

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Martin Vondrášek
Advisor:	Mgr. Vojtěch Mišák
Title of the thesis:	Spillover effect on crime during the COVID-19 lockdowns in the Czech Republic

OVERALL ASSESSMENT:

Short summary

Martin Vondrášek chose an interesting and policy relevant topic for his bachelor thesis. Overall, apart from the minor comments below, I have a trust in his results and I consider the submitted bachelor thesis to be above average. I appreciate that he did not afraid of demanding econometric models and (with my little help) he managed to learn spatial models that far exceed the requirements set for students of his level. The bachelor thesis deals with two important areas: 1) Spatial effects of crime and offenses in the Czech Republic. 2) Effect of COVID-19 pandemic on crime and offenses rates.

Contribution

The thesis contributes to an important topic. As far as I know, there is no similar analysis of spatial effects of crime on the Czech data. Moreover, the author analyses data during the COVID-19 pandemic, which gives the thesis an additional contribution.

Methods

In addition to the classical OLS regression, Martin Vondrášek uses the Spatial autoregressive model to examine the spatial dimension of crime and offenses rates. In addition to the discussion, he based his choice of model on econometric tests such as the Moran I test and spatial LM tests. Moreover, Martin Vondrášek uses a z-test to test his hypothesis that the spatial effect of crime differs in the pre-COVID and COVID periods.

I also appreciate that the student has thought critically about his results and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of his econometric approach, as provided in the chapter 5 of the bachelor thesis "Limitations of empirical methods".

Literature

The author works mainly with foreign literature, which is logical given the originality of his work. I appreciate the study of the demanding econometric and statistical literature. Given summary table 2.1, the author could also mention and discuss papers that used the random-effects SAR model (most notably BUONANNO, Paolo; PASINI, Giacomo; VANIN, Paolo. Crime and social sanction. Papers in Regional Science, 2012, 91.1: 193-218.) or the Bayesian random-effects spatial model (for example GRACIA, Enrique, et al. Exploring neighborhood influences on small-area variations in intimate partner violence risk: A Bayesian random-effects modeling approach. International journal of environmental research and public health, 2014, 11.1: 866-882.).

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Manuscript form

The text is written in good English and it reads well. The thesis is well-structured, I have a little complaint that the text on the axes of the graphs could be in a larger font. Also, R-squared as provided in regression tables, should be called “pseudo-R-squared” for SAR models.

Overall evaluation and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

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

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 A**.

Moreover, in my opinion, Martin Vondrášek should consider submitting his bachelor thesis to relevant student competitions focusing on Law and Economics / empirical criminology such as the award IUS et SOCIETAS.

Suggested questions for the discussion might be:

- 1) Due to the arrival of a large number of refugees from Ukraine because of the war in February 2022, the government of the Czech Republic approved a state of emergency. Based on your results, do you think that we can expect a decrease in crime during this state of emergency?
- 2) If a pandemic situation similar to COVID-19 were to happen again in the Czech Republic in the future, what policy recommendations would you make based on your bachelor thesis?

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	28
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	15
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	18
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	91
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	A

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NAME OF THE REFEREE: Mgr. Vojtěch Mišák

DATE OF EVALUATION:

***Digitally signed (20.8.2023)
Vojtěch Mišák***

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