

IMESS DISSERTATION



Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator (jiri.vykoukal@post.cz)

Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

Student:	Yifan Chen
Dissertation title:	The Changing Role of Global Automotive Industry: Analyse the Automotive International Trade of CEE Countries and China

	70+	69-65	60-64	59-55	54-50	<50
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of problems involved, e.g. historical and social context, specialist literature on the topic. Evidence of capacity to gather information through a wide and appropriate range of reading, and to digest and process knowledge.</i>		68				
Analysis & Interpretation <i>Demonstrates a clear grasp of concepts. Application of appropriate methodology and understanding; willingness to apply an independent approach or interpretation recognition of alternative interpretations; Use of precise terminology and avoidance of ambiguity; avoidance of excessive generalisations or gross oversimplifications.</i>		65				
Structure & Argument <i>Demonstrates ability to structure work with clarity, relevance and coherence. Ability to argue a case; clear evidence of analysis and logical thought; recognition of an argument's limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.</i>		65				
Presentation & Documentation <i>Accurate and consistently presented footnotes and bibliographic references; accuracy of grammar and spelling; correct and clear presentation of charts/graphs/tables or other data. Appropriate and correct referencing throughout. Correct and contextually correct handling of quotations.</i>			63			
Methodology <i>Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.</i>			64			

ECTS Mark:	B/65	Charles Mark:	B/82	Marker:	Vilém Semerák
<i>Deducted for late submission:</i>			No	Signed:	Electronically signed, Vilém Semerák
<i>Deducted for inadequate referencing:</i>				Date:	September 9 th , 2024

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+) = A (Charles mark 91-100 - excellent): Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work.

Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

B (UCL mark 69-65) = B (Charles mark 81-90 – very good)

C (UCL mark 64-60) = C (Charles mark 71-80 – good): A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research. 65 or over equates to a B grade.

D (UCL mark 59-55) = D (Charles mark 61-70 – satisfactory)

E (UCL mark 54-50) = E (Charles mark 51-60 – sufficient):

Demonstration of a critical use of sources and ability to engage in systematic inquiry. An ability to engage in sustained research work, demonstrating methodological awareness. 55 or over equates to a D grade.

F (UCL mark less than 50) = F (Charles mark 0-50 - insufficient):

Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate research techniques.

Please provide substantive and detailed feedback!

Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (*at least 300 words*):

Ms Chen Yifan has decided to analyse changes in the role of the Central and Eastern European countries and of China in the global automotive trade. The topic can be considered highly important and relevant because of the recent rise of China in this sector and because of the current wave of countervailing duties imposed by the EU (+ USA and other countries) on Chinese car exporters.

The thesis builds on two up-to-date sources of data: (i) input-output data (OECD ICIO), (ii) traditional cross-border statistics (BACI by CEPII), which are used in two main ways: (i) for analysis of derived GVC indicators and (ii) as inputs into network analysis which is used to evaluate the changes in the relative global position of the analysed countries. The former approach is relatively simple and descriptive, and it is largely based on the application of a relatively easy-to-use ICIO package in Stata. At the level of analysis attempted by the author, the main contribution of relying on the ICIO package instead of using official OECD TiVA indicators is related to the ability to calculate the GVC-participation indicators for user-defined regions (such as new EU member states in CEE). The latter approach is more interesting, in my opinion, and as such, it can be considered the main contribution of the thesis. The student had to master the network theory and related methods while working on the thesis; they were not included in her standard courses.

The results of the application of both types of methods look plausible and logical. Apart from data-related limitations, the author managed to provide sufficient evidence that supports her claims on the changes in the relative positions of the CEE countries and China in the automotive production networks. As far as the network analysis is concerned, one weaker point of the IO-data-based part of network analysis is the relatively brief description of what the author did with the data prior to the application of network methods, i.e. how the vehicle trade flow data were extracted from the matrix. On the other hand, the specifications of the procedures that were used to create the charts (parameters behind the size of the nodes, layout algorithm) are described better. The author also provides results in the form of calculations of key centrality metrics (with a more complete version in the appendix). An interesting addition is the network analysis based on traditional cross-border statistics (HS data from BACI). The author realised that using a new version of the HS classification provides her with an opportunity to focus specifically on trade in electric vehicles. While the data (and results) are not comparable with the IO-based results (which end in 2020, and separation of EV-trade only is not possible), they provide quite interesting insight into the latest trends. A relatively detailed interpretation of the results (and in some cases comparison with the latest changes and trends) is provided in section 4.

The thesis includes a lengthy but structured overview of available data and previously published literature. It is divided into multiple relatively coherent parts and covers most of the relevant factors and sources. Its readability (and therefore partly also the contribution) is, to some extent, unfortunately, reduced by language issues.

Besides the language quality, the formatting and visual style of the thesis (e.g. formulas on p. 27) also leave some space for improvement. It is a pity that the author did not find more time for additional editing, especially as she has had more time to work on the thesis than most other students who submitted their theses this year.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (at least 2 questions):

1. Taking into account the sources that you have studied, do you find the imposition of EU tariffs on imports of EV vehicles from China justified?
2. You have described the CEE countries as “factory economies” (p. 29) from the point of view of their position in the automotive GVCs. Do you think that there is a chance that they will simply switch to playing a similar role in new GVCs that will be dominated by China, i.e. where China would be one of the main headquarter economies?
3. What are, in your opinion, the main limitations of your attempt to analyse the changes in the relative position of the CEE countries and China in global automotive production with the use of the network analysis based on IO data?