ABSTRACT

Corruption is perceived as one of the most serious threats to the society and to the economy of the country as well. For these reasons, many social scientists have tried to discover and describe the root causes of corruption. This task is complicated by the fact that corruption is a clandestine activity, which makes it very difficult to measure and to detect its true effects, as well as its underlying causes. The aim of this dissertation is to analyse and explore possible causes for the level of corruption on the European level with a special focus on the differences between post-communist European countries and the rest of countries in Europe. First, this dissertation presents theories explaining corruption on a global level as well as definitions of corruption. Theories explaining the influences between corruption on a global level and various variables, namely GDP per capita, income inequality, generalized trust, values, and the share of Protestants in the population, are discussed and a special focus is made on the possible different effect in the case of post-communist European countries. Next, in methodological part, indicators measuring corruption are assessed and the best indicator is selected – the Control of Corruption by the World Bank. The validity of the theories presented in the first part of dissertation are then tested on 40 European countries with the use of data from 1996 until 2014 and by using several statistical methods as OLS regression or multilevel models. Countries are also divided into countries with and without a history of communist rule and the differences between them are tested. The analysis shows unexpected results, especially concerning income inequality, GPD per capita and values. This micro-macro model shows that there are huge differences between countries with a communist legacy and countries with a longer history of democracy and rule of law.