



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Matěj Štěpánek

Title: *The Art of (In)Accuracy: A Meta-Analysis of the European Values Think-Tank's Forecasts.*

Programme/year: Bezpečnostní studia / 2019

Author of Evaluation (external assessor): doc. PhDr. Běla Plechanovová, CSc.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	8
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	28
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	35
<i>Total</i>		80	71
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	8
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	18
TOTAL		100	89



Evaluation

Major criteria: The thesis offers an interesting endeavour to evaluate the accuracy of the predictions made by European Values think-tank on politico-security environment influencing the interests of Czech Republic through 2016-2019 period. I appreciate this idea as well as the empirical base collected by the Author and his analysis. I am not an expert on methodology of forecasting so I would assume that the assessment of this aspect will be made by the supervisor of the thesis in his review. My comments and questions aim at the broader context of the work and the relevance of such evaluations.

First, I miss at least an introductory debate on assessment of quality/accuracy of policy relevant predictions made, preferably globally, by think-tanks that would place this project in proper context. I do agree that think-tanks should engage in probabilistic forecasting only after mastering the methodology, but in real world, it does not always happen. Comparison with institutions that do this type of predictions regularly or even specialize in this area is not that much “interesting” then (even if they got it wrong in the selected predictions).

Second, similar point, close to the first one. I would appreciate some kind of an assessment of probabilistic forecasting in Czech environment in the area of social phenomena. That again would provide context. Do we have an audience that can appreciate such efforts beyond weather forecasts?

Methodologically, I would appreciate at least short discussion of the choice of the Brier score as a scoring rule, not just that it is the one most often used from the plethora of rules out there (p. 21). Also, I am not very comfortable with the assumption behind the double range of the Brier score.

Ethically, since the analysis was made using data provided by the European Values think-tank, I miss in the text of the thesis an information on explicit consent with making the data available to other persons except the Author. Posting the data on personal site of the Author on academia.edu as well uploading it to SIS may represent a serious breach of confidence.

Minor criteria: Very well written, no issues found.

Overall evaluation: An excellent thesis that would profit from bit broader perspective.



**FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Charles University

Suggested grade: A-B

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "J. Hájek", is written in a cursive style.