

Name of the student:	Ayauzhan Kamatayeva
Title of the thesis:	Contextual Determinants of the Age Gap in Voter Turnout across Europe
Reviewer:	Ignacio Lago

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

This paper examines the determinants of the age gap in turnout in European countries. Using data from the ESS, the authors shows that government expenditure, the share of immigrants and the age of democracy differently affect young and old when going to the ballot box.

2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The paper is too long. In particular, the presentation of the state of the art and the hypotheses should be shortened. The author addresses too many different discussions and many of them are not relevant for the story she is telling us. For instance, the developmental and generational approach mentioned on pages 6 and 7 is not part of the empirical analyses.

Surprisingly, the discussion about the mechanisms accounting for the three explanations is too brief. I am sympathetic with the arguments; they make sense. However, I miss a better explanation of why the three variables are more influential for young (or less for old) individuals. This is particularly evident for the explanation relying on the age of democracy.



3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

This is a very good paper. It fills a gap, has a contribution and uses the appropriate data and methods although it has several limitations that I have explained in this memorandum

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

Although the paper is well written in general terms, the hypotheses are not well expressed. Please, use “smaller” instead of “less”, for instance.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

The two reasons for selecting the round 4-9 of the ESS (page 21) are not convincing.
Not sure why government expenditure should make a difference. Similarly, the discussion about 1980 when capturing democratization is ad hoc.
Some controls should be included in the models. For instance, compulsory voting.
Finally, there are some references to the use of panel data (for instance, on pages 4 and 23), when the paper uses cross-sectional data.

Grade (A-F):	A, 9,0
Date:	Signature:
25.06.2021	Ignacio Lago

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	91-100 %	8,5%	5	6,7%	8,5-10	5,3%	9-10	5,5 %
B (81-90)	81-90 %	16,3%	4,5	11,7%	7,5-8,4	16,4%	8-8,9	11,0 %
C (71-80)	71-80 %	16,3%	4	20%	6,5-7,4	36,2%	7-7,9	18,4 %
D (61-70)	61-70 %	24%	3,5	28,3%			6-6,9	35,2 %
E (51-60)	51-60 %	34,9%	3	33,4 %	6-6,4	42,1 %	5-5,9	30,1 %

Assessment criteria:

Excellent (A): 'Outstanding performance with only minor errors';

Very good (B): 'Above the average standard but with some errors';

Good (C): 'Generally sound work but with a number of notable errors';

Satisfactory (D): 'Fair but with significant shortcomings';

Sufficient (E): 'Performance meets the minimum criteria';

Fail: 'Some/considerable more work required before the credit can be awarded'.