

Name of the student:	Igor Nunes Vidal
Title of the thesis:	Autocratization outbreaks: the Polish and Hungarian responses to the Covid-19 pandemic and their early effects on democracy in comparison to Italy
Reviewer:	Martin Mejstrik (Charles University)

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

The MA Thesis of Igor Nunes Vidal offers a relevant and important research comparing Polish and Hungarian responses to the pandemic situation to the Italian case. The author clearly defined and justified his research question and further analyses the state of rule of law, democracy and legal issue in the framework of anti-covid measures.

Igor chose an innovative topic - even if there are articles analyzing the pandemic in concerned countries, his research still offers an original comparison which could contribute to the whole debate connecting populism, rule of law and democracy in the time of the pandemic.

The literature review is done in quite compact way, however, I would suggest to focus more on the authors deal with political aspects of populism which could help the author to better conceptualize radical-right wing populist in all concerned countries. Nevertheless, this doesn't constitute a major problem for the thesis research framework.

2. ANALYSIS

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

The research is based on the content analysis of legal documents along with the qualitative comparative analysis of policy measures. The analysis is very well positioned in the theoretical debate on populism and is well linked to the key sources. The conceptual framework is clear and well-written. In general, the author succeeded in connecting the research design and the methodology in order to build his argument.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

Igor's thesis is a coherent research text which analyses legal documents and policy decisions. He clearly proved his hypothesis thus confirming the claim that Polish and Hungarian governments used the pandemics to further advance their autocratization tendencies. The author did a satisfactory job in construction of his research design and its application in his research and thus to achieve his research objectives. I would especially underline the nicely done structure of the thesis which offers a clear understanding of the subject. However some part of the thesis could be cut, overall lengths of the thesis is too much. Another minor issue to improve I see in the conclusion of the analytical part which should offer better explained final comparison between research cases.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

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

The MA thesis of Igor Vidal is written without major formal issues. It's well structured, the author used appropriate and correct language and works well with citation style and bibliography. In general, the thesis fully adheres to academic standards in the EPS Programme.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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

Overall, the thesis is of a very good quality. The author shows a systematic work in analysing the effects of anti-covid measures in selected countries and makes a real comparison. His research is well explained and embedded in the current state of the arts. The only important issues are excessive lengths and lower clarity of final outputs of the author's research. Otherwise, the thesis fully comply with standards of the EPS programme and should be awarded with rather high grade.

Grade (A-F):	B+ (Krakow grade 4.5)
Date:	Signature:
28. 9. 2021	

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	Grade Range	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade Range	Percentage	Grade Range	Percentage
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'.