

Institut ekonomických studií

Fakulta sociálních věd, Universita Karlova Praha

Referee report on the Bachelor/Master Thesis submitted to State Exam

Student Name:	Jan DUBEN
Thesis Supervisor Name:	Ing. Vilém Semerák, PhD
Thesis Title:	Věštba z křišťálové koule - Predikce pracovní imigrace cizinců do České republiky z panelových dat

Overall Evaluation:

The thesis of Jan Duben, after superficially skimming through the text, filled me with high expectations. Maybe that influenced my objectivity unduly because after more concentrated reading I had to discount the results quite significantly.

First to the topic:

The choice of immigration of labour to Czechia – that was quite an unorthodox treat and, indeed, this author was the first one who came with its quantitative analysis and who also attempted at forecasting the future inflows. This should be appreciated.

The method of analysis:

The author describes in chapter 2 several heterogeneous theories explaining migration in the world literature. Some of the theories would deserve a lot more attention, so that the total 8 pages provided were far too little for this kind of seminal study. It would be a merit if the author tried to construct an interface between this theoretical part and the specification of the final empirical model. I have missed that here.

At the end the author decided about one model (like *deus ex machina*) that was already used quite successfully in the past. Its authors Alvarez-Plata, Brücker and Siliverstovs and DIW as host institution are quite renowned and their model should not be therefore blamed for inconsistencies. Nevertheless, I have a suspicion that the decision to use the GDP per capita (in addition at the PPP level), instead of the wage rates, was an erroneous step that damaged the credibility of estimates. The inclusion of unemployment rates and distance between countries seems to be acceptable. More attention would deserve the dummies (actually the crucial variables) that were smuggled into the model nearly unobserved.

The techniques of estimation:

Even though the matter of estimation techniques did not figure as the main objective of the study, at the end it looked as if this was the main contribution. Author tried several techniques and he has proved that he knew how to work with them in the environment of complicated panel data. However, the "trick" of including a lagged variable of migration stocks /i.e. the explained variable/ among the explanatory variables should deserve more attention and most probably it should not have been chosen.

About the results:

This part was rather hasty – it was not easy to understand both the estimation and the prediction results and their interpretation. For example, I had problems with the two SHARE variables in the anonymous table on the page 29. Why two ? The author also has not commented on the facts that the importance of all three real variables was just marginal, meanwhile the importance of lagged and dummy variables explained nearly all variations. I have a suspicion that in reality the models used were very weak in their explanatory power.

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Then also the predictions could not be very credible. This was not so much a problem of weak data but a problem of a weak model. The prediction of a dominant Chinese migration (while in the input data on pages 19 they seem to be close to zero) is from this point of view just a whim.

My impressions from this thesis are completely mixed – on the one hand the author deserves honours for some parts of his work, while on the other hand he should rewrite completely some important chapters.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for the explanation of categories and scale, please, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
Quality of Research	15-24
Clarity and Readability	5
Content/Quality of Ideas	34
Organization & Development	4
Manuscript Form	4
TOTAL POINTS	62-71
LETTER GRADE	B – B-

(Signature – Defense Opponent)

<Vladimír Benáček

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