

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

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

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| Title of the thesis: | Economic Spillover of Europeanization: A Permissible Attack on Realism? |
| Author of the thesis: | Sebastian Kiehl |
| Referee (incl. titles): | PhDr. Irah Kučerová, PhD. |

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):

| CATEGORY | POINTS |
|---|---------------|
| <i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i> | 15 |
| <i>Contribution (max. 20)</i> | 15 |
| <i>Methods (max. 20)</i> | 12 |
| <i>Literature (max. 20)</i> | 15 |
| <i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i> | 19 |
| TOTAL POINTS (max. 100) | 76 |
| The proposed grade (1-2-3-4) | 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:

A rather wide range of IR theories was chosen, in my opinion unnecessarily and even inaccurately: realism, liberalism, constructivism and Marxism with reference to their influence in the formation of economic cooperation - yes, sure, but rather than realism, so neorealism. But the phenomenon of Europeanization has its theoretical basis - why not its separate analysis as a theoretical framework? (Given the title presented by MT?)

2) Contribution:

Against the background of the four most prominent "ideologies" of IR, the author tries to trace the influence of Europeanization on the behavior of states according to a realistic concept.

By comparing two groups of EU states, the countries of the northern enlargement and then selected three states of the eastern enlargement, on the basis of macroeconomic indicators, they try to confirm hypotheses about the economic benefits (spill-over-effects) of EU membership. Although right in the title of MT is the concept of Europeanization, the author does not actually focus on it explicitly: yes, he has included a part related to economic spill-over, but he continues to work with a dataset of macroeconomic indicators.

I do not explicitly see the individual levels of Europeanization - vertical, horizontal, institutional, although the author does not avoid political and democratization spill-over effects in the case of the second monitored group of countries. The topic being worked on is interdisciplinary, the name corresponds more to a political science orientation, but the elaboration then corresponds to an economic analysis.

3) Methods:

Despite the theoretical part is readable, it does not fully relate to the topic of MT; a deep dive into the roots of realism as far back as antiquity is interesting, but irrelevant here.

The economic analysis of 4 macroeconomic indicators for individual groups of countries is adequate.

However, if the hypothesis of realistic behavior of states as a basic approach should be fully confirmed, then in addition to economic development, the development of public opinion should also be monitored more significantly.

4) Literature:

The list of sources used is really rich, but I miss the basic theorists of Europeanization - C. Radaelli, R. Ladrech, K. Featherstone, T. Börzel, J. Carporaso...

5) Manuscript form:

OK, only - The resource list is not structured.

Question:

How different are the views on the importance of economic cooperation between the approach of defensive realism and liberalism? - see Conclusion; Is it just a question of the primary purpose of economic cooperation or are there more significant motivations?

Notes:

Second enlargement in 2005 (p. 51) – it is nonsense: second wave of eastern enlargement came in 2007, the first started in 2004

DATE OF EVALUATION: 9. 9. 2023

Referee Signature

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:

| TOTAL POINTS | GRADE | Czech grading | US grading |
|--------------|----------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 81 – 100 | 1 | = excellent | = A |
| 61 – 80 | 2 | = good | = B |
| 51 – 60 | 3 | = satisfactory | = C |
| 41 – 50 | 3 | = satisfactory | = D |
| 0 – 40 | 4 | = fail | = not recommended for defence |