



## Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Jennet Gylychmyradova

Title: The Europeanization of German Political Parties in the 21st Century

Programme/year: MAIN 2024

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

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Research question, definition of objectives	<b>10</b>	3
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	<b>30</b>	0
	Methodology, analysis, argument	<b>40</b>	0
<i>Total</i>		<b>80</b>	3
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources	<b>10</b>	2
	Style	<b>5</b>	0
	Formal requirements	<b>5</b>	0
<i>Total</i>		<b>20</b>	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	5



## Evaluation

### Major criteria:

The thesis aims to study the Europeanisation of political parties in Germany in the last 20+ years. That would be an interesting topic, but the chaotic nature of the theoretical and methodological frameworks and lack of actual empirical study do not allow for any meaningful analysis or conclusions. The list of objectives of the study and research objectives (p.14) should be shorter but, at the same time, more precise. The author claims to apply offensive and defensive realism to Europeanisation. This "theoretical framework" is chaotically discussed in the unnumbered chapter Theoretical framework and Chapters 1 and 2, often repeating parts of definitions or arguments. While the main authors who have studied Europeanisation and their definitions are mentioned, and the short definitions of offensive and defensive realism are also essentially correct, the entire text is a weird back-and-forth between these definitions, resulting in unfounded and unreferenced arguments. For example, the author claims that (1) following the lead of state security concerns, defensive realism posits that, in the face of Europeanization, parties may pursue tactics to preserve their power and significance (p.44) or (2) political parties' use of aggressive tactics and behaviors to aggressively pursue their goals can be studied through the lens of offensive realism. Some examples of such actions include trying to get more support from voters, having more say in policymaking, or consolidating power in the Europeanized arena" (p.47). The thesis also includes parts on approaches to the study of political parties, but also chaotic or incomplete. For example, what are Monroe's two theories of political parties? (p.23). In these "theoretical" parts, terms like theory, hypothesis, and method are used randomly.

Chapter 3 on methodology has zero references to methodological literature, talks about mixed-method approach, qualitative content analysis, statistics, sampling, stratification, triangulation and even a strong emphasis on ethical considerations, ensuring informed consent, data privacy, and participant confidentiality, and, somewhere in between, simply presents election results from Bundestag elections 2002-2021. The author also claims that her exploration of party documents, speeches, and statements unveils the ideological foundations shaping each party's stance on Europeanization (p.64) but presents absolutely nothing about any of that. The thesis contains very little about actual German political parties, their organization or activities, apart from chapters 2.2 and 2.3 and election results introduced in the "methodological" chapter 3. In fact, the chapter is called Introduction to Research Methodology and, for the most part, sounds precisely like a general introduction to research in social sciences, with no relation to the thesis. Chapter 4, Interpretations of Research Findings, has similar issues.



**Minor criteria:**

**1. Sources and referencing**

The thesis does not meet the basic criteria of academic work. Entire sections are written without references. References that are in the text often cannot be matched with the final list of references; some seem to be made up (see, e.g. *the authors of "Defensive Realism and Balancing Strategies in Party Politics"*, p. 17) and/or lack proper format and necessary information (such as *ProQuest, n.d.*, p. 44). The final list of references is not alphabetically organised; individual references do not adhere to one format, are often incomplete, and some are repeated. The division into primary and secondary sources shows that the author does not understand these terms.

**2. Style and formal requirements**

The thesis is written in several different styles. Some parts of the thesis are written in the third person, in chapters 3 and 4, and the conclusions are written mainly in the first-person plural. These parts also contain unbelievable self-praise (*methodological rigor and trustworthiness of the study's outcomes*, p.56, *we offer a significant theoretical contribution*, p.68, and especially *as we wrap up our tenure in academia, it is critical that we acknowledge the substantial impact our research has had on political science and European studies*, p.71, ???)

The thesis also has an illogical structure and missing chapter numbers for the first chapters. Parts of paragraphs or sentences are often repeated in the next paragraph or later in the text.

Some sentences make no sense in English, although the quality of language varies significantly throughout the text. Random mistakes, such as "*the term (Europeanization) used to describe this impact on American politics and policymaking is the "Europeanization" of these institutions*" (p. 17) or "*we analyse the potential effects of environmental Europeanization on the Democratic Party of America*" (p.67) are present.

**Assessment of plagiarism:**

No plagiarism was found using the Turnitin and Theses systems, but some parts' differing styles and illogical content raise severe doubts about how this thesis was written. The entire section of the methodology sounds like a translation of general texts on social sciences' methodological aspects; of course, the conclusion's retirement speech style is baffling.



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**Overall evaluation:**

This thesis cannot be recommended for defence, and it is, in fact, indefensible. In any other case, I would suggest improvements to the text; however, in this case, I can only ask the student to throw it away and start anew.

**Suggested grade:**

**F**

**Signature:**