

IMSISS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2684618 DCU/Trento 233475 Charles 98799307
Dissertation Title	An Assessment of Energy Security Performance in the Context of European Integrations: the Case of the Republic of Serbia

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

	Late Submission Penalty no penalty
Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)	
Word Count: 21 107 Suggested Penalty: no penalty	

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark. (Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied).

Before Penalty: B1 [17] **After Penalty:** B1 [17]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Excellent
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Very Good
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Very Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Very Good
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Good
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Excellent
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Excellent
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Very Good
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Excellent
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Very Good
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Very Good
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Excellent
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required

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- *Appropriate word count*

Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The student outlines that the purpose of this study is to assess the effects of European integration on the performance of energy security in the Republic of Serbia and to evaluate Serbia's response to developments in the EU's energy strategy. The two research questions that are reflected in this purpose statement could benefit from a little more refinement particularly in terms of the relationship or connections between the two questions. The literature gap could also have been explored in more detail, particularly with respect to connecting the research questions/puzzle to the literature.

It is clear that the student has engaged with an extensive background analysis and has gathered a vast amount of information which is presented within the dissertation in an easy to read and manageable manner. However, the style is more descriptive than would be expected at this level and I believe that the dissertation would benefit from a little restructuring specifically in relation to its framework of analysis. The student identifies a number of frameworks within the existing literature (see pages 10-11) which indicate the complexity of energy politics for security, the economy, and the environment, but doesn't utilise these frameworks to help structure the analysis as effectively as could have been done. It also was not clear to me how the discussions on European integration theory (i.e. intergovernmentalism) were to be integrated into the analysis. Certainly, there is no meaningful engagement with these theories in terms of the findings chapter. How does such theory inform the analysis of Serbian/EU relations?

The presentation of the dissertation is very strong and the style is highly readable with a strong level of knowledge and factual awareness of the evolution of EU energy policy and relationship with the wider neighbourhood and institutional structures such as the Energy Community. The Case Study chapters are also well researched and there is a vast amount of information presented.

The methodology while not groundbreaking is totally acceptable and justified. However, the student could have explained the identification and selection process for data sources in more detail.

One of the key issues that emerges from the narrative is the relevance of Russian ownership within the Serbian energy sector. It is clear that this is a potential problem vis-à-vis the EU interests and there is scope for this to be explored in more depth.

The role and relevance of conditionality (highlighted early in the dissertation) was also not effectively explored, particularly in terms of Serbia's ability to not conform to EU expectations. What does this tell us about EU foreign policy success or tools?

I would accept that the student presents an interesting and relevant conclusion regarding compliance and integration being high when national interest/security are not challenged. But I would like to have seen some discussion about what this actually means both for Serbia as an autonomous actor and for the EU as an international actor.

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Overall, despite these critical reflections this is a very good performance characterised by an attempt to answer questions as fully as possible, generally good organisation and structure of answers, reasoned arguments developing logical conclusions, a detailed and carefully researched understanding of the subject, which draws upon relevant reading or research. There are very good examples used and factual information is accurate. As such there is a lot to commend this dissertation for. But with some additional refinements particularly in terms of the way theory is used, and how the structural framework is set up, as well as some deeper probing question and analysis of the findings we would be presented with a stronger and more original discussion.

Question for the Oral Defence:

It appears from your study that Serbia is playing a balancing game that accounts for multiple actors (EU, Russia, China etc). In your opinion based on your analysis and the relevant importance of geopolitics and potential benefits of integration, does the balancing game offer greater security or increased risk and why has Serbia opted to take this approach?

Reviewer 2

The thesis offers an overview of Serbia's Energy Policy and Energy Security and puts it in relation with Serbia's bid for EU accession. The text highlights points of friction and inconsistencies among the two political objectives and the tensions between actions required by the EU and those put in place by the Serbian government in light of fostering the country's energy security.

The work is well structured and presents a lot of interesting details both on the legislative framework as well as on the various goals and objectives that enter the picture.

While I find the descriptive part very well done, the analytical dimension is less developed and it is not always easy to find the "red line" connecting the different parts of the analysis. This is possibly due to the fact that the thesis seeks to touch upon many different issues (geopolitics, socio-economic considerations, environmental concerns), but these are not very well integrated into the analysis, so that the work lacks the ability to evaluate and "rank" the associated goals.

For instance, EU-originated requirements are sometimes confronted with socio-economic advantages related to imports from Russia, but EU accession is a political goal that cannot be solely evaluated in terms of energy security or economic convenience.

The thesis highlights the inherent tension between a state-centric notion of SOS and the EU integration project (and the role of energy security within the EU project). This line of reasoning is interesting but not developed as far as it could be. For instance, Moravcsik's (1998) view seems to offer a way out of the conundrum, but this approach does not seem to be used in the discussion of the case study.

In the conclusion, the thesis stresses that "Serbia perceives energy security to be correlative to national security"; as a result, the country is not ready to compromise. What about EU accession? why isn't it a matter of national interest, and why doesn't it affect the priorities of the government? This interplay is not at all explored in the analysis and this is probably the main (minor) limitation of the thesis.