

CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE
Faculty of Social Sciences
Institute of International Studies

PROTOCOL ON DIPLOMA THESIS ASSESSMENT
(Supervisor)

Name of the student: Petr Pospíšil

Title: Variances in the Blue Card Directive Transposition across the European Union

Reviewer (external reviewers including the address and position): Mitchell Young

1. TOPIC AND OBJECTIVE (short information on the thesis, research objective):

The thesis addresses the European Blue Card directive and its implementation. The author situates his study within public policy implementation literature, using that to also address the different ways in which Europeanization occurs. The Blue Card represents an interesting case, as it came after contentious negotiations that allowed for many discretionary clauses and the allowance of Member States to run national schemes in parallel to it. The research focuses on two questions: One, what factors cause differences in the timeliness and correctness of transposition. This comes out of the traditional literature on implementation. Two, what causes the differences in the way the directive is transposed, in this case, the author creates two categories (open/restrictive) and seeks to identify what factors lead to each.

2. CONTENT (complexity, original approach, argument, structure, theoretical and methodological backing, work with sources, appropriateness of annexes etc.):

The thesis involves an original and comprehensive approach to seeking answers to the above-mentioned questions. The author relies on a large number of short cases, analysing half (14) of the Member States. The appendix, in particular, demonstrates a vast research and data collection and compilation project. The author uses a qualitative approach to provide scores on a large number of variables for each of the countries. The analysis is documented and explained in the appendix. The qualification of qualitative data makes sense as a methodology given the number of cases.

The author's approach involves building an index using the discretionary clauses from the directive, which is a creative way to address the research question. The index is then used to create a classification of transposition into four categories from restrictive to open (with two in between). This provides a more granular approach than other authors have taken and shows the ability to build on other people's work without simply replicating it. The author breaks his research questions into a series of hypotheses, which are grounded in theory and other researcher's findings, and uses the data he has collected to test those.

3. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE (quality of language, citation style, graphics, formal aspects etc.):

The text is clear and well written. It is logically organized, and the formal elements are all appropriate.

4. SHORT COMMENTS BY THE REVIEWER (overall impression, strengths and weaknesses, originality of ideas, achievement of the research objective etc.):

The thesis involves a rather massive amount of data collection and analysis in order to address 14 countries and how their implementation of this directive has been handled. This was discussed with the author, who felt that it was necessary to have a broad range of different cases. In the end, the author has managed to successfully summarize the policy developments in this area in all these countries.

In summary, the author finds that in testing a large number of hypothetical factors that could influence the implementation process, there are few places in which a simple answer can be found. The explanatory factors vary between the countries in answer to both of the research questions. I do not see this as a weakness, but rather a sign that the author was open minded and did not try to force data in his analysis. The comprehensiveness of his approach is to be admired.

The author demonstrates a solid understanding of the literature, particularly in the sections on veto players, misfit, administrative factors. He also provides a good and concise history of the development of the Blue Card directive.

5. *COOPERATION WITH THE SUPERVISOR* (komunikace s vedoucím práce, schopnost reflektovat připomínky, posun od původního záměru apod.)

Petr has been open to comments and suggestions about how to improve his work. He has been in regular contact throughout the process. Discussion with him were always constructive and thoughtful.

6. *QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED DURING THE DEFENCE (one to three):*

What challenges did you face when assigning numerical scores to indicators? Overall, how would you critique this methodology? What parts of it worked and which did not?

7. *(NON-)RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTED GRADE*
(*excellent, very good, good, unsatisfactory*): *excellent*

Date: 24. 8. 2020

Signature: Mitchell Young