



## Master's Thesis Evaluation Form

Student's name: Valeria Galushkevych

Thesis title: 'Czech people' coming from Ukraine, their understanding of national identity

Name of the supervisor: Jakub Grygar

Name of the opponent: Michal Nekorjak

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis? Please give your reasons for the suggested grade in detail below.

1. *Does the author show understanding of one or more theories, and uses theory to generate a hypothesis or to make the problem area more understandable?*

To some extent the understanding (and application) of relevant sociological theories is satisfying, especially the theory of push and pull factors in international migration and its weak point. Key theory of social identity is acceptably interpreted, however the related concept of ethnic identities is introduced, but not utilized in its richness. Thus, the explanatory potential for the surveyed phenomenon is unemployed (for example, Czech national identity of actors with Czech ancestors is taken as a fact – they just have it, and is not systematically conceived as a dynamic and socially formed phenomenon).

Overall, the author uses theory to generate hypothesis and is trying to find a better understanding of the selected topic. But the devise of relevant social or sociological problem is weak and so there is a question why to invest time and skills into such demanding enterprise such as this research. Limited capability of the push and pull factors is well-known and largely discussed. Also, ethnicity as the initiator of international migration is not a new finding. Finally, push and pull factors have been defined in the logic of objective social phenomenon („structures“, „social forces“). Ethnic identity does not fit into this reasoning and is as a whole a different type of „factor“. In the logic of push and pull factor theory, it could be written on the list in the cases of social conflicts, discrimination and ethnic violence generating “objective pressures”, but the story here is somewhat different.

2. *Is the research question articulated clearly and properly? Is the research question sufficiently answered in the conclusion?*

Conclusions are not very convincing (also due to weak analytical work) and with topic previously undiscussed in the analytical part:

- The answer to research question no. 3 (“what are the integration patterns of these migrants as opposed to other migrants described in migration literature?”) is problematical because of conceptualization of the social integration of migrants, despite the fact that there is rich literature about this theme. The answer to the research question no. 2 (“to what extent is



their migration decision motivated by national identity considerations as opposed to wage differentials?”) is vague. First of all, there is no need to conceive both motives as opposed. The conclusion that ethnic identity “is an important determinant of individual decision to emigrate, more importantly, what country to emigrate to”, is truism with no analytical gain because taking part in government program is based on ethnic belonging.

- Conclusion includes research findings on the role of social networks but this theme is missing in the analytical chapter.
- Minor objection could be raised against the formulation of research question. “To what extent” connotes quantification, but this has not been intended. “Other migrant” is quite vague formulation simplifying existing heterogeneity into one category (see also below).

3. *Is the thesis based on relevant research and literature and does it accurately summarize and integrate the information?*

The thesis uses relevant literature to some extent, but some key concepts are missing. The most problematical abandonment is the missing literature review on immigrant integration and surveys on resettlement (including the nation state policy of resettlement and its connection to national ideologies). Less problematic, but questionable, are unmentioned concepts and literature dealing with transnationalism. On the other hand, some literature is superfluous making the text “overcontextualized” (e.g. literature dealing with the definition of migrants, concept of individual identity, review on international migration etc.)

4. *What is the quality of the data or the other sources? Are the sample method, data collection and data analysis appropriate?*

The analysis is weak, research method is problematic and in the text there is confusion of qualitative and quantitative approach. Specifically:

- The analysis of interviews is weak and has rather descriptive character instead of desirable form of sociological interpretation based on analytical approach.
- The research sample consists of 10 respondents, which is not sufficient with regard to the chosen method. The author reflected objective obstacles obstructing the construction of appropriate sample, but it should lead her to choose different approach how to gather data for analysis and how to construct research tool.
- Another problematic attribute could be briefly expressed as follows: qualitative technique, quantitative logic. Although the research is based on qualitative methodology, it is evident that the author is more familiar with quantitative research design. It can be noticed on many occasions when quantitative discourse and reasoning emerge in inappropriate places (for example on p. 40 the text deals with the problem of generalization; the research has an ambition to test hypothesis; in research questions reasons for migration are denoted as determinants or one of the questions starts with collocation „to what extent“ etc.).
- Integration, as stated in the text, is one of the core topics of the research. But the complex problem of integration is discussed intuitively. There is no standard “operationalization” for the survey purposes or inspiration from the literature dedicated to the multidimensional character of migrants’ integration in various social spheres.



5. *Are the findings relevant to the research question? Are the conclusions of the thesis based on strong arguments?*

Only to the some extent. The problematic formulation of research questions (including the problematic working out of relevant sociological questions and mismatch of qualitative and quantitative logics) and the weak analytical approach has been mentioned.

6. *Are the author's thoughts distinguished unambiguously from the borrowed ideas?*

Yes, there is no confusions in this regard and the thesis reaches required standards.

7. *Is the thesis containing original/innovative research (in terms of topic, approach, and/or findings)?*

The framing of the research is interesting and promising some attractive findings, but the result is not original in any aspects, nevertheless I do not expect standard master thesis to be innovative.

8. *What is the quality of style and other formal requirements?*

Formal requirements are followed sufficiently. The language aspects is less adequate, but the text is intelligible.

9. *Are there any other strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, which are not included in the previous questions? Please list them if any.*

The inconvenient and confusing structure of the text is one of the most problematic aspects of the thesis:

- The sequence of the topics often lacks comprehensibility and does not contribute to structured argumentation. Some topics are repeated and are scattered over chapters (especially theories and surveys based on the push and pull factors, method of the research).
- Chapter on survey method is not followed by empirical/analytical part, but the topic of international migration and Ukrainian immigration into the Czech Republic surprisingly emerges, although this is the broad context for the research and it should be placed earlier in the text.
- 9 pages (over 10 % of the text) are dedicated to the minor issue - the definition of migrants and the problem of official national statistical data construction on (im)migrant population discussed without a direct link with the research problem.
- Introduction chapter discusses themes on the level of details appropriate for theoretical or methodological chapter.
- Chapter 5 (Analysis of Collected Survey Data) consists of descriptions of the Program and partially of methodology, i.e. themes belonging to previous chapters.

10. *What topic do you suggest for the discussion in the thesis defence?*



- Is the author aware of the existence of similar government program apart from the Czech one?
- Is the current war situation in the Ukraine the trigger for their respondents to decide to emigrate or is the program just a suitable tool or accelerator for those who have been prone to emigrate in any case?
- “A survey study conducted by post might not be a good method in terms of the representativeness of the survey. In other words, there is no reinforcement device that would force every German who received a questionnaire to respond to that questionnaire. The authors work with the sample of those respondents who decided to reply to the questions (p. 14)”. Could the author specify this? Is it a specific problem of researches using this method of survey distribution?

Overall assessment of the thesis:

The master thesis is qualified to be successfully defended, although my proposed grading is rather strict. In my opinion this thesis met the required standards but more likely on the low level of acceptance. The author demonstrated that she knows the basic logic of sociological research and reasoning, found the relevant topic and applied standard theory. But the text is not well structured, has weak analytical character and it is not thoroughly worked out with care to details and effort to gain maximum from the interesting topic.

Proposed grade: good

Date: 21. 6. 2016

Signature: