

**BACHELOR'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT**  
*PPE – Bachelor's in Politics, Philosophy and Economics*  
*Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University*

<b>Thesis title:</b>	The Impact of Russia's War of Aggression against Ukraine on Nuclear Energy Policy in Central and Eastern European Countries
<b>Student's name:</b>	Kryštof John Donovan
<b>Referee's name:</b>	Jonathan Collins

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	<b>50</b>	38
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	<b>15</b>	11
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	<b>15</b>	10
<i>Total</i>		<b>80</b>	59
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources, literature	<b>10</b>	10
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	<b>5</b>	5
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	<b>5</b>	4
<i>Total</i>		<b>20</b>	19
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	78

**Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score:**

I see no issues with plagiarism within the text, with a Turnitin score of 9% (mostly due to properly cited long quotations).

**Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria:**

**Major Criteria:**

The author aims to outline the impact of the current conflict in Ukraine with the potential shift of CEE countries' nuclear policies and programs. This study has clear and interesting ramifications not only for the outlined nuclear energy strategies but also for the overarching energy policies implemented throughout Europe. Below are my general comments about the work.

The overall contribution and argumentation surrounding the work are sound, albeit unsurprising. It makes logical sense for CEE countries (and the rest of Europe) to shift their energy dependency away from Russia. Instead, the innovation of the study comes from the cross-comparative or small-n case study of each state and their so-called shifting policies across the previous ten years – Since the 2014 invasion/occupation. These countries are presented across an interesting mixed-methods approach, combining statistical analysis as the baseline with some qualitative cherry-picking to reaffirm the author's claims.

The research questions, however, muddled the direction of the work. The thesis should have been centralised around research question 1 – the impact of the Ukrainian war on the CEE energy strategy. I am unsure exactly of the point of research question 2 – the other factors beyond the outlined problem. This inclusion seems outside the scope of the thesis and detracts from the overall argumentation. I also believe that the third question could have been integrated into the answer for the first, as it sets up an unneeded expectation that the thesis will cover some more profound theoretical implications somewhere in the analysis.

Based on the context clues from the analysis section, I could understand the methodology utilised. Nonetheless, the author could have done a better job outlining how exactly they were going to analyse the data/documents within the methodology section.

I realise the importance of implementing a theoretical framework, but I wonder if a grand theory like Realism was appropriate. Herein, the author describes the importance of Realism within the thesis but does not describe how it fits within the specific focus of nuclear energy policy – instead, that Realism is making a comeback in general IR debates. This issue is especially prevalent when the author dives into Great Power Competition, which makes a compelling case for its selection in its direct relation to the phenomenon. The author would have thus been better off solely implementing the latter theory, which matches the overarching story of shifting nuclear energy reliance.

I enjoyed reading about the different cases and the discussion that followed. The author did a great job proving and solidifying their argumentation. There is an excellent mix of sources here, and I can appreciate the overall effort put into the analysis.

**Minor Criteria:**

There is a slight problem with the Chicago footnoting, where the author needs to include the full citation before the shortened version. The structure is also a bit odd. Is Section 4/5 – Nuclear Power in Europe/Historical Background – the literature review? Usually, this would come before the method/theory so the reader could understand the gap in the field and then be able to address it. Is there a literature review on how other academics have approached the topic or just a summary of the situation in Europe and CEE? Finally, there is an excellent amount and utilisation of sources for the study, backed up nicely by the overall language and tone of the thesis.

**Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): C**

**Suggested questions for the defence are:**

It would be beneficial to clarify Realism's direct relevance to nuclear energy policy within the context of your study. How do you see Realism informing your analysis, specifically concerning the shifting energy dynamics in CEE countries post-2014?

Please provide further insight into your methodology, particularly how you approached the combination of statistical analysis and qualitative policy examination. How did you ensure the robustness of your methods in capturing each state's nuclear policy shifts?

I suggested that the thesis should have been centralized around the impact of the Ukrainian conflict on CEE energy policies rather than incorporating additional questions. How do you justify the inclusion of multiple research questions, and how do you believe they contribute to the overall understanding of the topic?

**I recommend the thesis for final defence.**

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***Referee Signature***

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Quality standard
91 – 100	<b>A</b>	= outstanding (high honor)
81 – 90	<b>B</b>	= superior (honor)
71 – 80	<b>C</b>	= good
61 – 70	<b>D</b>	= satisfactory
51 – 60	<b>E</b>	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	<b>F</b>	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.