Report on **Bachelor / Master Thesis**

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Student:	**Zuzana Meteláková**
Advisor:	**Barbara Pertold-Gebicka**
Title of the thesis:	**Socioeconomic Determinants of the Availability of Kindergartens in the Czech Republic**

OVERALL ASSESSMENT *(provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):*

Short summary

The bachelor thesis by Zuzana Meteláková aims at analyzing regional determinants (or correlates) of the inbalance between the supply of and demand for places in kindergartens in the Czech Republic. Zuzana first presents the system of pre-primary education in the Czech Republic with all its specificities. Next, she reviews the Czech literature on the topic as well as several international studies within the same scope. Finally, she moves to empirical analysis, which is performed on district-level (okresy) data from the last three pre-pandemic school years. Applying relevant panel-data estimation techinques Zuzana finds that the share of rejected kindergarten applications is the highest in districst with the highest wages and highest net migration.

Contribution

While the topic of kindergarten availability is often discussed in the media, there are very few rigorous empirical analyses of this issue. This makes the contribution of Zuzana's work clear: she neatly summarizes factors that correlate with the number of rejected kindergarten applications, what might help parents decide about their residence or kindergarted application strategy and, most importantly, might help policymakers predict the demand for places in kindergartens.

Methods

Zuzana hse collected data from 76 Czech districts (okresy) for three consecutive pre-pandemic school years. Consequently, she works with panel data and applies panel data methods. Presentation of panel estimation techniques is written in a textbook-style. The most important thing is that Zuzana applies these methids correctly and with understanding. She was very careful about checking the conditions behind each approach and choosing the most reliable method. I also appreciate careful discussion of the timing of the included explanatory variables.
Interpretation of regression estimates is a bit clumsy and a reader might find it difficult to get the main message of the thesis, to figure out what is the main result. Nevertheless, I appreciate the attempt to quantify the estimated coeficients in a meaningful way.

Literature

The literature review is very nice. Zuzane picked the relevant Czech papers and organized their description in an intuitive way: not paper y paper, but topic by topic. It is obvious that she read all there papers and understood them.

Manuscript form

The manuscript is well-organized and written in a good English. Sometimes sentences are a bit too long and literate rather than scientific language is used. But overall, the thesi reads well and makes a confident impression. Figures, tables and maps are well presented and are self-explanatory.

Overall evaluation and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

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The thesis by Zuzana Meteláková definitely fulfills the requirements for a bachelor thesis at IES, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, I recommend it for the defense and suggest a grade A. This is because Zuzana put a lot of effort into this work, an effort that resulted in a comprehensive, carefully performed and neatly presented thesis.I appreciate the attention that Zuzana pays to details, her willingness to understand everything she works on, and precision with which she does the work. Although sometimes this is on the cost of text clarity and compactness.

There is little discussion about causality in the thesis and I suggest that Zuzana talks more about it during the defence. Specifically, can it be concluded that higher district-level wages *cause* a higher rejection rate of kindergarten applications?

The results of the Urkund analysis do not indicate significant text similarity with other available sources.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED *(for details, see below):*

CATEGORY		POINTS
Contribution	*(max. 30 points)*	28
Methods	*(max. 30 points)*	28
Literature	*(max. 20 points)*	20
Manuscript Form	*(max. 20 points)*	18
TOTAL POINTS	*(max. 100 points)*	**94**
GRADE	**(A – B – C – D – E – F)**	**A**

NAME OF THE REFEREE: *Barbara Pertold-Gebicka*

DATE OF EVALUATION: **17.8.2022**

digitally signed on 17.8.2021 by Barbara Pertold-Gebicka

_____
Referee Signature

Please sign the report electronically using one of the following options:
- *Certified electronic signature*
- *Adobe digital signature*
- *Writing „Digitally signed", the date and your name above „Referee Signature"*
- *In any case, your name has to be typed, the signature cannot include a scanned picture of your hand-written signature.*

- *Two examples are here:*

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Ladislav Kristoufek
Digitally signed by Ladislav Kristoufek
Date: 2020.08.05 15:14:49 +02'00'
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Referee Signature

Digitálně podepsáno (5. 8. 2020):
Ladislav Krištoufek
_____
Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

CONTRIBUTION: *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

METHODS: *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

Overall grading:

TOTAL	GRADE
91 – 100	A
81 - 90	B
71 - 80	C
61 – 70	D
51 – 60	E
0 – 50	F