REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

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

Title of the thesis:	The Implications of the Estonian E-residency Project on Statehood and Territoriality
Author of the thesis:	**Liis Peets**
Referee *(incl. titles)*:	**Mgr. Martin Riegl, Ph.D.**

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**
Theoretical background (max. 20)	15
Contribution (max. 20)	19
Methods (max. 20)	18
Literature (max. 20)	15
Manuscript form (max. 20)	18
TOTAL POINTS *(max. 100)*	**85**
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**: The author framed her reserach within the theoretical concept of political territoriality which is closely related to Sack´s theory, which is a good starting point for the selected case study of the Estonian e-residency and its potential impact on the Westphalian system of sovereign state. Having mentioned that, the latter concept might be elaborared more, however it still provides the author with a relevant and sufficient framework for the empirical part of the paper.

2) **Contribution**: What I do appreciate most its author´s understanding of the case as she has a first hand experience, besides that Ms. Peets has chosen a difficult topic which has not been among top listed topics of experts in the field. The author has managed to conduct independent and dutiful research/analysis, her conclusions are relevant and one might agree with them and generally fulfilled the declared goal of the thesis.

3) **Methods**: The author based her analysis on the case study, the method is clearly defined and throughly applied in the thesis.

4) **Literature**: The list of sources is satisfactory and relevant, the author has proven her ability to work with a different types of sources and utilize them accordingly and critically. However, considering the topic itself, and main concepts used throughout the thesis, additional literature review on the concept of sovereignty would be beneficial as it remains far from being exhaustive.

5) **Manuscript form**: The submitted thesis meets all formal criteria required by Faculty of Social Sciences and the overall quality of written English, some minor typos appear but this does not affect the overall positive impression of the paper. Therefore I do recommend to grade it excellent.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 24.5.2017

_____

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