

## REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>The European Union and expansion – potential borders of the European Union</b>
<b>Author of the thesis:</b>	<b>Denisa Dočkalová</b>
<b>Referee (incl. titles):</b>	<b>PhDr. Mgr. Jakub Landovský Ph.D.</b>

**Remark:** It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

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

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	16
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	17
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	18
<b>TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)</b>	<b>1-2</b>

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

### **Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).**

**1) Theoretical background:** The thesis is inspired by geopolitical thinkers like Cohen and Friedman. The author utilized two well known concepts in regard with European enlargement. The first is core - periphery theory and the second is the concept of multi speed Europe. The European core and the European periphery are much more apparent in connection with current crisis of Greece inability to pay its debt. Multispeed Europe was mostly criticized by the European idealist but vigorously defended by the Euro realists.

#### **2) Contribution:**

What are the future borders of Europe is a pivotal and up to date question. Current development in the eastern and southern borders of Europe proves that beyond any doubt. Personally I found very useful the survey of possible candidates for accession to EU including: Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Ukraine and Switzerland. The problem lies elsewhere. Author has not brought original research or updated current academic debate.

#### **3) Methods:**

The thesis analytical part combines qualitative and quantitative approaches. Methods are sound and authors work with the political, economic, geographic data is very extensive. Author attempt to answer several important questions, which are very much in sync, with current situation in Europe. "Is the European Union able to incorporate additional new members? Is the expansion or the reduction of the European Union a dynamic process? Author sees the entry ticket to EU for a state to be economically stable and homogeneous. I would add that the homogeneity does not have to be absolute, if the political system proved to be able to overcome the ethnic, geographic, religious and other differences.

#### **4) Literature:**

Selection of literature is generally very commendable. Cohen, Wiener, Freidman and others. Author brings forth other relevant sources and data: statistical data, primary and secondary sources of *Acquis communautaire* and official press releases.


The referee should give comments on the following requirements:

**5) Manuscript form:**

Thesis is well written and the extensive amount of information is organized in a way that is convenient to read. Author presents lush appendixes, which include maps and charts and the main body of work is organized in 5 chapters. The language is academic and there are virtually no misspellings.

Considering all the merits of the work and putting on scales, what could have been done better I have decided to propose this work to be either excellent (grade A) or very good (grade B).

**DATE OF EVALUATION:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Referee Signature**

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Capex grading	US grading
81 - 100	1	= excellent	= A
61 - 80	2	= good	= B
41 - 60	3	= satisfactory	= C
21 - 40	4	= satisfactory	= D
0 - 20	5	= fail	= not recommended for defence

**The referee should give comments to the following requirements:**

**1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND:** Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts omitted? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently incorporated with the topic and hypotheses tested?

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**2) CONTRIBUTION:** Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the policy implications well founded?

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**3) METHODS:** Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further verification and testing? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or irrelevant detours off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 10 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**.

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**4) LITERATURE REVIEW:** The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way and disposes with a representative bibliography. (Remark: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**). If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression.

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**5) MANUSCRIPT FORM:** The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate language and style, including academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:**

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