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 author attempted to identify determinants of pre-school education availability (measured by rejection rate) in the Czech Republic, focusing on district-level socioeconomic characteristics. The selection of the research question is quite unfortunate since availability is the outcome of two independent forces – supply on one side and demand on the other. This made the whole analysis quite cumbersome and the results very hard to interpret.

The findings presented by this work seem to be very hard to be make a consistent story. Unfortunately, the has not managed to present the work in a clear and conscise way. It is way too long, quite unstructured and considerably unfocused.

Contribution

While the literature is usually concerned with the factors that determine participation, the author attempted to analyse the drivers of availability. However, this is a complex question which would need to be broken down and analysed in parts. Had that been done, this work could have had produced policy-relevant insights.

Methods

Given the panel data at hand, the author used an appropriate method of first differences. It is worth noting that due to the nature of selected variables, the analysis has had the potential of revealing only correlations, not causality.

However, the most pressing problem of this work is definiton of the research question. Analyzing the availability itself, especially when defined by rejection rate, is very challanging due to mere arithmetics. That is because availability is determined by the combination of demand and supply and, thus, a decrease in availability can be caused by a demand surge in one region and by a supply cut in another.

As mentioned in literature review, majortiy of studies focus on socioeconomic factors to help predict demand for pre-school education. On the other hand, supply in this case is mostly set administratively by local governments – over 90% of kindergartens in the Czech Republic are established by the state. What could be of informative value for policy-makers is an analysis of how supply of private kindergartens is influenced byt socioeconomic factors. Unfortunately, the author fails to distinguish these two types of supply in the analysis.

Literature

The author presents a thorough literature review. It should be noted though that the reviewed literature concerns only determinants of pre-school education *participation*, not availability. Thus, there's no direct comparison for the obtained results.
The literature is cited properly, nevertheless a more structured overview would make it easier for readers to navigate themselves in the text.

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

Manuscript form

The author uses good English, uses appropriate formatting and cites properly. However, the work is quite lengthy. This makes it challanging to follow and hard to communicate the main findings. The language is often unclear and slightly confusing. For example, while the analysis is probably concerned with real shortage (or availability), the author mentions „perceived" shortage in several places without clear distinction.

Overall evaluation and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

In my view, the thesis 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 D.
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)	15
Methods (max. 30 points)	20
Literature (max. 20 points)	16
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	10
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	**61**
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	D

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Tomáš Kučera

DATE OF EVALUATION: **4.9.2022**

Electronically signed (4.9.2022):
Tomáš Kučera

_____
Referee Signature

<u>*EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:*</u>

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.*

<u>*Overall grading:*</u>

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