

MASTER'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies

Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

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| Thesis title: | Success factors of place branding of European cities |
| Student's name: | Dinara Zakharova |
| Referee's name: | Tereza Klabíková Rábová |

| Criteria | Definition | Maximum | Points |
|-----------------------|---|------------|-----------|
| Major Criteria | | | |
| | Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality) | 50 | 47 |
| | Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses) | 15 | 15 |
| | Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question) | 15 | 15 |
| Total | | 80 | 77 |
| Minor Criteria | | | |
| | Sources, literature | 10 | 9 |
| | Presentation (language, style, cohesion) | 5 | 4 |
| | Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures) | 5 | 5 |
| Total | | 20 | 18 |
| TOTAL | | 100 | 95 |

Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score:

[NB:] If the plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score is above 15%, the reviewer has to include his/her assessment of the originality of the reviewed thesis in his/her review.

Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria (min. 1800 characters including spaces when recommending a passing grade, min. 2500 characters including spaces when recommending a failing grade):

A thesis presented by Dinara Zakharova is focused on the studying place branding practices, „multidimensional and multifunctional concept“, of 16 medium-sized cities. The topic of her work is sufficiently limited and represents a solid insight into a previously undescribed academic area, as demonstrated in the part of literature review. The state of the art she presents is clear and functional, with real respect to the research part and with the introduction of different relevant approaches to the factors of place branding.

As for the research itself, she constructs a research method for selecting the cities under study based on hard data while logically operationalizing the concept of city success. After discussing its limits, she chooses a Qualitative Comparative Analysis. On the basis of this analysis she provides well-presented and detailed interpretation of the results of the 3 main success criteria of place branding: inclusion of the stakeholders in the city branding process, management of digital identity, and

inclusion of sustainability discourse and „greenness“ rhetoric and their relations thus confirming the statement above: the succes of place branding is a multifunctional concept.

In her master's thesis, Dinara Zakharova convinces that she has done a lot of careful work (e.g. working with many types of sources in Table 5) and presents a comprehensive study in which she explains the influence of the key success factors of place branding of medium-sized cities.

The aim of this thesis: „to attempt to contribute to bridging the gap between theory and practice by considering the influence of several factors on the outcome of place branding implementation and understanding which combinations of factors result in the successful place branding implementation“ has been fulfilled successfully.

Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): A

Suggested questions for the defence are: Just one question: what about the situation when e.g. the involvement of stakeholders in the process of city branding was „at the halfway“, not perfect but but with hints of doing it? How to classify this case?

I (do not) recommend the thesis for final defence.

Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

| TOTAL POINTS | GRADE | Quality standard |
|--------------|----------|---|
| 91 – 100 | A | = outstanding (high honor) |
| 81 – 90 | B | = superior (honor) |
| 71 – 80 | C | = good |
| 61 – 70 | D | = satisfactory |
| 51 – 60 | E | = low pass at a margin of failure |
| 0 – 50 | F | = failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence. |