

Master's Thesis – Information for UPF supervisors (EPS, Erasmus Mundus Program European Politics & Society) – Academic year 2023-2024

Key dates for Master Thesis Supervisors

By June 14th, 2024: deadline for students to submit their final thesis project.

June 28th: deadline for the evaluation by all supervisors

From June 28th to July 1st: agreement with second reviewers and/or second supervisors on a final grade

July 2nd: EPS Students will receive their grade.

July 4th: the oral defense will take place on this date.

Formal requirements – Length of the Thesis

For **EPS students (Erasmus Mundus students)** the Master's thesis **has to be 12 000 words** ($\pm 10\%$ **including footnotes and bibliography and excluding appendixes**). The cover page of the MA thesis should include the number of words. This is a highly relevant issue, particularly for EPS – Erasmus students.

Assessment and grading

For the EPS students the following are the official assessment criteria they have in their handbook. Therefore, the evaluation and the report should mention this type of criteria. At UPF we need a numerical evaluation from 0 to 10. In addition, this numerical evaluation is translated in some universities into a non-numerical grade.

Grades for EPS – Erasmus Mundus students

A: All elements of a thesis are combined in an effective and convincing form. The case for the research question or hypothesis is well-made and grounded in a significant and topical issue, whether derived from the literature or empirics. The thesis delivers excellent, powerful engagement with the literature, suggesting full mastery of academic and/or empirical debates. The thesis conveys an excellent understanding of how to design and conduct research. The selected method aligns with the research question/hypothesis, and the student evidences a fulsome understanding of it, both at the abstract and applied level. The thesis offers an original answer based on an outstanding analysis of relevant sources, primary as well as secondary where appropriate, that advances our understanding of the matter. It is well-structured and shows excellent awareness of the need to account for the audience. Additionally, the thesis must demonstrate a full understanding of and compliance with academic conventions, including but not limited to the presentation, referencing and

use of footnotes. A thesis performing at this level should be considered to be exceptional, indicative of a student ready to begin doctoral research or high-level professional work.

B: The thesis covers all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but does not meet the exceptional standard above. It will be excellent, at least in part, with relatively minor deficiencies that do not compromise the research design and the relevance of the answer. The research question or hypothesis will be of significance, and the student will deliver an original contribution to knowledge by answering it. The thesis will be grounded in a very good or excellent evaluation of an appropriate body of literature, discussing key concepts and debates maturely and convincingly. The student will demonstrate a very good facility with the demands of good research design. The selected method will align with the research question/hypothesis and the student evidence a good understanding of it, both at the abstract and applied levels. The thesis offers an original answer based on a very good analysis of relevant sources, primary as well as secondary where appropriate, that goes some way to advance our understanding of the matter. Additionally, the thesis must demonstrate a full understanding of and compliance with academic conventions, including but not limited to the presentation, referencing and use of footnotes.

C: The thesis covers all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but with some significant deficiencies. The research question and corresponding hypotheses are developed according to academic standards and linked to the scholarly literature but do not appear entirely convincing. The answer offered is not fully persuasive but offers relevant insight into the topic. The thesis will be referring to an adequate amount of literature, but the reference and the contribution to the academic debate are not really insightful. The research methods show interesting and innovative ideas, but there are some doubts about their development. The thesis still demonstrates knowledge and application of academic conventions (including, but not limited to the presentation, referencing and the use of footnotes), but there are apparent issues with their employment and/or a lack of attention to detail.

D: The thesis covers most issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above, but it is relatively pedestrian, particularly in relation to the embedding of the research question. There is some engagement with the literature, identification of the method and operationalisation of that method to the research. The analysis is present but not fully developed. The selected research method may be of dubious utility, suggesting the student has an imperfect understanding of research design. The question or hypothesis is answered/ tested but not in a very compelling fashion. The thesis is vulnerable to criticism that it is derivative and descriptive, with opportunities for delivering critical analysis not exploited. Peripheral but important issues such as presentation and referencing are problematic, and the student does not always comply with other forms of academic convention.

E: The thesis does not cover all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but offers a structured piece of relevant analysis that is embedded in the literature and provides an answer to a research question. The method of analysis is explained, albeit not fully developed and persuasive. The thesis is pedestrian, descriptive and unoriginal in form.

F: The thesis does not represent a piece of independent research as far as it does not formulate a straightforward research question and/or lacks engagement with the literature and/or the method of inquiry and/or does not provide an answer based on the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Evaluation procedure for students with second reviewer and/or second supervisor

EPS students - Erasmus Mundus students will have a second reviewer of their Master Theses (from Prague, Krakov or Leiden). Both reviewers, the UPF supervisor and the second reviewers from the previously mentioned universities will have to agree the common final grade. This means that they will have to be in touch either by email and, if necessary, through skype and/or zoom. According to the EPS-Erasmus Mundus rules, students have the right to see their evaluation of both reviewers before their oral defence. This means that in this current year your evaluation should be available by June 28th and then exchange this information with the second reviewer and to agree on a final grade by July 1st.

