



Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree in
Economics of Globalisation and European Integration

Academic Year 2015-2016

**DISSERTATION EVALUATION
SUPERVISOR'S FORM**

Dissertation title: The economic benefits of EU membership: an empirical analysis

Student's name: Anna Zhitina

Supervisor's name: Marcel Bluhm

Here is brief reminder of the general instructions:

- 1) The dissertation should:
 - a. have an original empirical part, albeit of limited scope, OR
 - b. (in the best of cases) contribute to theory, OR
 - c. be a 'meta-empirical' study, i.e. a comparative study of empirical results, with particular care to synthesis, OR
 - d. 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 (8,000 to 12,000 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 examination regulations.

According to these general guidelines, please report the final overall grade on the next page, using the following grading system:

5	= 'excellent' (outstanding performance with no or only minor errors);
4,5 / 4	= 'very good' (above the average standard but with some errors);
3,5 / 3	= 'good' (generally sound work with a number of notable errors);
2,5 / 2	= 'satisfactory/sufficient' (pass; performance meets the minimum requirements);
1,5 / 1	= 'not sufficient' (marginal fail);
0,5 / 0	= 'poor' (fail).

In order to determine the final overall grade, it may be helpful to mark the dissertation on each one of the specific aspects mentioned on the next page, when they are relevant for the dissertation. However, the final grade does not necessarily have to be the simple average of these partial grades.

For the final overall grade you can use only integers or half-integers. To insert your mark, first click on "Choose a mark", then click on the arrow on the right, and finally select your mark from the drop-down list.

A short motivation of your grade will be much appreciated.

FINAL OVERALL GRADE:	3,5
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Detailed appreciation:

Item	Mark (0 to 5)
Presentation	3.5
Is the dissertation well organised?	
Is the list of references well organised?	
Are the tables and figures well-presented and appropriately referenced?	
Does the dissertation fit in the 12,000 words limit? (Penalise if you think the limit has not been reasonably respected.)	
Literature review and references	3.5
Is there a good enough coverage of the literature that is reviewed?	
Are the main relevant contributions included in the list of references?	
Does the literature review clearly present the main questions and results of the literature?	
Models and theoretical analysis	3.5
Is the choice of assumptions clearly motivated?	
Is the choice of assumptions relevant?	
If there are, what is the quality of the proofs?	
Econometric analysis	3.5
Is the choice of the econometric model a relevant one?	
Is the choice of econometric methods appropriate?	
Are the main econometric problems (e.g. endogeneity) well dealt with?	
Argumentation	4
Is the dissertation well motivated?	
Is the argumentation well-presented and clear?	
What is the quality of the interpretation of the main results?	
What is the degree of originality of the work?	
What is the potential of the dissertation to lead to publication in an academic journal?	
Working on the dissertation	
Has the student regularly worked on the dissertation all along the year?	
Was the student regularly in touch with the supervisor?	
Was the student understanding and taking account of the supervisor's remarks?	
Was the student really autonomous?	

Your general appreciation: In her thesis 'The economic benefits of EU membership: an empirical analysis', Ms Zhitina investigates the impact of joining the EU on countries' most important macroeconomic variables, GDP growth, unemployment rate, and inflation, using panel data analysis. While her findings show a negative impact from joining EU on GDP growth, the effect on inflation and unemployment is favourable in the sense of lowering both variables. Overall, the Master thesis is well done with some notable shortcomings outlined in the following. First, several typos and grammar mistakes should have been corrected. Second, the author does not provide enough justification as to why she chooses a standard fixed effects analysis and does not follow the literature she outlines which used other methods such as difference-in-differences analyses. Third, possible endogeneity issues arising from regressing contemporaneous dependent and independent variables should at least have been discussed (it would be beyond the scope of the Master thesis to solve these). For example, GDP growth and inflation are used both as dependent and independent variables, explaining each other. Fourth, a quantitative interpretation of marginal effects is missing from the regression results. Fifth, it would have been necessary to motivate/compare the three regression models used from/to the literature, in particular to also justify the choice of explanatory variables. While measures of FDI and freedom were included, gross capital formation – the most important variable in the overwhelming part of the growth literature – was not included as explanatory variable. Furthermore, the inflation variable used seemed to be heavily influenced by outliers/extreme values. While this was acknowledged by the author, a suitable transformation might have alleviated this problem and would have served as additional robustness check. Sixth, the conclusion should have concentrated more on summarizing the main findings. Most of these points might have been addressed had the student regularly communicated and coordinated with her supervisor. Nevertheless, it is a good Master thesis.

Supervisor's signature:
October 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Date:7