

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:	PhDr. Karin Roginer Hofmeister PhD.

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

Identifying this as a research gap, the author aimed to shed light on the causal relationship between gender equality in Montenegro and EU accession negotiations as communicated by selected Montenegrin media. Given the deteriorating image of the EU in the Western Balkans, but more importantly the growing discrepancy between the official policy of compliance with EU norms and public opinion, a broader understanding of how the popular media in Montenegro represent these issues is highly relevant. Furthermore, the issue of public perception of gender equality is a particularly pressing one in the predominantly still patriarchal societies of the WB, making the research even more relevant. The research objectives are clearly stated and build on existing research, as demonstrated by a literature review.

2. ANALYSIS

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

The analysis is underpinned by theoretical knowledge. The author has a clear understanding of the concepts she uses. In terms of methodology, Balota uses qualitative content analysis and CDA. Here she only refers to Fairclough's 1992 work. In the absence of other publications (perhaps more recent and updating Fairclough and Wodak), I miss a detailed argumentation as to why this particular approach is the most appropriate. In terms of working with primary sources, the author explained her selection criteria in detail, as well as her approach to analysing the selected texts. In terms of the line of argument, I sometimes missed the links between (sub)chapters that work relatively independently. This had a negative effect on the flow and compactness of the text. It probably also led to unnecessary repetitions and overlaps that could have been avoided. For example, there are two chapters entitled Theoretical Framework and it is not clear what the difference is between them or how they complement each other.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

The author provides a detailed textual analysis of the articles identified as having a negative tone. In doing so, she was able to interpret and contextualise the selected excerpts. However, I would have expected an analysis of all three types of articles (positive, neutral and negative). The author's decision to exclude the first two types (the neutral ones completely) may be justifiable, but needs to be explained in the design of the research, not just superficially in the Findings section.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE


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

The author's language skills are advanced for an MA student. I did not notice any serious shortcomings regarding the formal aspects of the thesis.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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

The thesis is written in very good English and appropriate academic language. The author has clearly defined her research objectives, which were both relevant and feasible. She was able to draw satisfactory conclusions from the media analysis. I see some reserves in the structuring of the text. Some chapters seem to be detached from the others. In particular, but not only in the section on findings, the text is chaotic and sometimes repetitive. The text should work in parts, but also as a whole. Finally, there is a lack of regional contextualisation. Although a comparison was not the aim of the thesis, it would be beneficial to place the findings in a broader empirical context by referring to cases from the region (in what sense is the Montenegrin case regarding gender equality and the EU's approach in this respect specific/similar and how is it reflected in the Montenegrin media).

Grade (A-F):	B
Date:	Signature:
20.7.2024	

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	Score Range	%	Score	%	Score Range	%	Score Range	%
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'.