

# Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

<b>Student:</b>	Veronika Dovhunová
<b>Advisor:</b>	Petr Janský M.Sc.
<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	Development Assistance and the Approach of Slovak Republic to Developing Countries

## **OVERALL ASSESSMENT** *(provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):*

The relationship and interactions between developed and developing countries are coming more and more under the scrutiny of economists. In her thesis, Veronika has decided to focus on the analysis of the approach of one now developed country, Slovakia, to developing countries. She has not only discussed the Slovak development assistance, but also quantitatively evaluated the approach of Slovak Republic to developing countries more generally using a policy index. For the first time ever, Veronika has created the Commitment to Development Index by the Centre for Global Development for Slovakia, which currently assesses 22 OECD DAC member countries on their overall approach to developing countries. It is published annually by the Center for Global Development, but until now Slovakia (similarly to the Czech Republic) has been not included, which, I hope, might change as a consequence of this paper on a regular basis.

Veronika has in detail analysed a number of data sources and results for Slovakia in international comparison and across many dimensions. The author analyses in detail why Slovakia scores well in environment and trade component and the main contribution of the thesis is in the sections 4.10 and 4.11.

As far as I know, the analysis in this thesis is the most complex empirical assessment of the Slovak development policy that I know of and this very good piece of work could serve as a basis for evaluation and monitoring of the Slovak development policy.

Although especially the empirical and policy contribution of this thesis is indisputable, a number of aspects of this thesis might be improved. While I provide some insufficiencies and suggestions for improvement below, it is important to keep in mind that this is a bachelor/undergraduate thesis and some of the issues would be more relevant if it was a master/graduate thesis or an academic paper.

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- Despite generally being open-minded about developing countries, she has not avoided some oversimplifying and possibly harmful stereotypes about developing countries, for example in the introduction.
- The selection and width of literature reviewed provides a lot of space for improvement. Veronika does provide the overview of some literature, but in both general and Slovak-related literature, it is insufficient.
- The flow of the text, its structure and its argument does not feel natural and would deserve better thinking and a few rewritings.
- Some of the parts of the thesis are mostly descriptive (most of section 2 and parts of sections 3 and 4), not very analytic and would deserve to be better linked with the rest of the paper and the main contribution of the thesis.
- The purpose and relevance of section 2 should be better explained or it should be shortened and better incorporated into the thesis.
- Taking into account the number of data Veronika did crunch into creating the CDI for Slovakia and how she presented them in the Appendix, she should make even better use of them and comment on them more intensively.

Despite these critical comments, I believe this piece of economic analysis has its place in an academic or policy journal and would recommend Veronika to consider its publication. After incorporating the comments of the discussant and above, rewriting it and focusing on the parts with the most contribution (section 3 and especially 4.10 and 4.11), it could transform into a very interesting article with a clear contribution.

Suggested question for the defense is:

- “On the basis of your empirical analysis of Slovak development policy, what would be your recommendations for its improvement?”
- „How does your thesis relate with the literature on policy coherence for development?“

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In the case of successful defense, I recommend “chvalitebně” (excellent, 2).

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

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	12
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	24
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	28
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	16
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b> (max. 100 points)	<b>80</b>
<b>GRADE</b> (1 – 2 – 3 – 4)	<b>2</b>

**NAME OF THE REFEREE:** Petr Janský M.Sc.

**DATE OF EVALUATION:** 1.8.2011

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**Referee Signature**

**EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:**

**LITERATURE REVIEW:** *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
20                          10                          0

**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.*

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
30                          15                          0

**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.*

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
30                          15                          0

**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.*

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
20                          10                          0

**Overall grading:**

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE		
81 – 100	<b>1</b>	= excellent	= výborně
61 – 80	<b>2</b>	= good	= velmi dobře
41 – 60	<b>3</b>	= satisfactory	= dobře
0 – 40	<b>4</b>	= fail	= nedoporučuji k obhajobě