

# Report on Bachelor Thesis

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

<b>Student:</b>	<b>Klára Kantová</b>
<b>Advisor:</b>	<b>Mgr. Dominika Špolcová</b>
<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>Ex-prisoners and the Labour Market in the Czech Republic</b>

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

### **Contribution**

Klara decided to investigate different approaches and their benefits of how to integrate disadvantaged people (mainly disabled people and released prisoners) into the labor market across Europe. However, the data for such a large analysis were not available. Therefore she focused rather on the Czech labor market. Again, the data for disabled persons were unavailable. Finally, Klara turned her research question over and asked how big problem is it for the ex-prisoners in the Czech Republic to find a job and how much the ex-prisoners affect the overall unemployment. She also tries to identify the factors leading to recidivism, but again she faces imperfect data. The topic is new within the Czech Republic, and the results could be important for policy implications. Unfortunately, Klara failed in her time management, and I have not chance to read the whole thesis before submission. Due to the time deficit Klara could not proceed with further analysis of the data she obtained with huge effort (including email communication with Rubicon and the prisoners' service). The main contribution of the thesis lies in the original data collection and the unexplored research topic.

### **Methods**

The methods used are adequate to the research question, but there seems to be not enough data for the time series analysis. If more observations were available, it would be valuable if Klara would play with the model specification more and would try to find a better model (e.i. include unemployment rate of Germany into the unemployment model). Klara is, however, aware that these observations are not enough for any inference and therefore did not continue with the time series analysis.

Klara proceeds with the panel data model, where the time lag of the explanatory variables (3 months) is quite small given the average length of a judicial proceeding in the Czech Republic and the fact that recidivism is measured as the percentage of more than one times sentenced prisoners. Again, the lack of time did not allow her to try other specifications.

Klara should be much more careful with the interpretation of the results, especially when she wants to reject some hypothesis. She should think about the explanatory power of the model and the economic significance of the estimates first.

### **Literature**

Klara changed the main research question after she already worked on the literature about disabled people which she had not included in the thesis.

The literature review summarizes a few recent studies dealing with released prisoners in the Czech Republic and then approaches the topic more generally. However, the topic was researched before in other countries, and the thesis should cite these studies.

Moreover, Klara does not cite coherently (sometimes at the end of the paragraph, sometimes in footnotes).

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## Manuscript form

The manuscript form corresponds to the minimal amount of time Klara has for finalizing her thesis and proofreading. The text is written in English with many typos and grammatical mistakes. The formulation of an argument is sometimes misleading, but general message of the text is clear. Several parts might be reorganized, but otherwise the thesis is well structured. The tables should be better described to be self-explanatory, but otherwise they are clear and Klara refers to them in the text.

## Summary

In the beginning, communication with Klara was sporadic, which changed a bit this year. However, she finalized the thesis so late that I had no chance to read it before submission. I have to appreciate how much she managed to do in a very short time after she collected the data. Most importantly I have to emphasize her enthusiasm for the research question. Nevertheless, Klara does not seem to be very confident in the interpretation of the results. I hope she will be more convincing during the defense. I hate to do so as the topic is very interesting and important, but in the state as the thesis is written now I have to recommend grade E.

## Suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

How can you explain that the estimated effect of  $ddprisact$  in Table 3 is a significant zero (at 1% significance level)?

How do you interpret the estimated coefficients of a difference stationary process?

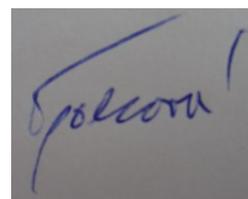
What is the main message of your thesis?

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

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	17
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	20
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	8
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	15
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b> (max. 100 points)	<b>60</b>
<b>GRADE</b> (A – B – C – D – E – F)	<b>E</b>

**NAME OF THE REFEREE:** Dominika Špolcová

**DATE OF EVALUATION:** August 26, 2019



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**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	<b>A</b>
81 - 90	<b>B</b>
71 - 80	<b>C</b>
61 – 70	<b>D</b>
51 – 60	<b>E</b>
0 – 50	<b>F</b>