





PROTOCOL – THESIS DEFENCE

Student Name	Irina Percemli
Student Number	3643719
Study Programme	MA European Politics and Society
Study Period	2022-2024
Thesis Title	Understanding and Framing of Democratic Decline in the EU funded Research Projects

DEFENCE DETAILS	
Date	18 July 2024
1 st Chair – Title, Name, Role	Dr Joost Augusteijn – Chair, MA EPS Programme, Leiden
2 nd Chair – Title, Name, Role	Dr Maxine David – Coordinator, MA EPS Programme, Leiden
3 rd Chair – Title, Name, Role	Dr Marcin Zubek – Coordinator, MA EPS Programme, Jagiellonian
Comments from Defence Committee on Student Defence	
<p>A good powerpoint was in place but the student did not seem as practised as she might have been, to the extent that she overran the 15 minutes.</p> <p>Dr Augusteijn asked: why not use democratic decline literature for your coding? The student should have been able to provide a better answer than this – but she did eventually get there in terms of arguing a wider lens was needed in order to capture wide context in which democratic decline takes place.</p> <p>Dr Zubek (online): did not the student’s preferred conception of democracy constitute concept stretching, e.g. democracy is synonymous with development assistance, for instance? The answer was much stronger here, the student speaking about Marxist roots – if there is not equality of opportunity, including economic, how can we really talk about democracy? She drew further on the notion of egalitarian democracy.</p> <p>Dr David: The second reader talked about what influences are not talked about, how does this criticism affect your thinking about future research agendas? This was not answered very strongly and required some prompting. Dr Augusteijn followed up on this too, on how neo-liberal thinking has become hegemonic such that it may not be the influence of the EU so much as the researchers’ starting belief system. Also added on the need to think about what was not funded as well. Answer about a lack of transparency for those that are not funded such that she could not research these, but still her research was revealing of what the dominant frames are.</p>	

The student's lack of confidence – seen throughout the thesis writing process – affected her performance here but once settled, she engaged very well with the defence and delivered some convincing responses.

Thesis Grade	8.7
Defence Grade	7.6 - B

Signature – 1st Chair	
Date	18 July 2024
Signature 2nd Chair	
Date	18 July 2024
Signature 3rd Chair	
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