Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Bc. Lenka Šperková
Advisor:	PhDr. Wadim Strielkowski Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Ukrainian labor migration and remittances in the European Union

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

Lenka Šperková explores an interesting topic of remittances of Ukrainian workers from EU countries. She uses a unique dataset collected in the western part of the Ukraine. The uniqueness of dataset is potentially the main advantage, but turned out to be the most problematic part of the thesis.

In first chapters, Lenka introduces topics of migration and remittances and reviews the existing literature. Literature review is extensive, using relevant sources with correct citations, furthemore in a succinct form and I enjoyed reading it. Following chapters discuss legislative in the EU and general characteristics of the Ukrainian economy and migration. There, I lack more data on migration patterns in Ukraine and its development in time. Second, since the dataset comes from one region in Ukraine (Zakarpattya), it would be good to include specific general characteristics, economic situation and migration patterns of the region. It could be very likely the case that this region is very different from other parts of the Ukraine.

The dataset was collected in specific region of Ukraine with usage of special survey mixing qualitative and quantitative approach, however, many issues are unclear. During the whole thesis, it is not mentioned the sample size, even though it is the key information for the analysis. If number of observations used in regressions (mostly 55) corresponds with number of data collected, then the implications are extremely limited. Moreover, it is not clearly stated where exactly were data collected (in one village?), how they were sampled, if households were randomized, who were the interviewers and if respondents were incentivized. Those issues appears to be even more problematic because authors claim that there was a certain rejection rate but they do not specify it exactly and that they had to exclude data from one interviewer due to low quality. Sentence commenting exclusion of data „Further analysis showed that reduction contributed to the representativeness of the data sample..." seems a bit odd. From all of the abovementioned arguments, it is very important to be totally transparent in data collection part because relevance of the following analysis hinges on data quality. On the other hand, the data collection part was conducted by the supervisor and it seems that Lenka Šperková was not involved in it. But it is not totally clear from the text. Even though following section documents similarities of sample characteristics with general population, representativeness cannot be implied, for example due to geographical reasons, and also the author mentiones it on a few spots in the thesis.

The analysis itself is, however, very carefully conducted and interpreted using appropriate methods. The first part analyzes data descriptively from the perspective of education, industries, remittances or heatlh status. It only supports previous arguments about non-representativeness because of specific composition of destination countries for migrants (Czech Republic 56%) and very high proportion of people migrating (67%). I would only suggest to use statistical tests when comparing average results and results of migrants. Then Lenka derives hypotheses based on existing literature and test them with various regression models. Models are correctly estimated and assumptions are tested. Probably due sample size, models lack in many cases statistical power. On the other hand, a few interesting results emerge from the analysis and could be interesting to explore them deeper

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in a future research. Lenka chooses the most appropriate model (LMP, logit, probit or OLS) based on information criteria. It is fine but it would be better to report all models in appendix. Last but not least, Lenka uses very non-standard bibliography style, in my opinion, links to papers should not be included.

The thesis is clearly structured, very well written and easy to follow. Lenka demonstrates understanding of the literature and econometric techniques. The downside is small sample size and problematic data collection which, however, is not fault of the author. Nevertheless, the analysis, even though carefully conducted, has limited contribution. From all of the abovementioned reasons I suggest the thesis for the defence and grade A-B (excellent-good).

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

CATEGORY		POINTS
Literature	*(max. 20 points)*	20
Methods	*(max. 30 points)*	24
Contribution	*(max. 30 points)*	20
Manuscript Form	*(max. 20 points)*	16
TOTAL POINTS	*(max. 100 points)*	**80**
GRADE	**(1 – 2 – 3 – 4)**	**1-2**

NAME OF THE REFEREE: PhDr. Václav Korbel

DATE OF EVALUATION: **1.6.2015**

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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	1	= excellent	= výborně
61 – 80	2	= good	= velmi dobře
41 – 60	3	= satisfactory	= dobře
0 – 40	4	= fail	= nedoporučuji k obhajobě