Oral defence of the thesis

The oral defence of the Master thesis will take place this year on July 4th in the classroom 20.053. The oral defence is 20 % of the final grade. This 20 % of the final grade is not so much about the quality of their work as for their capacity to do a good presentation to show their proficiency when presenting their research as well as providing convincing arguments when reacting to questions made by the Tribunal.

EVALUATION

Please be aware that in order to be able to go to the defense (on July 4th), Erasmus Mundus Students need to pass (5 out of 10 as agreed evaluation grade between both reviewers, the supervisor and the second reviewer).

Annex 1 – Template Dissertation Report EPS



Joint Dissertation Review

Name of the student:	Valentin Christoph Zanon
Title of the thesis:	Domestic Transitions, Global Support: EU Public Attitudes Toward North-South Climate Finance
Reviewer:	Eliška Ullrichová (Charles University)

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

The research question – *How do individuals' perceptions of the domestic green transition in EU countries relate to public support for climate finance allocation to the Global South* – is highly relevant for the study programme in European Politics and Society. The student also revealed a pertinent gap in EU-wide public opinion concerning transnational transfer of climate finance. Although not stated explicitly, the objective of the MA research lies in identification, respectively, verification of determinants of public support on the individual level for the transfer of climate finance from the Global North to the Global South. Based on the existing literature, the MA thesis tests three determinants – fairness and effectiveness of policies and trust in government institutions (H1) – and mechanisms of transferring these determinants from the national to the global level (H2a and H2b). Concerning hypotheses 2a and 2b, it is not clear what exactly is meant by „moderation“ and „mediation“ – H2a: *Affinity towards climate justice mediates the individual-level relationship of most in their country's ability to design a just green transition and the endorsement of climate finance allocation to the Global South*; H2b: *Affinity towards climate justice moderates the individual-level relationship of most in their country's ability to design a just green transition and the endorsement of climate finance allocation to the Global South*. Since these terms are essential in the formulation of hypotheses and thus for the entire dissertation, their explicit definition should be stated. The same applies to the type of the relationship between individuals' perception of national green policies in EU Member States and public support for climate funding allocation to the Global South in the research question. In other words, the research question would deserve reformulation with this respect.

2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The student analyzed pertinent resources for testing formulated hypotheses knowing and acknowledging weak points of the used sources, which is highly appreciated. The logistic regression analysis is a relevant methodology to the research objectives and is done in a robust manner. The thesis is embedded in two theories, i.e., theory of reasoned action and elaboration likelihood model but both would deserve more elaboration, especially concerning the relation between climate justice affinity and finance transfer to the Global South – see more above. The unclarity in this context thus undermines arguments of the analysis with respect to the verification of H2a and H2b.

3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

The research confirmed all three hypotheses and provided an interesting insight into the existing literature and theories stating that, while individuals supporting financial resources for the green transition are more likely to advocate climate funding from Global North to South, citizens endorsing tackling social inequalities as a part of climate finance tend to support North-South funding transfer less. Anyhow, there is still an unclear link between the research question, hypotheses, data, and conclusions. The concluding part of the thesis discussed the empirical data in the context of hypotheses but does not mention the research question at all and therefore does not provide a clear answer to it. I believe this relates to the missing definition of „moderation“, „mediation“ in two of three hypotheses and „relation“ research question.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The thesis is written in an appropriate language, meets all formal aspects and is fully in compliance with academic standards.


I did not run the thesis through the anti-plagiarism software expecting that this is done and checked at the university of the defense.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

MA thesis of Valentin C. Zanon is well written, includes all required parts relevant for MA level and EPS programme and complies with academic standards. The thesis is based on a robust logistic regression analysis examining pertinent dataset. The author is also well aware of the weaknesses of used dataset and thus work with resources in an adequate manner. The gap in the literature is well-identified and communicated to the reader.

The main weakness of the dissertation is the unclear communication between the research question and hypotheses and followingly also among the research question, analysis and conclusion. The blurred link is caused, in my view, mostly by missed definitions of important terms in research questions (relate/relation) and in hypotheses (mediate/mediation and moderate/moderation).

Grade (A-F)	8,6 (B)
Date	Signature
25/06/2024	

GRADE CONVERSION MA EPS

Percentile	Prague	Krakow	Leiden	Barcelona
A (91-100)	91-100 %	4,51-5,00	8.0-10	9-10
B (81-90)	81-90 %	4,21-4,50	7.5-7.9	8-8,9
C (71-80)	71-80 %	3,71-4,20	7-7.4	7-7,9
D (61-70)	61-70 %	3,21-3,7	6.5-6.9	6-6,9
E (51-60)	51-60 %	3,00-3,20	6-6.4	5-5,9

Assessment criteria:

Excellent (A): 'Outstanding performance with only minor errors';

Very good (B): 'Above the average standard but with some errors';

Good (C): 'Generally sound work but with a number of notable errors';

Satisfactory (D): 'Fair but with significant shortcomings';

Sufficient (E): 'Performance meets the minimum criteria';

Fail: 'Some/considerable more work required before the credit can be awarded'.