IMESS DISSERTATION

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

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

Student:	Yinuo Liu
Dissertation title:	Population ageing and economic growth: an analysis of Central and Eastern Europe

	70+	69-65	64-60	59-55	54-50	<50
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Knowledge *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.*			X			
Analysis & Interpretation *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.*				X		
Structure & Argument *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 limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.*					X	
Presentation & Documentation *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.*				X		
Methodology *Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.*					X	

ECTS Mark:		**UCL Mark:**	56	**Marker:**	Dr Erkin Sagiev
Deducted for late submission:				**Signed:**	Erkin Sagiev
Deducted for inadequate referencing:				**Date:**	27 August 2024

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+): *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 65-69):
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.

C (UCL mark 60-61):
Some evidence of critical analysis, knowledgeable interpretation. Wide range of sources used to develop a logic and coherent argument. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen

field of research, the extent of independent research could have improved.

D (UCL mark 59-55):
Employ relevant sources and show ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Little critical analysis of the material. It demonstrate methodological awareness but the standard and rigor of the analysis can improve.

E (UCL mark 54-50):
Mostly descriptive argument. Employ relevant but limited sources. The structure, logic and overall quality of the argument needs improvement.

F (UCL mark less than 50):
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.

Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (_at least 300 words_):

The aging demographic has become a key topic in Europe's modern agenda, presenting significant opportunities for valuable research. However, the variety of research methods that students have tried to apply is often complex and challenging. Unfortunately, these methods are not always applied accurately or appropriately.

The choice of countries for analysis is well justified, as they share common features and differences that make them suitable for comparison. The period selected for analysis is mostly appropriate, though it might be better to exclude 2020 if the author does not intend to cover the pandemic period due to its exceptional nature.

The literature review could be better organized. Sections 1.1 and 1.2, despite having different titles, both cover the topic of aging. Meanwhile, section 1.3, which is supposed to focus on Europe, also reviews the US and Asia. Overall, the review shows a significant bias towards the negative economic aspects of an aging population, with opposing viewpoints only briefly mentioned.

The descriptive analysis is adequate but lacks explanations of the dynamics. For example, Figure 4 combines countries with a hump in the working-age population and those that have remained stable, followed by a decline after 2010. There is no proper explanation the differences observed.

The theoretical model is poorly presented, with many key aspects not justified. For instance, it is unclear why the total human capital is not driven by the size of the population. The calculations should be more detailed. For example, it is unclear why the last factor in the expression for output per capita on page 43 is not raised to the power of Beta.

In chapter 1, old-age dependency is defined as the ratio of the number of elderly individuals to the number of working-age individuals. In the theoretical model, it is defined as the ratio of average output per elderly individual to output per capita. Different parts of the analysis lack coherence.

The author claimed that the empirical analysis would explore the mediation effect and be based on the theoretical model. In practice, the empirical analysis does not seem to fulfill either claim. The IVs have not been explained, and fixed effects are not tested. The nature of the heterogeneity analysis is unclear.

The documentation is not sufficiently accurate. The units of measurement are not clearly specified in many plots, and some concepts are introduced without proper explanation.

Overall, the dissertation represents an interesting attempt to apply various complex research methods to an important topic to gain valuable insights. However, the author has not managed to apply most of these methods adequately.

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

1. How is the theoretical model relevant to the empirical analysis?

2. Why does the definition of age-dependency vary between the literature review and the theoretical model?

3. How did age demographics change with accession into the EU in these countries?