

# Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

<b>Student:</b>	<b>Lucie Svitáková</b>
<b>Advisor:</b>	<b>Petr Janský, Ph.D.</b>
<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>Measuring the Index of Constructive External Engagement: ICEE for the Czech Republic</b>

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

The aim of this thesis was to compute the Center for Global Development's Index of Constructive External Engagement (ICEE) for the Czech Republic and compare the results methodologically and internationally. Lucie Svitáková fulfilled this objective in a very good way.

As a piece of applied empirical work, Lucie first introduced the concept of the index and discussed its differences with Commitment to Development Index (a similar index focused on aiding poor countries). She then did the time-consuming job of collecting the needed data and computing the score of ICEE for the Czech Republic. In some depth she discussed the overall result and subsequently the score of each component separately. As a final empirical contribution of her thesis, she compared ICEE with other related works. In this and other parts of her thesis (such as when pointing out drawbacks of the ICEE and suggesting a potential for its improvement in further research) she has demonstrated that she is capable of going well beyond conventional thinking and beyond a replication of the index for the Czech Republic, which is commendable.

The manuscript form is appropriate and mostly without problems. Lucie presented the results of the ICEE with the Czech Republic included for a number of years in a very reader-friendly way, including the tables in the appendix. The structure of the manuscript is logical (although it differs from what we are used to in economics journals as well as most theses at the IES these days). The use of English language is very good for an undergraduate student (although some typos remain) and adequate for this work (which might seem, at least in some sections, straightforward and informal rather than formal and academic).

Her thesis is an important contribution to evaluating constructive external engagement of the Czech Republic in international context. The thesis presents the first results of a respected measure of constructive external engagement (going well beyond friendly foreign policies). The results will be useful to those who would like to compare the Czech Republic's standing against the rest of the world.

However, it seemed from the beginning that the bigger will be the contribution in terms of policy and information value, the bigger challenge will be to place this applied research within the existing academic literature and to qualify for an excellent undergraduate thesis at the IES. Lucie knew about this challenge from the beginning and dealt with it quite well and in a competent way. Of course, an applied research manuscript like this looks different from what we see published in top journals (and sometimes trying to be methodologically close to the mainstream partly backfired such as in the case of using a regression method in not a very standard way, where a correlation analysis might be sufficient and more appropriate), but it does not imply that the thesis is not worth a very good grade.

Given Lucie's substantive contribution I would like to award over 80 points to Lucie's thesis. This would be in line with – in some respect similar – thesis of Zuzana Řehořová, who even received the distinction from the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences for an extraordinarily good bachelors diploma thesis (in which she computed the Commitment to Development Index). However, mainly to reflect the likely changing (rising) standards of undergraduate theses at the IES, I propose the following:

Lucie Svitáková did a very good job of writing a thesis and deserves a grade of **good (velmi dobře, 2)**.

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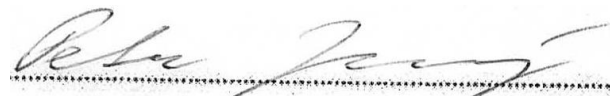
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## **SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED** (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
Literature (max. 20 points)	15
Methods (max. 30 points)	20
Contribution (max. 30 points)	27
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	18
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b> (max. 100 points)	<b>80</b>
<b>GRADE</b> (1 – 2 – 3 – 4)	<b>2</b>

**NAME OF THE REFEREE:** Petr Janský, Ph.D.

**DATE OF EVALUATION:** 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2015



**Referee Signature**

**EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:**

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

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
20                          10                          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.*

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
30                          15                          0

**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.*

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
30                          15                          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.*

Strong                  Average                  Weak  
20                          10                          0

**Overall grading:**

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE		
81 – 100	<b>1</b>	= excellent	= výborně
61 – 80	<b>2</b>	= good	= velmi dobře
41 – 60	<b>3</b>	= satisfactory	= dobře
0 – 40	<b>4</b>	= fail	= nedoporučuji k obhajobě