

## REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>Interdependence and Diversification. A View at Current EU-Russian Energy Relations</b>
<b>Author of the thesis:</b>	<b>Anna Beniczky</b>
<b>Referee (incl. titles):</b>	<b>PhDr. Vít Strátecký, M.Phil., Ph.D.</b>

**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):

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	18
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	16
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	14
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	19
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	19
<b>TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)</b>	<b>1</b>

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:**

The concept of interdependence is appropriately chosen. Moreover, the thesis offers the operationalization through the notions of sensitivity and vulnerability. The theoretical debate focusing on realist and liberal perspective is well-written and pinpoints the crucial elements of both paradigms.

Generally, the theoretical framing is adequate and well-elaborated.

#### **2) Contribution:**

Even if interdependence is a common analytical perspective (as the quality literature review also claim), many approaches suffer from the inability to effectively operationalize the concept, particularly in the social scientific (non-economic) context. From this perspective author's approach indeed contributes to the field. On the other hand certain limit lies in (may be unavoidable) simplification of the relation between interdependence and political implications (reactions). It is exactly the reason for why some research tends to utilize the concept of securitization in the context of EU-Russia energy relations.

#### **3) Methods:**

The author does not perform any quantitative operation (despite her claim in the introduction). It utilizes and interprets quantitative data. The author nicely explains the way she will utilize the conceptual framework, which is in fact a methodological perspective. On the other hand the thesis could be better grounded a standard social scientific methodology (perhaps case study, here)

#### **4) Literature:**

The thesis builds on relevant and rich literature base. I especially appreciate the literature review.

#### **5) Manuscript form:**

The thesis is well-written and structured. It has a clear analytical character.

**DATE OF EVALUATION: 01/09/2015**

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**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	<b>1</b>	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	<b>2</b>	= good	= B
51 – 60	<b>3</b>	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	<b>3</b>	= satisfactory	= D
0 – 40	<b>4</b>	= fail	= not recommended for defence