



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Noora Mattson

Title: Immigration Policies - Challenges and Changes that European Union is Facing

Programme/year: MISS (2016)

Author of Evaluation (thesis supervisor): Dr. Ondrej Ditrych

Criteria	Definition	Max.	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	5
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	15
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	25
<i>Total</i>		80	45
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	3
	Style	5	2
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	10
TOTAL		100	55



Evaluation

Major criteria: The presented thesis tackles a subject matter of substantial contemporary relevance. The author asks several research questions which she proposes to answer using a qualitative method: whether the EU has been able to devise effective immigration policies, whether the cooperation is making it stronger, how has the 'refugee crisis' affected the EU, what kind of challenges it has brought, and, in her own words most importantly, what have been the effects of EU securitization of immigration. Due to a lack of their specificity, absence of theoretical framework, practically no methodology and often convoluted argument, despite providing a decent if somewhat disorganised overview of EU migration policies and the member states, the thesis does not reach conclusions that could be considered a result of a thought process that meets standards of the scientific inquiry, with a partial exception of the summoning some evidence to substantiate a posited relationship between securitisation and nationalisation of responses to the perceived immigration problem.

The author suggests to be using securitisation theory and 'realism' to show why immigrants are seen as threat across the EU. First, it is debatable whether these theories can indeed be used for such purpose. Second, their presentation is unsatisfactory. Both chapters draw on a *single* source each, in case of realism moreover rather obscure (notwithstanding existence of literature on realist understanding of EU politics, see Mearsheimer, or Rosato). When the author writes, later in the thesis, that '[t]he asylum seekers coming to EU at the moment are often from countries that are also affiliated to Islam and terrorism and because of this the securitization of asylum seekers is very possible' (p. 48), it raises doubts about whether she really knows what securitisation is. In the chapter on realism, she includes a debate on Euroscepticism, which moreover makes it unclear to what extent she distinguishes between a theory of international politics and a political movement.



The thesis neither defines nor follows any manifest method, and both structure and flow of the argument seems to be somewhat chaotic, suggesting that when writing the thesis, the author was unsure as to what she really wanted to achieve. (It certainly does not reflect the definition of research questions.) The indiosyncrasy of the structure is immediately clear as the introduction is the thesis' *third* section, and the conclusion is followed by a part called 'hypothesis' which purports to provide responses to the research questions which however, due to the lack of their specificity and commensurate methodology, are generally superficial.

The chapter on common immigration policies of the EU is the thesis' best as it provides a concise if somewhat unsystematic overview of the relevant legislation and common actions. Even here, however, the argument lacks focus and some important dates, such as that of the Amsterdam Treaty, are incorrect, which makes it unclear to what extent the empiric fundamentals have been mastered by the author.

The next two chapters often confound description and prescription. The chapter on EU security provides a very partial discussion of the subject matter and includes problematic statements such as that EU counterterrorism fails because 'so many attacks have happened' (p. 48).

The following chapters on public opinion and ongoing refugee crisis do not seem to follow any clear objective, and previously unannounced 'case studies' (Finland, Hungary) are included – though the discussion of the Finnish case, with which the author seems to be very familiar, brings some interesting insights.

Because of the deficiencies previously mentioned, the conclusion is then somewhat facile (EU faces 'massive challenges' and is 'suffering' from it), and contained several vague and unsubstantiated assertions ('people are worried about the situation').



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Minor criteria: The sources used are not extensive and at times are poorly chosen to treat the particular aspects of the problem the author seeks to confront. The author's language makes understanding of some arguments difficult.

Overall evaluation: Because the thesis lacks a conceptual framework to situate the inquiry it proposes to undertake as well as any methodology, its argument does not succeed in penetrating under the surface of the general rhetoric in the contemporary polarised political debate. That said, the thesis at least partly manages to support the claim that securitisation of migration is productive of nationalisation of political action in the EU.

Suggested grade: Good / Fail

Signature: