



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: **Mariia Kulichkina**

Title: **European Defence Industry in Times of Austerity**

Programme/year: **2016/2017**

Author of Evaluation (supervisor/external assessor): **Jan Beneš (external assessor)**

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	7
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	14
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	27
<i>Total</i>		80	48
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	9
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	4
<i>Total</i>		20	18
TOTAL		100	66



Evaluation

Major criteria:

a) Research question, thesis / hypothesis

The author is outlining an actual and relevant main research question. Other sub-questions are fairly corresponding with the major one and providing a reasonable value added to the research. I especially appreciate the question „How the change in the high politics affected the other dimensions of the non-traditional aspect of international security, in particular how the relationship among economics-power-security reconfigured?“, nevertheless I would welcome further elaboration of the relationship between this question and the overall aim of the thesis. On the other hand, the questions concerning EU defence integration and the institutionalization process are partly outside the framework of the thesis, which is focused on comparative study of the three states in within the neorealist paradigm. The thesis observes and analyses the approach of the examined states towards European defence industry cooperation, pooling and sharing and integration, but not the process itself. The research is focused on states, not on the processes within the EU, for which the comparative study of three actors out of 27/28 is not well suited. The hypothesis is well chosen and corresponds with the research purpose.

b) Theoretical / conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is very in depth, concerning political and economic aspects. However, the introduction to defence industry is interesting, comprehensive and precise, but for the purpose of the research it is extensively long, focusing on unimportant aspects and going into the details that are irrelevant for the rest of the thesis. The author should have created closer links between the examined subject relevant for the research and the provided information. Nevertheless, I appreciate that the author is able to grasp and summarize the complexity of the European defence industry market.

The theoretical framework is a bit vague. Author juxtaposes the two major theories – constructivism and neorealism – elaborates them and then chooses one. The argument “Neorealist approach provides a more precise explanation of the intergovernmental nature of cooperation in defence, therefore it has been selected as main theoretical approach” is insufficient. Author proved a very good understanding of the main theoretical schools in the defence industry, proves a good knowledge of a relevant literature, but fails in argumentation for the selection of the theory. Also the theory is only explained, but not further analysed. I am missing an explanation, which part of the theory is particularly relevant, why and how does it help to explain us the behaviour of the observed actors.



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The operationalisation is slightly unclear. It is difficult to find in the thesis a link between the research questions, theoretical grounding, comparative analysis and expected outcomes. Author creates a logical set of observations, which are clearly ordered, but I would welcome further elaboration of how the research is conducted, what outcome proves the hypothesis, what disproves it. There should also be clearly explained what is the aim of the comparison towards the research questions and hypothesis.

c) Analysis and Argument

The argumentation is clear, knowledgeable and using fair amount of sources. The author is providing a great amount of facts including hard data. Author is proving to be able to analyse the massive corpus of information and provide a reliable narrative. However, concerning the theoretical framework, research questions and hypothesis, there should have been a greater attention paid towards the relationship between national strategy, national economy and the response towards the financial crisis. Author has collected a great data set, proved its ability to work with the data, but the thesis lacks better link between the data and the purpose of the research.

I highly appreciate that author combined coherently the “soft data” from strategic documents, political goals and speeches with the “hard data” of arms trades, budgets etc. and created a complex overall picture of the observed state.

There is a major problem with conclusion of the thesis. A proper conclusion with the results of the comparison is missing. The major answer is well addressed in each of the observation, but the three observations are not connected in a final thought that would justify the comparison and the overall structure of the paper. The conclusion considering the EU defence cooperation is not using sufficiently the outcomes of the comparison.

Minor criteria:

a) Sources

Author is using a great amount of sources, relevant sources, fairly distributed among observed states, EU integration and EU defence market. I appreciate the usage of a solid amount of policy papers, official documents and reports. I would welcome adding more literature on the theoretical aspect of used neorealism (questionable use of Morgenthau, Snyder and Oakeshott, while missing other neorealist authors, especially those focusing on the relationship between realism and economy – Grieco, Gilpin, Guzzini)



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b) Writing style

Author writes knowledgeably with proper English, easy to understand and using proper language and vocabulary. There are minor mistakes, mostly misspellings.

c) Formal Criteria

The thesis is sufficiently long, having all the necessary parts with correct citation. Some of the charts have been taken from other sources (and properly cited) containing also a lot information irrelevant for the thesis.

Overall evaluation:

The thesis provides an intelligent insight into the European Defence Industry and contains in-depth and detailed work with facts, covering many aspects of the researched topic and using a large scale of data. However, the conceptual framework and the interplay between theory, methodology, research questions and hypothesis is weak and insufficient. The operationalisation is too vague and too short. The thesis lacks reliable and coherent conclusion that would grasp the results of the three observations, prove or disprove properly the hypothesis and answer the research questions. The selection and further operation with the theory is disputable. Nevertheless, there are several very good parts of the thesis - the elaboration of a links between the observed states' reactions to economic austerity and the relationship towards EU defence market or the amount of sources.

Suggested grade:

3 (with possibility for 2)

Signature:

