

Name of the student:	Assem Zhuaspayeva
Title of the thesis:	Revealing narratives on the SDGs implementation in the Scandinavian countries
Reviewer:	Maciej Stępk

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

This thesis addresses a highly relevant question of implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in the Scandinavian countries, by looking at specific narratives produced by governments and NGOs. The author focuses on unravelling of narratives on success and criticism, trying to identify points of divergence (conflicting storylines) between the governments' and NGOs' discourses. In my view it is a relevant and interesting topic, suitable for an MA-level inquiry.

The aims of the thesis are stated clearly in the introduction. They are also suitably justified. The thesis could benefit from more detailed research questions. The overarching question (here: "How is the SDGs implementation being narrated by the national NGOs and the governments in the Scandinavian countries?") is important but it could include additional more detailed sub-question that would guide the analysis. The literature review section is satisfactory. The concept of "development" is essentially contested and it is not easy to conduct a comprehensive literature review. However, the Author could engage more meaningfully with the concept of implementation, operationalizing it and including to analytical framework.

2. ANALYSIS

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

The method used in the analysis is suitable for this type of research. The methodological approach is explained in a satisfactory manner.

The analysis is competent and does deliver answers to posed research question. It feeds on relevant sources and data. Nonetheless, it also represents the most problematic aspect of the thesis. The author does not connect the discussion already begun in the literature review to the analysed data. Therefore, there is no guiding framework that would allow to produce a more informed and theory-driven analysis. The structure of the analytical section is clear but that content would benefit from more direct and meaningful references to appropriate work on implementation of SDGs and development in general. It is also not clear how specific analytical sub-sections fit into specific SDGs. At least some of the Goals should be discussed in more detail, just to exemplify how narratives become conflicted in regards to specific challenges. The analysed cases of Scandinavian countries are not differentiated and instead are treated as one corpus of data. This approach should be explained in more detail as it affects the analysis. Due to these shortcomings, the analysis does not dig deep enough into the nuances of specific narratives on challenges of SDG implementation. It focuses on practical aspects of development and implementation, scratching the surface of academic debate.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

Conclusions address the main research questions of the thesis. The section is in a form of a summary rather than traditional concluding discussion. It includes very general references to main findings already indicated in the analytical chapters. The link between data, specific goals and conclusions could be stronger.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

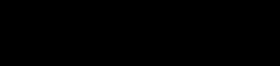
(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The thesis is well written, though it could benefit from more rigorous proof-reading. Overall, the writing is grammatically correct. The structure is logical and appropriate.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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

In my view this thesis touches upon an important and academically relevant topic of development and SDG implementation. It is written in clear and satisfactory manner. The literature review and methods are sufficiently selected. The thesis struggles with analysis, which is not theory driven and in general descriptive. The conclusions should engage in more meaningful way with data as well as aims/research questions outlined in the introduction.

Grade (A-F):	D/ 3,5 (Jagiellonian University)
Date:	Signature:
20.09.2021	

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	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'.