

Name of the student:	Lennart Paetz
Title of the thesis:	Entering the European Stage? Roles in Enlargement
Reviewer:	Dr hab. Magdalena Góra

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

The student is analysing the roles of the EU towards Western Balkans enlargement. Lennart possess a very good overview of the historical background of the Western Balkans enlargement, politics of the EU with focus on enlargements and foreign policy. Additionally, the research questions are very interesting and currently relevant and novel and with the solid theoretical background in role theory shed a new light on the relations of the EU with Balkans and perspectives of enlargement. The thesis – with its focus on value and interest driven roles and their relations – allows to capture the very recent dynamics in the EU’s approach to neighbourhood under conditions of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine.

2. ANALYSIS

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

The thesis is based on interviews with stakeholders in the EU and in WB and analysis of documents and literature. The aim was to establish what are the role conceptualisations, performance and possible role conflicts. I’d like to stress that Lennart provided deep understanding of role theory and presented proper literature review of the topic of enlargement. The qualitative methodology that was chosen – interviews with stakeholders – provided with a novel and original data and is in line with role theory approach. Even if the number of interviews was limited it is sufficient for MA thesis since these were high level political actors in a process and obtained data shed new light on the process of enlargement. The data from interviews was also analysed against the deep and thorough desk research of literature and documents. It is also important to stress that Lennart’s thesis was much impacted by the Russian aggression on Ukraine. Since the original case selection was Serbia – the country’s pro-Russian stance in 2022 dominated the coverage of the case and the fear was that the interviews will mostly be on that rather than on the general process of enlargement. Therefore, the student decided to focus on Montenegro instead serving as a case that was allowing him to pursue the original research question and limits the potential risks. That also demonstrate his maturity in approaching the researched issue and deep understanding of the political context in Western Balkans and in the EU.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

The conclusions are correctly written linking the results with theoretical background of the thesis. There are attempts by the student to advance discussion on the changing politics of enlargement and engagement with very recent shifts resulting from Russian aggression on Ukraine. Lennart focused in his thesis on interviews allowing him to capture potential changes in approach.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

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

The language of the thesis is correct even if sometimes shows stylistic weaknesses. The layout of the thesis is proper and clear. Citations, use of sources and bibliography is correctly applied,

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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

I highly assess Lennart's knowledge of the region of Western Balkans, politics of Enlargement, and political context within the EU. The thesis strength is coming from developed theoretical reflection and from original and very recent empirical data. The methodology was correctly chosen with novel and original data coming from interviews. Lennart was also able to engage with shortcomings of selected methodology, its execution and obtained data proving maturity in empirical research.

Grade (A-F):	A
Date:	Signature:
12/07/2022	Magdalena Góra

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'.