



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Leona Knežević

Title: The Early Warning Mechanism: political or legal procedure?

Programme/year: MAIN/2024

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Viera Martinková, Ph.D.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	8
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	35
<i>Total</i>		80	63
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	3
	Formal requirements	5	3
<i>Total</i>		20	16
TOTAL		100	79



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis aims to contribute to the understanding of subsidiarity control in the EU by analysing the nature of reasoned opinions submitted by national parliaments within the Early Warning Mechanism. Specifically, it looks at the reasoned opinions submitted by the national parliaments of Denmark, Sweden, Romania and Croatia in order to determine whether they rely on legal or political arguments.

While the thesis has a clear goal, is well-situated with the current literature and uses a straightforward method to answer these questions, it often lacks delivery.

First, the introduction mentions rather specific details, such as the technical description of the early warning procedure or planned categorisation of reasoned opinions, instead of providing a clearer presentation of the context and goals of the thesis.

Next, the first part of the literature review provides a comprehensive overview of the literature dealing with the nature of subsidiarity and the Early Warning Mechanism; however, the presentation could have been more structured to increase clarity and reduce the repetition of arguments. The second part then mixes the overview of the role of parliaments in European Affairs and implicit arguments for selecting the four parliaments analysed, with some apparent mistakes. (“...the Danish Parliament submitted its negotiating position to the European Affairs Committee too late and lost the chance to influence EU law”, p.8)

The conceptual framework focuses on the definition of legal vs political position. As the distinction is crucial for the thesis, the author should have elaborated more, working with broader literature distinguishing between legal and political actors.; without it, the conceptual framework is rather superficial and mostly just intuitive. The majority of the “framework and concepts” chapter then describes parliamentary involvement in European affairs in the four selected states – this should have been a separate chapter. It would also have been more beneficial to use the roles of parliaments mentioned in the literature review in comparing these four countries rather than just describing them one by one independently from previous chapters.



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The method and the execution of the research is much clearer. The author uses content analysis to classify submitted reasoned opinions as legal, semi-political and political. She explains the data collection and coding very clearly. She deals well with issues stemming from different records of reasoned opinion by the European Commission and the parliaments. The analysis offers valuable insights into the four parliaments, even though the comparative value is limited, and the thesis cannot draw any general conclusions.

The author also collected information from opinions or resolutions submitted within the Political Dialogue; however, there is no systematic framework for their analysis (as they do not directly relate to the research question). Instead, the author offers more subjective observations.

Minor criteria:

The Diploma Thesis is a little shorter than the required minimum (about 1.5 of a standard page).

Additional proofreading would have been helpful to avoid mistakes (e.g. "Treaty of Rome of 1992" (p.1)) and incorrect sentence structures (e.g. the research question itself "Whether the EWM, as a subsidiarity mechanism, is a political or a legal procedure?" (p.9)).

The clarity of the text would also be improved by structuring the text into shorter paragraphs.

Assessment of plagiarism:

While Turnitin shows overall similarity at 31%, this is caused mainly by references, terminology, and description of legal procedures, mostly in the Literature review chapter.



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Overall evaluation:

As the supervisor, I feel compelled to say that the author has made tremendous progress from the first version of the thesis she originally intended to submit in the summer. The thesis proves the author's extensive work with the current literature and its deep understanding and systematic work with rich primary data. However, it suffers from shortcomings in the conceptual framework, presentation and a broader discussion of the results.

I recommend it for defense with a suggested grade C.

Suggested grade: C

Signature: