

## REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>EU Policy towards Eastern Partnership Countries: A Gap between Goals and Achievements</b>
<b>Author of the thesis:</b>	<b>Gunel Mammadova</b>
<b>Referee (incl. titles):</b>	<b>Doc. PhDr. Běla Plechanovová, CSc.</b>

**Remark:** It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

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

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	16
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	14
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	16
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	18
<b>TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)</b>	<b>1-2</b>

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

### **Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).**

**1) Theoretical background:** The student offers two alternatives for the theoretical background of the thesis; (neo)realism and constructivism. She deliberates which assumptions fit better for the foreign policy of the European Union and constructs four hypotheses. These are unfortunately not discussed in any detail in the thesis and rely mostly on an intuitive grasp of the empirical findings. As an implication, the conclusions of the thesis do not stand on clear embedded theoretical foundations but depend on empirical observation only.

**2) Contribution:** The topic of the thesis embodies an interesting and relevant niche of the foreign relations of the European Union, so far only scarcely covered by recent literature. The thesis aims to fill in the gap, but remains largely on the surface due to rather shallow analysis and partly inconsistent argumentation, lacking deeper theoretical foundations. On the other hand, the empirical part of the thesis brings interesting findings that embody original contribution, albeit only partial. The thesis concludes with a policy recommendation section that aims to summarize the deficiencies of the Eastern Partnership policies and pinpoints the sensitive aspects of the EU relationship towards the Eastern European Post-Soviet countries, particularly in relation towards Russia.

**3) Methods:** The thesis builds on empirical analysis in form of two case studies of countries of Eastern Partnership with quite diverse positions within the Eastern European Post-Soviet countries; namely Ukraine and Azerbaijan. These case studies are framed within a broader context of both internal and external factors influencing European Union's foreign policy. Even the thesis claims to use statistical analysis to underpin the arguments, it makes use of descriptive statistics only, without an aim to construct a model of relations under consideration.

**4) Literature:** The thesis provides very good review of literature related to the topic, particularly of the empirical studies.

**5) Manuscript form:** The manuscript was submitted in a good form, without any major issues.

**DATE OF EVALUATION:** 5 September 2016

  
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Referee Signature