Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Student:	Bc. Vít Žáček
Advisor:	Mgr. Barbara Pertold-Gebicka M.A., Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Modelling of impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the labour market in the Czech Republic

OVERALL ASSESSMENT (provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):

Short summary

My main problem with the thesis is that it is not clear what the author finds. The proposal is reasonably transparent: the purpose is to examine the impact of the pandemic lockdowns on different portions of the population. I believe that the topic was offered by the advisor, and it makes good sense. The execution, however, is exceptionally poor. The author just piles table upon table and figure upon figure (very similar ones, moreover) without much interpretation or structure.

Contribution

I see limited contribution in the thesis. Consider, for example, the summary provided in the abstract. I have never seen such a poor abstract in an MA thesis at the IES. I believe that the thesis as a whole represents a reputational risk for the Institute. The results show that some demographic groups may have been differentially affected by Covid, or perhaps not, because the results and their discussion are very confusing. It saddens me to observe that the author did not devote sufficient time to his thesis. Perhaps the main problem is that the text was written in extreme haste, which makes the (potentially useful and perhaps interesting) content very hard to understand and appreciate.

Methods

The best thing about the thesis is the quasi-experimental methodology. Because of the confusing writeup, it is not entirely clear to me whether the methodology is applied correctly. I believe this is the case. Nevertheless, the thesis seems to be a mechanical application of techniques that were used previously in almost the same form for the same question but with data for different countries. Perhaps I am mistaken, but no evidence to the contrary is provided.

Literature

Sometimes the author relies on newspaper articles and mixes different citation styles. In general, the reader misses more references to scientific literature on the effect of covid on the labor market. The most commonly cited survey by Brodeur is missing, and one could go on and on.

Manuscript form

The thesis is not written well. There is a mistake even in the title: it should read "Modelling THE impact…" The author did not take care of the manuscript and did not bother to proofread even the abstract, which contains phrases like "home office" that do not exist in

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English. There is a mistake in almost every sentence. The level of typesetting is poor, making the thesis hard to read. The author states on p. 139: "I used artificial intelligence (ChatGPT) for grammatical and stylistic adjustments." I wish it was so!

Overall evaluation and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

I am not sure whether the thesis fulfills the requirements for a bachelor thesis at IES, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University. If the author performs well at the defense, is able to articulate his contribution and reply to my concerns, and if the advisor finds the thesis defensible, I believe it might be defended with a grade E, but not better. I am sorry to be so negative, but the outcome of the thesis is unfortunately much worse than what discussions at the MA thesis seminar indicated. I believe the author would have benefited from taking another month or two of full-time work to improve his thesis.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY		POINTS
Contribution	*(max. 30 points)*	10
Methods	*(max. 30 points)*	23
Literature	*(max. 20 points)*	12
Manuscript Form	*(max. 20 points)*	6
TOTAL POINTS	*(max. 100 points)*	**51**
GRADE	**(A – B – C – D – E – F)**	**E**

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Doc. PhDr. Zuzana Havránková, Ph.D.

DATE OF EVALUATION: *May 7, 2024*   *Digitally Signed, Zuzana Havrankova*

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                                             Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

CONTRIBUTION: *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

METHODS: *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

Overall grading:

TOTAL	GRADE
91 – 100	**A**
81 - 90	**B**
71 - 80	**C**
61 – 70	**D**
51 – 60	**E**
0 – 50	**F**