

Name of the student:	Ayauzhan Kamatayeva
Title of the thesis:	Contextual Determinants of the Age Gap in Voter Turnout across Europe
Reviewer:	Brian Shaev (Leiden University)

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

This thesis poses a quite relevant and important research question for European politics and society aimed at exploring the underlying reasons for diversity in the ‘age gap’ rates of electoral participation between European countries. The subject itself is a rather perfect mix of the political and societal elements of the EPS masters. The literature review appears well done and generally convincing, with the important caveat that I am far from an expert in the specific field of contemporary youth electoral participation.

2. ANALYSIS

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

The hypotheses come directly out of the literature review, which is well done in accordance with social-science methodology. I wondered at times about the presumptions behind the hypotheses, such as whether we should hypothesize that youth would be more anti-immigration than older people based on economic factors, but these emerged out of existing literature so the approach and hypotheses appear valid. They were then productively explored in the regression analyses.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

As I am not trained in econometrics, I cannot comment on the statistical foundations of the conclusions reached based on the regression analyses. From an overall perspective, they held close to testing and exploring the hypotheses, while demonstrating that some hypotheses did not yield hypothesized results and exploring various nuances and qualifications. So there does not appear to have been overarguing at work here, and the conclusions tie back directly to the research question. Therefore the thesis appears convincing to my untrained (in this methodology) eye. I would have preferred some more overarching conclusions about youth participation in contemporary European politics and a longer, deeper concluding section.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

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

Generally the writing is good. There are sentence fragments scattered throughout the thesis, e.g., starting sentences with ‘While’ or ‘Whereas’ without including the necessary second (main) clause. Also some writing errors, ‘younghood’ instead of youth for instance (p. 21).

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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

Overall this appears to be a very good, perhaps excellent thesis. This summary conclusion is reached though without benefiting from the expertise of a reviewer trained in econometrics, who may well see merits or demerits beyond what I am able to from my training and academic perspective.

Grade (A-F):	B+; 8.2 on 10 point scale
Date:	Signature:

22 June 2021

Brian Shaev

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	Score Range	%	Score	%	Score Range	%	Score Range	%
A (91-100)	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'.