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Leiden

Thesis evaluation Max Powell

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Programme details

Programme: European Politics and Society

Specialisation:

EC: 30

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Thesis details:

Title: The Irish Lisbon Treaty Referendums 2008 and 2009: Which themes were present in the debate?

Is the thesis in your assessment free of plagiarism?

Yes to my knowledge the thesis is free of plagiarism

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Can the thesis be made publicly available in the Leiden University Repository?

by I. Slosarcik: it can be made public through the repository.

Summary assessment/comments

Interesting thesis which complies with requirements of the EPS program. Thesis provides solid description of topics presented during 2008 and 2009 Lisbon Treaty referendums, with slightly weaker contextualisation and explanation of referendums results.

Criteria

Knowledge and insight

The thesis compares the Irish referendums on the Lisbon Treaty held in 2008 and 2009. Its main objective is to compare the topics occurring in the campaign before both referendums and to contextualize them. Its secondary objective is to explain reasons behind the difference in the results of the first and second Lisbon referendums.

The thesis is based on existing literature and academic debate on the problem of referendums, European integration and Irish politics in general. The second chapter of the thesis, referred to as "literature review", is rather an overview of the key events researched, supplemented by selected academic commentaries. As the author decides to address the referendums in France and the Netherlands in 2005 within the „literature review“, it would be appropriate to explain in more detail their relevance to the Irish case study, e.g. the significance of the split within the French political class in 2005 in contrast to situation in 2008/2009 Ireland.

Assessment: good

Weighing: n/a

Application knowledge and insight

The thesis analyzes the content of selected texts published in Irish periodicals. The author of the thesis explains the method of their selection, but of course he is able to cover only part of the relevant discussion in the Irish political space. However, the author is aware of this limitation and mentions it in the final part of the thesis.

Assessment: good

Weighing: n/a

Reaching conclusions

Thesis structures Irish campaign referendum topics into nine groups. This structure is relatively arbitrary. Individual groups partially overlap (Irish place in Europe – neutrality, economy - WTO) and combine sectoral approach (taxation, abortion, economy etc.) with horizontal issues of Irish political life in years 2008-2009 (unpopularity of government). In general, the respective thesis section provides an interesting insight into Irish political debate. Weaker element of the thesis is its explanation (or lack of it) of the voters' opinion shift between 2008 and 2009 referendums.

Assessment: good

Weighing: n/a

Communication

The thesis is well written and has clear structure. Grammar or formulation mistakes are relatively rare, such as „Euroaromter, 2010“ (p. 22).

Assessment: good

Weighing: n/a

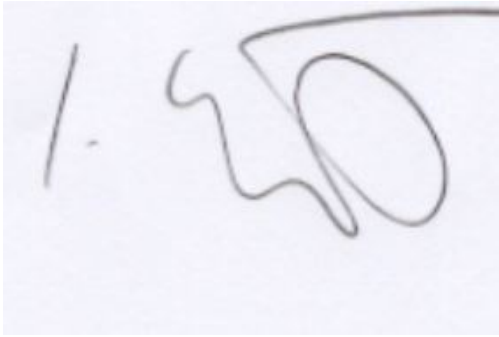
Formal requirements

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Final assessment

This thesis is graded with a 7.4

Signatures



I. Slosarcik