Reviewer's report on the master thesis submitted by Askhat Ashimov

Trends and patterns of cancer mortality in Kazakhstan in comparison with some selected European countries from 1986 to 2008

The submitted thesis in the field of mortality has an interesting theme. At first sight it seems that the work is fulfilling the basic requirements of a master thesis. Nevertheless detailed analysis of the text revealed, that the thesis contends with several serious problems which are completely unacceptable for academic writing.

The most serious shortcoming of the work is plagiarism. It is hardly believable, that substantial part of the submitted text was copied from online sources. For instance, the subchapter “Review of the literature” (page 16-18) is with the exception of four lines totally copied! In addition, some sources quoted in the text are not in references (e.g. page 17, the third paragraph). The same approach of copying was applied in the subchapter “Basic concepts and terminology” (page 25), in the subchapter “Relevant theories and facts” (page 27-30), in the subchapter “Initial hypotheses” (page 31-33), in the subchapter “Data availability and quality” (page 34-35) and in the subchapter “International classification of diseases” (page 36). The subchapters devoted to methods and data analysis also contain rewritten and copied texts, but the most incredible case of plagiarism is in the conclusion. The “Conclusion” (page 89-91) consists of two identical texts. Seven paragraphs of the conclusion were copied from electronic source. Afterwards these paragraphs were rewritten and again pasted to the subchapter. Therefore there is a copy of the copy!

Taking into account the methods (page 38-40) they are insufficiently explained, quoted and graphically presented. For example, it is not clear how the method of “Potential years of life lost” was applied. In addition, the results of analysis are unsatisfactorily explained and some charts are not described (e.g. Fig. 20-21). The thesis is also characterised by deficient graphical layout (e.g. general heading; contents: page 11; figure 3: page 23). Besides that references (page 92-97) are incomplete, with duplicates and do not fully fit to quotations in the texts. Concerning sources, the appendix consists of several figures with unknown data sources (Appendix 10-25, page 107-114).

The whole thesis is characterised by inconsistency and does not fulfil even basic master thesis requirements. With respect to all above mentioned shortcomings I do not recommend the work to defence. In addition, taking into account plagiarism further stint of Askhat Ashimov at the Charles University should be considered.

Prague, 12th March 2012
RNDr. Olga Sivková, Ph.D.