

Name of the student:	Emina Balota
Title of the thesis:	Media portrayal of gender equality in Montenegro in the context of EU accession negotiations
Reviewer:	Dr. habil. Przemysław Tacik

### **1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD**

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

The thesis formulates a very precise research question which strictly corresponds to the research gap that the Author has identified. The Author's objective is to establish a correlation between the dissemination of gender equality discourses in Montenegro and the influence of EU accession negotiations, which is addressed through the lens of media portrayals of the link between these two. This is a complex research strategy, but designed and applied with precision. In particular, the structure of the thesis is very well organised around the research question, the guiding hypothesis and the final claim which confirms it (namely that 'the EU accession negotiations have significantly influenced media discourse on gender equality in Montenegro'). The text presents the hypothesis and subsequently proves it in a consistent and comprehensive manner. Literature review is quite exhaustive, although both more classic and more contemporary works on feminism, gender equality and queer studies could have been consulted. Patriarchy and feminism have been addressed in a bit instrumental manner, appropriate to the purposes of the study, but a bigger theoretical picture would certainly help the thesis. The inclusion of queer studies would also contribute to a fuller analysis.

### **2. ANALYSIS**

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

Given that the thesis operates in various thematic fields (feminism / anti-discrimination law / EU accession negotiations / socio-economic reality of Montenegro / media-created reality), it is not exhaustive in each of them, but altogether makes a really good use of their combination. The methodology is very well designed and described; it fully suits the purpose of answering the research question. The theoretical backing, esp. in gender studies, may be underrepresented (perhaps its more marked presence would hone the analysis of empirical data), but definitely sufficient. The Author has made a significant research effort in sampling media discourses, and analysed them in a way that makes a convincing argument.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

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

The conclusions, although a bit short, are well backed-up by the research of empirical data. They fully correspond to the research question and the guiding hypothesis, which articulates the thesis' design. The argument – although it could be more nuanced in more contexts – is definitely persuasive. The Author has managed to demonstrate how the EU has been portrayed as a 'civilisational force' that supports and promotes gender equality in Montenegro.

### **4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE**

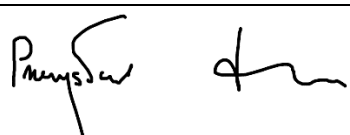
(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The Author's academic English is mature and appropriate. It could have been perhaps a bit more concise, but definitely it satisfies the requirements of an MA thesis. Academic standards have been duly respected; footnotes, bibliography and use of empirical data are fully satisfactory. The layout makes the thesis transparent and readable.

### **5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT**

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

I assess the thesis as very good. The Author has offered a comprehensive study of a very precisely identified research gap; a precise research question guides her work – throughout a comprehensive empirical analysis – to offering an answer. The thesis may have been more solidly anchored in theoretical discourses, but its undoubtable strength is the ability to make the theory practical and operationalisable. In sum, the presented work contains a very good realisation of all the key elements required from an EPS MA thesis.

<b>Grade (A-F):</b>	B
Date: 15/07/2024	 Signature:

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	91-100 %	8,5%	5	6,7%	8,5-10	5,3%	9-10	5,5 %
A (91-100)	91-100 %	8,5%	5	6,7%	8,5-10	5,3%	9-10	5,5 %
B (81-90)	81-90 %	16,3%	4,5	11,7%	7,5-8,4	16,4%	8-8,9	11,0 %
C (71-80)	71-80 %	16,3%	4	20%	6,5-7,4	36,2%	7-7,9	18,4 %
D (61-70)	61-70 %	24%	3,5	28,3%			6-6,9	35,2 %
E (51-60)	51-60 %	34,9%	3	33,4 %	6-6,4	42,1 %	5-5,9	30,1 %

**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’.