

Name of the student:	Aleksander Gustaw Jaworski
Title of the thesis:	Comparison of suicides trends in Poland and Czech Republic with alcohol abuse and depression as chosen risk factors in the context of preventive policies.
Reviewer:	Kinga Sekerdej

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

The paper explores mainly how suicide prevention policies relate to two selected risk factors, namely alcohol abuse and depressive disorders. It is a qualitative analysis, based on literature and policy review, concerned mostly with data from Poland and the Czech Republic in the context of the EU. The paper concludes with general recommendations of cohesive policies, as the existent are not well aligned with each other.

Mr. Jaworski divided his work into three main parts. The first deals with research on suicide and its risk factors, including not only alcohol abuse and depressive disorders, but also generally belonging to a minority group. Going back to Emile Durkheim, Mr. Jaworski ponders on the theme of seasonality of suicidal incidents, albeit without clear conclusions.

The second part aims at comparing the Czech Republic and Poland, along with some historical-cultural context of alcohol and data on depressive disorders. The last part enumerates existing preventive policies.

2. ANALYSIS

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

The topic is broad and ambitious in scope and the author performed basic review of relevant literature and policies. However, the sources are scattered and seem incidental, which together with an unfocused research question led to vague conclusions. It would be more convincing had the author chosen to include meta-analyses of the efficiency of suicide interventions.

The author did not center that much on numbers and statistics, as he took the effort to explore the specific socio-cultural context of Poland and Czech Republic. It is an interesting comparison to make, given the similarities and differences of the two neighbouring countries, both in the EU, with a communist past, but different size and different history and religious tradition.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

The author embarked on a difficult task, as the question of suicide prevention policies draws on diverse research traditions, such as psychology, public health, sociology, public policy, to name just some. Having a broad topic, references from various disciplines, it was difficult to deliver fully developed, compelling conclusions, firmly embedded in existing research. However, the work presented by Mr. Jaworski meets the basic requirements for an MA thesis.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

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

The paper is structured logically, the references are usually done properly. The text itself is written with good English, but language polishing would be beneficial, as the writing style is at times chaotic.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT


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

Strengths:

1. A timely topic
2. Ambition to prepare an interdisciplinary dissertation and searching for diverse sources
3. The comparative aspect of the thesis

Weaknesses:

1. Unfocused research question
2. Not a clear methodological design and incidental sources, which hindered meeting the ambitious goals
3. Chaotic presentation

Grade (A-F):	D (3,5)
Date:	Signature:
17.09.2022	

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'.