



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

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Title: Post-Vilnius European Neighbourhood Policy: The Case of South Caucasus

Programme/year: International Relations/SS 2020

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	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	28
<i>Total</i>		<i>80</i>	54
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	8
	Style	5	3
	Formal requirements	5	3
<i>Total</i>		<i>20</i>	14
TOTAL		100	68



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis addresses an interesting and important topic of European Union's policy towards the post-soviet space, namely the region of South Caucasus. The Author aims at depicting the evolution of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in the last decade and answering a question which IR theory explains the ENP after the Vilnius summit better. The thesis offers a concise description of the ENP during the period mentioned as well as the positions of the countries in the region. The research design of the thesis lacks clarity, the methodology is not properly described.

The quest for the answer to the research question is unconvincing, nevertheless. The Author starts with assumption that there is a conflict between values and interests emerging around the time of the Vilnius summit. In my opinion, a wrong assumption, as there is a conflict between values and interests inherent in any politics, anytime, only that when the times are calm and easy, there is not much pressure to make the choice. Both can be followed, and the presentation of the values help to build an image of a value-oriented actor while at the same time the interests may be looked after as well. When the times are harsh, the actors have to make the choices more often, and more often the values lose. To sum up, the neoliberal and the neorealist theories do not represent alternative explanations of the conflict between values and interests. It would take a longer explication why we cannot consider ENP a norm-oriented project from its very beginning.

What has been said explains, hopefully, why the approach of the thesis could not deliver convincing conclusion.

Minor criteria:

The scope of resources used is adequate as well as the work with them. The text would benefit from language and style editing.



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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-D