



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Matej Žganec

Title: Policy determinants in the context of the EU's carbon neutrality goals

Programme/year: MAIN 2021

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Viera Martinková, Ph.D.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	30
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	38
<i>Total</i>		80	78
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	19
TOTAL		100	97



Evaluation

Major criteria:

I have the great pleasure to submit this very positive review of the Master thesis 'Policy determinants in the context of the EU's carbon neutrality goals' by Matej Žganec.

The thesis's goal is to examine the factors influencing the use of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans in European (SUMP) cities. The author first introduces the concept of SUMP and previous research on the topic; this is done in sufficient detail and presents the creation of SUMP in European policies, even for an uninformed reader. The then correctly identifies the existing research gap, as the previous research consists of qualitative studies and predominantly focus on large cities. Based on this, the author formulates a rather ambitious research goal, forming a quantitative large-n study focused on the dissemination of the use of SUMP among small and medium-sized cities.

The literature review, clearly presenting and clustering both theoretical argumentation and findings of previous qualitative studies, is one of the most impressive parts of the thesis. The author identifies an extensive array of possible factors related to the dissemination of the SUMP and formulates nine hypotheses, creating a comprehensive picture. The critical assessment of literature and presentation of his own ideas and arguments are excellent, resulting in a well-founded and, at the same time, readable reasoning behind each hypothesis.

The sample size and operationalisation of variables is equally impressive for a Master thesis. Limitations in the size sample (small and medium cities from 12 European countries, resulting in 296 cities in the sample) are reasonable and sufficiently explained. Some variables could have been operationalised in more detail (for example, multiple memberships in city networks). More information on data collection (which data were collected manually etc.) would also be helpful.



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The author performs logistic regression to analyse the data; the statistical method and results also meet all the requirements. However, the author should have explained his reasoning behind the three models in more detail. Controlling for the country effect could also put the results into perspective. The common wisdom would suggest that SUMP's could be more widely adopted in countries with more progressive green policies. This would undoubtedly bring another value to the analysis, especially since the author emphasised that the 12 countries included in the analysis vary in many characteristics associated with differences in European policies (time of accession, north-south etc.).

The interpretation of results is correct and brings a valuable contribution to the existing literature. A more detailed discussion on the implications for future research could have been included, especially since the author hints on some other possible influences (interest representation) and correctly identifies limits of his study, such as focusing on the figure of a mayor and not including broader political representation/city councils etc.

Minor criteria:

The formal presentation of the thesis meets the required standards. The text contains only occasional typos, such as the repeated use of 'weather' instead of 'whether'. Numbering of chapters, subchapters and tables, and including a list of abbreviations would also be helpful.

Overall evaluation:

To conclude, I find that Mr Žganec not only meets all the requirements of a Master thesis but also surpasses standard expectations. The main strengths of the thesis lie in the literature review and argumentation and resulting hypotheses and in the substantial data collection. I therefore wholeheartedly recommend it for defence.

Suggested grade: **A**

Signature: