and EET are likely to have effects on food and beverages services sector sales. Tomáš does a good job in discussing the importance of EET in his thesis, but he is not able to do much in terms of empirical identification strategy (also given the data limitations).

I appreciate the difficulties Tomáš had searching the best available data. Having collected the data, he applies three regression models to two relevant outcome indicator. Two of them show no significant effect of the smoking ban, while in one model it shows a positive effect, which he argues can be explained by the introduction of EET. His conclusion thus is that no adverse effect of the smoking ban on sales in food and beverages services sector. In my opinion, he is likely too quick in this conclusion in that finding no statistical significant effect does not imply finding no effect, in particular in the view of the data limitations highlighted.

Before submission of Tomáš's thesis, I suggested that he could do a better job of comparing his methodology and results to the existing studies from other countries and he has somewhat improved this aspect of his thesis. I would be also more upfront than he is about the limitations of his thesis, highlighting them in the abstract and in other sections more.

### **Literature**

Tomáš demonstrates his familiarity with some of the research papers most relevant to his thesis.

### **Manuscript form**

The manuscript form is clear and well outlined and accessible for the reader. The use of English could be better, but the text is easily readable and understandable.

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## Suggested questions for the committee

What kind of data would you need and what methodology you would apply to make your results more persuasive?

In short, Tomáš did a good job of writing a thesis and I recommend a grade of C.

## **SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED** (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
Contribution (max. 30 points)	20
Methods (max. 30 points)	20
Literature (max. 20 points)	18
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	18
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b> (max. 100 points)	<b>76</b>
<b>GRADE</b> (A – B – C – D – E – F)	<b>C</b>

**NAME OF THE REFEREE:** Petr Janský, Ph.D.

**DATE OF EVALUATION:** 23 August 2019

  
Referee Signature

**EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:**

**CONTRIBUTION:** *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

**METHODS:** *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

**LITERATURE REVIEW:** *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

**MANUSCRIPT FORM:** *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

**Overall grading:**

TOTAL	GRADE
91 – 100	A
81 - 90	B
71 - 80	C
61 – 70	D
51 – 60	E
0 – 50	F