



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Bc. Lucia Vilimovská

Title: US lobbyists in the EU: significance of home country regulation for lobbying behaviour in a less regulated environment

Programme/year: Mezinárodní vztahy / ZS 2019

Author of Evaluation (external assessor): doc. PhDr. Běla Plechanovová, CSc.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	6
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	25
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	35
<i>Total</i>		80	66
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	6
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	2
<i>Total</i>		20	12
TOTAL		100	78



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis addresses an interesting and important topic of lobbying in the European Union focused on the level of regulation and behaviour of the US lobbying entities in the EU environment. While I appreciate the topic and its relevance, the thesis suffers from a number of flaws that could have been avoided. First and most importantly, the thesis does not reflect properly the literature already out there on EU lobbying and its findings. The Author uses a cite from Eising (2017), (p. 14), which is unfortunately out of the context as regards the goals of the thesis. This leads to uncertainty regarding the theoretical anchoring and methodological approach. The Author states that International Political Economy and rational choice perspective are going to be the theoretical background of the thesis, but the definitions and concepts are introduced in a very broad meaning without really implementing these to the research design of the thesis.

Second, following from the first point, the research questions introduced in the first chapter can hardly be answered without clear idea how to measure the differences among behaviour of the actors in diverse legal environments of the US and EU. Whichever the approach to the analysis, the indicators have to be stated unambiguously, which is not the case in the thesis. From what follows in chapter 3.2 and chapters 6 and 7 I see a contradiction between a claim that the data available are not suited for quantitative analysis and the description of the process the Author was intending to use and in fact was using through the analytical part of the thesis.

Minor criteria:

I appreciate the breadth of the sources used by the Author for the empirical analysis as well as the proactive approach to the lobbyist organizations when looking for the information needed for the analysis. On the other hand, the list of the documents that constitute the sources of the data is nor organized in any way and is not referred to properly through the text. While there is not a real need to structure the list of the references to the literature, there is definitely a need to present separately a list of documents that are sources of the data. "Online" is not in this respect a category, it is just a form. The section mixes up governmental and EU documents, media, documents of lobbyist organizations/firms, policy papers, email communications, etc. It is extremely difficult then to match the passim reference in the text and the item on the list.



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Overall evaluation:

The strength of this thesis lies in the choice of the topic and the scope of the sources used for empirical analysis, as well as the proactive approach; the weakness lies in the weak research design which does not allow to evaluate the contribution of the analysis properly.

Suggested grade: C