IMESS DISSERTATION

Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator (jiri.vykoukal@post.cz)

Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

Student:	Xueyan Shi
Dissertation title:	Analyzing the Impact of Czech Economic Development on Carbon Emissions: VAR Model Approach

	70+	69-65	60-64	59-55	54-50	<50
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Knowledge *Knowledge of problems involved, e.g. historical and social context, specialist literature on the topic. Evidence of capacity to gather information through a wide and appropriate range of reading, and to digest and process knowledge.*					54	
Analysis & Interpretation *Demonstrates a clear grasp of concepts. Application of appropriate methodology and understanding; willingness to apply an independent approach or interpretation recognition of alternative interpretations; Use of precise terminology and avoidance of ambiguity; avoidance of excessive generalisations or gross oversimplifications.*					50	
Structure & Argument *Demonstrates ability to structure work with clarity, relevance and coherence. Ability to argue a case; clear evidence of analysis and logical thought; recognition of an argument´s limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.*					54	
Presentation & Documentation *Accurate and consistently presented footnotes and bibliographic references; accuracy of grammar and spelling; correct and clear presentation of charts/graphs/tables or other data. Appropriate and correct referencing throughout. Correct and contextually correct handling of quotations.*						30
Methodology *Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.*		67				

ECTS Mark:	51/E	**Charles Mark:**	E	**Marker:**	Magdalena Fiřtová
Deducted for late submission:			*No*	**Signed:**	
Deducted for inadequate referencing:				**Date:**	

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+) = A (Charles mark 91-100 - excellent): *Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work.*
Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

B (UCL mark 69-65) = B (Charles mark 81-90– very good)
C (UCL mark 64-60) = C (Charles mark 71-80 – good): A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research. 65 or over equates to a B grade.

D (UCL mark 59-55) = D (Charles mark 61-70 – satisfactory)
E (UCL mark 54-50) = E (Charles mark 51-60 – sufficient):
Demonstration of a critical use of sources and ability to engage in systematic inquiry. An ability to engage in sustained research work, demonstrating methodological awareness. 55 or over equates to a D grade.

F (UCL mark less than 50) = F (Charles mark 0-50 - insufficient):
Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate research techniques.

Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (*at least 300 words*):

The submitted thesis examines the impact of economic growth on carbon dioxide emissions in the case study of the Czech Republic. It concludes that economic growth is an essential factor influencing CO2 emissions. The VAR analysis has been aptly applied and suggests some significant and interesting conclusions. It empirically shows that the environmental Kuznets theory (EKC) is valid as economic growth in the early stages of transformation contributes to the increase of CO2 emissions, while in later stages of economic development, it inhibits CO2 emissions.

While the thesis presents an interesting attempt at econometric analysis, a noticeable time constraint becomes evident in the text, as the work displays several fundamental shortcomings:

1. The literature review is carried out in a rudimentary descriptive manner, lacking substantive discussions or a comprehensive evaluation of the established literature. For instance, the thesis overlooks and does not engage with the findings of studies that challenge the validity of the EKC theory (p. 9-10). Moreover, the scholarly discourse concerning the connection between the selected explanatory variables (namely, foreign trade and industrial structure) and carbon emissions is also absent.
2. The structure of the thesis would need revisions: Chapter 3 is more of an introduction as it presents the structure of the whole thesis. Subchapters 1.2., 3 and 6.1.1 are largely overlapping and partly duplicated.
3. In Chapter 5, the author presents the context of emissions' development, industrial structure, and the progress of the development of renewable energy sources in the Czech Republic in a highly fragmented and sometimes factually inaccurate manner. The presentation of data lacks a coherent logical progression and blends details about the Czech Republic, the EU, and the CEE countries without a clear structure (p. 35-36). Moreover, there are significant factual errors:
    - Greece is included among Central and Eastern Europe (p. 30-31).
    - Natural gas is cited as a renewable source of energy (p. 36).
    - Ms. Shi states that “the Czech Republic is also actively developing shale gas” (p. 36). Although there is no legal moratorium on shale gas prospects and exploration, the Czech government has not issued any licences to mining companies and the debate about potential prospects has been more or less dormant since 2012.
    - It also states that “The proportion of renewable energy is expected to increase to 14% by 2020, indicating that The Czech Republic's *'open source' policies* and measures have made great achievements, making the Czech Republic a *world leader* in the development and utilization of renewable energy. This will help the Czech Republic realize its commitment to reduce emissions and alleviate the country's *passive position in energy diplomacy* due to its over-reliance on energy imports.” (p. 37) Firstly, the reference to "open source policies" is utilized here without prior discourse on Czech government energy policies The official IEA statistics indicate that renewables accounted for 16% in 2019. Secondly, the term "world leader" in comparative context sounds more like a mockery: Germany, for instance, achieved a renewable proportion of 47%, while Norway reached 98% and Iceland reached 100%. The assertion regarding passivity in Czech energy diplomacy is also contentious. For instance, energy played a pivotal role during both Czech presidencies, in 2009 and 2022.
    - The paragraph analysing the data presented in Table 3 is misleading with very vague and imprecise conclusion. (“At the same time, net exports as a share of GDP had a downward fluctuation. This indicates that the Czech economy is still developing smoothly in genera” (p 34).
    - The paragraph related to the reduction of GHG emissions presents solely raw data, lacking any subsequent discussion on the structure of sectors and activities responsible for generating these emissions (38).
4. The presentation of the final analysis of results is a bit unclear and could benefit from some restructuring and clarification (p. 57-58), it lacks clear explanations and mainly discussion.
5. Presentation & Documentation are insufficient.:

- It necessitates substantial linguistic revisions of numerous grammatical and style errors.
- It is of significant concern that the author has not provided sufficient citations; on many occasions, the paraphrased ideas lack proper source references (p. 4, 9, 10, 23-26, 42), the theoretical chapters 2.2.5 to 2.2.7, and chapter 5 are entirely devoid of any references to the sources.
- It blends elements of both APA in-text citation and Chicago Manual footnote style in a manner that departs from standard conventions. It lacks a coherent approach in this regard.
- Footnotes spill over between pages and their font changes.
- The in-text references to charts and figures are not numbered which is confusing. Several figures have no reference to sources (Figure 1, 13).
- In Table 3 there is inaccurate label of columns.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (*at least 2 questions*):

1/ What is your evaluation of the most pressing political priorities for Czech energy and industrial policies in terms of decoupling economic growth from GHG emissions, especially considering the ongoing energy crisis? How does it interplay with the EU energy policies?

2/ Are there other relevant variables that could be included in the model to further enhance its explanatory potential?