

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

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

Title of the thesis:	<u>THE IMPACT OF UKRAINIAN CRISIS ON RUSSIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE CIS COUNTRIES</u>
Author of the thesis:	Tatiana SIDORENKO
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr. Markéta Žídková, Ph.D., M.A.

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>	11
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	5
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	15
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	61
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)	2

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:

In her first chapter, Tatiana Sidorenko identifies several factors with a significant influence on RFP in the post-Soviet era. She describes the impact of the USSR dissolution on Russia and introduces the famous theoretical debate about geographical and civilizational identity as well as the question of Russia being an empire. In addition to that, the first chapter provides an overview of RFP since 1991.

2) Contribution:

The author has made an effort to understand and present the integration processes in the post-Soviet area. The second chapter describes various integrational projects initiated by Russia. The core of the Thesis, however, lies in its third part, which focuses on the topic of the Ukrainian crisis, its roots and consequences for the Russia's relations with the C.I.S. countries, in particular with Belarus and Kazakhstan. Russia's role in the current conflict can be discussed during the Thesis defense.

3) Methods. 4) Literature:

Tatiana Sidorenko's work remains mainly descriptive. She builds her work on relevant sources, including primary ones (RFP concepts, presidential speeches). She tries to assess her sources critically. Author's analytical abilities are most visible in the third chapter, where she deals with very current issues (with a clear timeframe).

5) Manuscript form:

The Thesis has a logical structure, although some parts would need additional clarification. The language of the Thesis is without major problems.

Tatiana Sidorenko worked mainly on her own, although we have been discussing the topic as well as her text for a few months. As her supervisor, I saw the work in progress and I appreciated Tatiana's hardworking approach. Therefore, I suggest to evaluate her work as *good*, "2-". The final grade will obviously depend on the author's ability to defend her work.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 20 January 2015

Martin Kildon

Referee Signature

The referee should give comments to the following requirements:

1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts omitted? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently incorporated with the topic and hypotheses tested?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

2) CONTRIBUTION: Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the policy implications well founded?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

3) METHODS: Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further verification and testing? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or irrelevant detours off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 10 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

4) LITERATURE REVIEW: The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way and disposes with a representative bibliography. (Remark: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**). If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

5) MANUSCRIPT FORM: The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate language and style, including academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading	US grading
81 – 100	1	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	2	= good	= B
51 – 60	3	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	3	= satisfactory	= D
0 – 40	4	= fail	= not recommended for defence