

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

Student:	Peter Kúdeľa
Advisor:	PhDr. Zuzana Havránková, Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Does Daylight Saving Time Save Energy? Evidence from Slovakia

OVERALL ASSESSMENT (provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):

Please provide your assessment of each of the following four categories, summary and suggested questions for the discussion. The minimum length of the report is 300 words.

Contribution

The effect of the daylight saving time policy on energy consumption is not straightforward. Supporters of the policy have traditionally pointed at lighting electricity savings during the evening hours – because the policy effectively forces people go to sleep and wake up earlier (thus bringing their biorhythms closer to the natural cycle of light and dark). But the shift to daylight saving time takes place relatively early in the spring, which means that many people suddenly have to get up during the coldest, darkest part of the day. So, in these days and weeks, we expect to observe increased energy consumption in the morning due to more intensive heating, and later in the summer more energy consumption due to air conditioning during the long evenings. According to my own research (a meta-analysis of dozens of estimates for many countries), the typical results is that daylight saving time brings no electricity savings on average. This BA thesis presents a state of the art estimate of the overall effect (including a detailed breakdown for individual hours; see Figure 5.1) for Slovakia, and the results contrast with my own research. As far as I know, this is the first rigorous estimate for Slovakia, and brings a substantial contribution to the current pan-European debate about the benefits and costs of daylight saving time. The author clearly demonstrates that in Slovakia daylight saving time saves electricity: the equivalent of about 7 million euros.

Methods

The thesis uses the best-practice methodology for the research question and data at hand: difference in differences. The approach is clearly documented throughout the thesis, and the results are credible. Indeed, I believe that this thesis could potentially be published in a good journal (such as Energy Economics) after some revisions. The author does his best at using all of the data that are available for the purpose of estimating the effect of daylight saving time. Of course, the best thing would be to have a natural experiment: for example, if Slovakia abolished the policy for a couple of years and then returned to it. But in the absence of such a natural experiment, the chosen methodology is the best one we can employ to answer this research question.

Literature

All the important studies are properly cited in the thesis. I appreciate that the author uses a bibliography manager.

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Manuscript form

I appreciate the care with which the manuscript is written. Of course, most non-native speakers, including me, can improve in how we write academic papers, but I think the quality of the thesis is superb when one realizes this is a BA thesis.

Summary and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

This thesis brings a clear research contribution, more than enough for a BA or MA thesis. In fact, I believe it could easily pass as a dissertation chapter. I urge the author to try to publish the results.

Question for thesis defense: could you elaborate a bit more on how the results change with a change in base temperature (the one when neither heating nor cooling is needed)? Could the fact that air conditioning is not really widespread in Slovakia explain the larger benefits of daylight saving time compared to other countries studied in the literature, especially the USA?

In sum, this thesis is a good candidate for potential award for an extraordinarily good BA thesis. I am not sure what more we could want from a bachelor student to deliver. Well done!

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
Contribution (max. 30 points)	29
Methods (max. 30 points)	30
Literature (max. 20 points)	20
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	19
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	98
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	A+

NAME OF THE REFEREE: PhDr. Zuzana Havránková, Ph.D.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 23.5.2018



Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

CONTRIBUTION: *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

METHODS: *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

Overall grading:

TOTAL	GRADE
91 – 100	A
81 - 90	B
71 - 80	C
61 – 70	D
51 – 60	E
0 – 50	F