
Reader's Report

Dissertation title: Empirical Analysis of EU's Economic Geography: Importance of Market Access

Candidate: Zuzana Janečková

Reminder of the general instructions:

- 1) The dissertation:
 - a. should have an original empirical part, albeit of limited scope, OR
 - b. (in the best of cases) should contribute to theory, OR
 - c. should be a 'meta-empirical' study, i.e. a comparative study of empirical results, with particular care to synthesis, OR
 - d. should be a thorough critical survey of the literature (empirical and/or theoretical).
- 2) The length of the dissertation should be kept within well-defined limits (8000 to 12000 words). Quality before quantity.
- 3) There should be proper attention to the citation of sources in footnotes or endnotes. The list of references should be carefully made.
- 4) The supervisor and the readers of the dissertation may perform checks on plagiarism. Citations should be made very explicit with quotation marks, indented text and quotation of the source in the main text. Quotations should be limited. Attempts of plagiarism will be severely dealt with, according to the regulations.

According to these general guidelines, please report the FINAL OVERALL GRADE. If you wish, you can also assign a grade on each one of the specific points separately; of course, the final grade does not necessarily have to be the simple average of the partial grades. The grade scale is 0–5 and 2 is the minimum to pass. Half points are allowed (but please not other decimals).

FINAL OVERALL GRADE5.....

Presentation of the dissertation objectives (motivation, main objective, bottom line, etc.)5.....

Organization of the dissertation (division in sections, introduction and conclusions, etc.)5.....

Use of presentation devices (tables, graphs, referenced material, quotes, etc.)5.....

Development of the argument and provision of evidence for the dissertation objective (including references to the literature)...5.....

Originality of the work5.....

Length of the dissertation (whether appropriate, penalize if you think the 12,000 words limit has not been reasonably respected)...5..

Please provide your own comments if you wish:

Ms Janečková has opted for a topic from one of the newest and hottest fields of international trade theory, i.e. empirical test of New Economic Geography models. This is a fairly advanced topic both from the point of view of trade theory (until now often neglected in master level courses) as well as from the point of view of econometrics (the models' predictions are difficult to not easy to convert to testable hypothesis, and many resulting hypothesis include quite a few econometric complications in the form of various non-linearities).

In my opinion this attempt was very successful. Both the descriptive parts (and the literature review) and analytical parts are logically structured and provide both useful and readable introduction to the issues of empirical tests of NEG models, as well as interesting results. I must also appreciate the ingenuity with which the author managed to obtain some of the less readily available data (e.g. distances between the regions).

Supervising the thesis of Ms Janečková was a great experience. It is rare to meet a student so motivated, with a clear vision of she wants to achieve and at the same time with skills that make the achievement possible. I therefore cannot do anything else than to suggest the highest possible grade and recommend her for a special acclaim.

In Prague, November 9th 2010

Vilém Semerák
