

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

GPS – Geopolitical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	Breaking Down Barriers: Euroregional Cooperation of the Czech Republic
Author of the thesis:	Karen Benko
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr. Martin Riegl, PhD.

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):

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	20
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	17
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	18
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	14
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	14
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	84
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)	1

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:

Karen Benko decided to analyze bilateral Euroregional cross-border cooperation between the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany, Austria and Poland between 2000-2008. The aim of the thesis is evaluate the impact of Euroregions and success of the European cohesion policy. Throughout the thesis the theory of learning regions is applied, which one can hardly object.

2) Contribution:

The author provides an interesting contribution to the research of cross-border cooperation between the Czech Republic and its neighboring countries. Karen answers number of interesting questions. The two main hypotheses being tested (and confirmed in the author's research) are that: "1. *The intensity of regional development post-2004 is greater, in the older, "established" Euroregions than in the more recently established Euroregions;* 2. *Czech accession to the EU had a greater impact on regions cooperating with a new member state than with an old member state.*" The strong side of the thesis is it's informative value.

3) Methods:

The author employs appropriate comparative analysis (along with the empirical method) in order to compare the pre-accession period and the 2004-2008 period.

4) Literature:

K. Benko utilizes extensive number of sources, however many experts in the field of regionalism are completely ignored (Fawcett, Mitrany among others). Thus the author fails to understand some basic definitions of pan-region, region, inter-state or cross-border region. Thus a definition of region according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (p.15) is provided, which barely understandable in the

master diploma thesis. Furthermore the author give another questionable statement “*the nation nation state is divided into separate regions...*”.

Unfortunately I must state that the list of sources does not follow the required layout.

5) Manuscript form:

The submitted thesis meets most of formal standards required by Faculty of Social Sciences, however the layout of the thesis is rather poor. Despite of all above mentioned faults I do propose to grade the submitted thesis as excellent.

DATE OF EVALUATION: May 29th, 2014

Referee Signature