

Advisor's Report on Dissertation Thesis

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Author:	Martina Mysíková
Advisor:	doc. Ing. Vladislav Flek, CSc.
Title of the Thesis:	Three Comparative Essays on Gender Earnings Inequality in the Czech Republic
Type of Defense:	DEFENSE
Date of Pre-Defense:	May 23, 2012

Address the following questions in your report, please:

- a) Can you recognize an original contribution of the author?
- b) Is the thesis based on relevant references?
- c) Do the results of the thesis allow their publication in a respected economic journal?
- d) Are there any additional major comments on what should be improved?
- e) Were the comments raised at the pre-defense, addressed in the dissertation submitted to the regular defense?
- f) What is your overall assessment of the thesis? (a) I recommend the thesis to be defended without major changes; (b) The thesis is not defensible.

SUMMARY

In general, all I can do now is to repeat most of my comments I already made on the pre-defense version of Martina's thesis (see paragraphs a-d below). I still maintain that her pre-defense work was of high quality and could be presented as the regular defense without major changes. In addition, I like the way in which Martina has incorporated the referees' comments into the final version of the thesis (see paragraph e). The quality of the thesis is now even higher and I have no doubts that it will be defended successfully.

- a) I can see an original contribution of the author in three major directions:
 - First, the present thesis represents an **original, in-depth comparative insight** into income distribution issues in the Czech Republic, especially with respect to gender-based income differentials and within-family income analysis. It should be admitted above all that the author reveals with high professional erudition the structure of the Czech gender wage gap, finding similarities as well as dissimilarities compared to other central European countries. Among other findings, the author delivers results

suggesting a comparatively high within-couple earnings inequality in the Czech Republic, where especially the presence of children plays a significant role. Compared to the existing literature, the present thesis addresses these topics in many respects firstly/newly, and offers **previously unknown stylized facts** for the Czech Republic and other central European countries.

- Second, the **application of highly advanced econometric techniques** on micro data analysis, such as Heckman's selection model and Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition also deserves our respect. Also in this sense I believe that we have to admit the author's professional competence.
- Finally, there is no doubt that the author can be considered as **one of the most qualified Czech experts**(if not the most qualified one at all) to deal with micro databases such as the EU-SILC. In fact, this kind of the author's specific ability and skill exceeds by far the standard requirements one could impose on doctoral students, and explains additionally why the author could contribute so nicely to what we know about income distribution in the Czech Republic, including many relevant comparative aspects.

In all the above highlighted respects, the author demonstrates convincingly her professional competence, as additionally confirmed by her participation in top-level research grants, international professional conferences and publication activities. What also has to be acknowledged is the author's full dedication and exceptional effort demonstrated in the course of our cooperation.

- b) The thesis is based on relevant references in all possible respects. As author's advisor I can confirm that all references are indeed used as conceptual background for the thesis, i.e. their inclusion is definitely not just a formal paperwork, as it is sometimes the case in academic research.

- c) All three essays on which the present thesis is based have already been published in various forms, including refereed journals. In my opinion this by itself indicates the existing publication capacity of results collected in the present thesis. Moreover, one fragment of the thesis is currently under consideration in a respected international journal (*Journal of Income Distribution*). Another part of the thesis is still intended for submission to an international journal after its defense.
- d) In any research there is obviously always room for additional suggestions. But, considering my advisor's status, let me hope that I have already provided the author with all advices I possibly could. That is why I do not have now any additional suggestions or comments on what should be improved.
- e) Martina has shown enormous effort to incorporate the comments raised at the pre-defense. To be perfectly honest, I believe that she has responded much more than one would find it necessary. In my opinion, many comments were in fact meant as suggestions to be used in Martina's further research or addressed general problems such as limited data availability/reliability, alternative estimation methods, and the potential use of more explanatory variables. Comments of this sort are inherent to any evaluation process in social sciences and do not automatically mean principal objections towards the presented work. Indeed, all three referees stressed in their pre-defense reports that their suggestions are not contrary to an overall positive evaluation of Martina's work. Anyhow, the major revisions of the thesis in comparison with the previous version include:
- An extended analysis of explanatory variables in the participation equation (Essay 2) is provided mainly in Annex 2, as a response to comments by Jiří Podpiera. The described impacts of particular variables on GWG decomposition results supplements the original analysis in an exhaustive way.

- A broader discussion on missing explanatory variables in the wage equation (Essay 2) includes the issue of risk-aversion (as suggested by Jiří Podpiera), as well as limited information value of some variables used (as highlighted by Jiří Večerník).
- More criticism on data quality is added in Essay 3 (in response to comments by Jiří Večerník). Martina broadly comments on reasons of possibly under-represented income sources and attempts to indicate their impact on her results.

The way Martina copes with some methodological comments (raised mainly by Jiří Večerník) also deserves our acknowledgement. Although Martina considers the inclusion of the “polarization index” in Essay 1 as rather unnecessary, she still provides the referees with the results generated by this method in her pre-defense report.

Martina also worked hard to improve some details, e.g. she supplemented available European comparative empirics on adjusted GWG. In addition, some relevant literature was added (both recommended and not recommended by the referees). I can conclude that Martina responded explicitly to all referees’ comments either in the thesis or in the pre-defense report. The scope of her response is exceptional, thus proving additionally her full dedication and effort she has permanently demonstrated in the course of our cooperation.

f) As for my overall assessment, I recommend the thesis to be defended without major changes.

Date: 24 August 2012	
Advisor’s Signature:	
Advisor’s Affiliation:	doc. Ing. Vladislav Flek, CSc. Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

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g) I can see an original contribution of the author in three major directions:

- First, the present thesis represents **an original, in-depth comparative insight** into income distribution issues in the Czech Republic, especially with respect to gender-based income differentials and within-family income analysis. It should be admitted above all that the author reveals with high professional erudition the structure of the Czech gender wage gap, finding similarities as well as dissimilarities compared to other central European countries. Furthermore, the author delivers results suggesting a comparatively high within-couple earnings inequality in the Czech Republic, where especially the presence of children plays a significant role. Compared to the existing literature, the present thesis addresses these topics in many respects firstly/newly, and offers **previously unknown stylized facts** for the Czech Republic and other central European countries.
- Second, the **application of highly advanced econometric techniques** on micro data analysis, such as Heckman's selection model and Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition also deserves our respect. Also in this sense I believe that we have to admit the author's professional competence.
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income distribution in the Czech Republic, including many relevant comparative aspects.

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- h) The thesis is based on relevant references in all possible respects. As author's advisor I can confirm that all references are indeed used as conceptual background for the thesis, i.e. their inclusion is definitely not just a formal paperwork, as it is sometimes the case in academic research.
- i) All three essays on which the present thesis is based have already been published in various forms, including refereed journals. In my opinion this by itself indicates the existing publication capacity of results collected in the present thesis. Moreover, one fragment of the thesis is currently under consideration in a respected international journal(*Journal of Income Distribution*). Another part of the thesis is still intended for submission to an international journal after its pre-defense, thus possibly making use of the referees' reports.
- j) In any research there is obviously always room for additional suggestions. But, considering my advisor's status and the pre-defense version of the present thesis, let me hope that I have already provided the author with all advices I possibly could. That is why I do not have now any additional major suggestions or comments on what should be improved. At this stage, it is rather a challenge for the referees. 😊
- k) As for my overall assessment, I can recommend the thesis for final defense without substantial changes.

Date:	12 April, 2012
Advisor's Signature:	
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