IMESS DISSERTATION

Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator (jiri.vykoukal@post.cz)

Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

Student:	Shuangning Cao
Dissertation title:	Carbon Emissions, Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Central and Eastern Europe

	70+	69-65	64-60	59-55	54-50	<50
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Knowledge *Knowledge of problems involved, e.g. historical and social context, specialist literature on the topic. Evidence of capacity to gather information through a wide and appropriate range of reading, and to digest and process knowledge.*			X			
Analysis & Interpretation *Demonstrates a clear grasp of concepts. Application of appropriate methodology and understanding; willingness to apply an independent approach or interpretation recognition of alternative interpretations; Use of precise terminology and avoidance of ambiguity; avoidance of excessive generalisations or gross oversimplifications.*			X			
Structure & Argument *Demonstrates ability to structure work with clarity, relevance and coherence. Ability to argue a case; clear evidence of analysis and logical thought; recognition of an argument limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.*			X			
Presentation & Documentation *Accurate and consistently presented footnotes and bibliographic references; accuracy of grammar and spelling; correct and clear presentation of charts/graphs/tables or other data. Appropriate and correct referencing throughout. Correct and contextually correct handling of quotations.*			X			
Methodology *Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.*			X			

ECTS Mark:	C	**UCL Mark:**	61	**Marker:**	Ilias Chondrogiannis
Deducted for late submission:				**Signed:**	Ilias Chondrogiannis
Deducted for inadequate referencing:				**Date:**	4/9/2024

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+): *Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work.*
Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

B (UCL mark 65-69):
A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

C (UCL mark 60-61):
Some evidence of critical analysis, knowledgeable interpretation. Wide range of sources used to develop a logic and coherent argument. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, the extent of independent research could have improved.

D (UCL mark 59-55):
Employ relevant sources and show ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Little critical analysis of the material. It demonstrate methodological awareness but the standard and rigor of the analysis can improve.

E (UCL mark 54-50):
Mostly descriptive argument. Employ relevant but limited sources. The structure, logic and overall quality of the argument needs improvement.

F (UCL mark less than 50):
Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage

in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate
research techniques.

Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (*at least 300 words*):

The sample stops at 2019. Given the nature of the data, this is probably due to availability reasons. However, the last 5 years are not taken into account. In addition, Global Carbon Budget data are available up to 2023. The same holds for World Bank data. There is not a meaningful or reasonable explanation why the sample stops in 2019, which is a severe weakness.

The interpretation of coefficients in p. 14 is a bit debateable, as they show correlation, not momentum. They just show that the effect is smaller but there can be no comment on the speed of decrease. In addition, such effects have been becoming more intense in recent years – this is where the lack of recent data becomes problematic. The variables are not rates of change anyway, they are log-levels.

The econometric treatment is standard and sound and contains most standard tests. However, cointegration is detected but not discussed at all, and is not used as property to extract further results and intuition. The control variables could be more comprehensive and control explicitly for the relationship between growth and emissions, especially since a reduction in effect is detected (e.g. is this because of an economic slowdown, a movement away from industry or because govt/ private environmental expenditure?). Also, the first two hypotheses are somehow trivial.

The research question is clear and well-justified, but not put in the context of CEE. E.g. rising sea levels or a tourism impact due to climate change are not expected to be major factors in most of them, but disruption in agricultural production or a worsening of living conditions in cities due to increased temperatures are quite likely. In what sense is climate change particularly relevant for CEE countries, and how is that connected to the selected variables?

The structure could have been better. No subsections are used and it is often easy to miss necessary information. This reads more like a wall of text.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (*at least 2 questions*):

Why does the data stop in 2019 and how does that affect contemporary intuition around the results?

What are the specific climate related challenges those countries face, with reference to real-world examples?