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| Name of the student: | Carl Schüppel |
| Title of the thesis: | Nationality Matters: How Members of the European Parliament Decide on Citizens' Petitions |
| Reviewer: | Jan Váška (Charles University) |

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

This thesis develops on the recent "representative turn" strand in European Parliament literature (research into national and electoral considerations as motivation factors of European parliamentarians' behaviour) in exploring the link between the composition of the EP's Petitions committee, in terms of nationality of its members, and the success of petitions addressed to the committee (defined as taking action rather than dropping the petitions), based on the nationality of the petitioners.

The topic may seem rather niche at first glance but the author does a very good job in linking it to several ongoing academic debates, including ones on the drivers of MEPs' decisions and the role of national principals, and, more indicatively and in more dispersed manner, on fairness within the EP. The literature review is concise rather than inflated and but very robust at the same time and both here and throughout the thesis, the author has proved his ability to critically appraise existing body of literature.

2. ANALYSIS

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

The thesis is build around just one core hypothesis, derived from both existing literature and available knowledge and implying a positive correlation between member states' representation in the PETI committee and the rate success of petitions based on the nationality of petitioners.

The author has opted for a mixed strategy of statistical analysis (original data set of petitions during the 8th and 9th parliamentary term) and thematic analysis of semi-structured elite/expert interviews. Based on very sound selection and operationalisation of variables, this methodological design works very well in my view: the quantitative phase provided data-supported empirical evidence of the state of the problem under investigation whereas the interviews supplied the author with numerous cues (in addition to those taken up from the existing literature) for the subsequent interpretation of the findings as well as, and this I feel is critical for the depth of insight, enhanced his understanding of the modus operandi of the committee. A fairly large number of respondents (11) meant the author avoided the trap of over-reliance on any single of these.

On the whole I was very impressed by the author's work with sources, both primary and literature, and by his focus in developing the argument. Some degree of background and contextual knowledge is required on the part of the reader, and here I feel a thematic introductory chapter would have been very beneficial. I am aware though the student was operating within a very stringent wordcount frame and on the instructions/advice by the supervisor.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

The conclusions of the thesis are adequately embedded in the evidence presented and argument developed throughout the thesis. Research objectives of the project were achieved abundantly. Last but not least, in the latter part of the Conclusions section, the author's reflection of the limits of the methodological design of the thesis is exemplary. On the contrary, I tend to think that possible remedies to the current relative lack of procedural fairness in the EP's treatment of petitions (as discussed on p. 33), which constitute the "political outreach" of the thesis, might have been interrogated more thoroughly.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

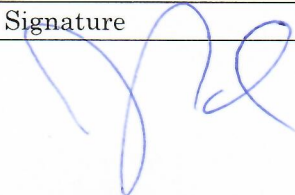
(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

I am not a native speaker so my assessment of the author's English is of course just indicative. The language of the thesis feels just commanding, dense and accurate, both the general and academic style. I have no issues with referencing and citations (the authors adheres to the APA citation style), and the layout of the thesis is very polished and attended to to the last detail (with a possibly single minor exception on p. 32).

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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

This is an excellent piece of independent research and definitely one of the best master theses I have ever had the opportunity to read. Convincingly embedded in literature, excellent in applying both quantitative and qualitative research methods, strongly argued, flawless language and terminology, perfect adherence to citation style, rich and visually very satisfying annexes, all of this very effectively combined. Just minor weaknesses in terms of relative underdevelopment of some parts of literature review and discussion. After minor revisions, this paper should definitely be published as an original research article.

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| Grade (A-F) | A (9,4 points out of 10) |
| Date | Signature  |
| 27/06/2023 | |