

MASTER THESIS REVIEW

Author: Eshkin Ibragimov
Thesis: Economic Development and Small-Medium-Sized enterprises: A study in the Caucasus region
Reviewer: Mgr. Martin Schlossarek, Ph.D.

Content

According to the original assignment, the thesis aims to understand the effects of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the economic development of Caucasus countries by analyzing existing data sets and reviewing the literature. Although I do not doubt that there is progress compared to the previous version of the thesis, unfortunately, the key statement of my previous review remains to be valid:

- the aim was not fully reached. First, no data were analyzed, the thesis is a pure compilation. Second, the compilation is rather shallow and without value added by ideas developed by the author.

Despite this, I would like to highlight various improvements of the thesis done by the author:

- He formulated new research questions: “What is the role of the SME sector in the economy of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia? What are the differences in the impact of the SMEs of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia on the country's economy?” Both questions are somehow answered, although the relevance of comparisons done in the analytical chapter 6 is thwarted by the fact that each country included in the comparison uses a different definition of SMEs and the author takes over these differences.
- Crucial chapter 6 was significantly expanded
- The analytical part of the thesis was expanded, new charts & tables with reasonable value-added were included
- All minor criticism from previous reviews were reflected (chapters were reshuffled into a more logical order, formal issues with the literature/list of sources were solved, etc.

Unfortunately, despite these improvements, the thesis is still a rather weak compilation which analyzes relationships between various phenomena just on a very general level, discussion tends to be shallow and it is hard to find in the thesis original ideas developed by the author.

Literature and references

Generally, there is a lack of synthesis of more sources, but the number of sources is adequate, although I expected a higher share of academic articles. The author utilizes mainly primary sources. Formally, both citations and a list of literature

Formal requirements

The format of the thesis is standard and the graphic layout is consistent. The tables and charts included in the thesis are well arranged, with a good graphic layout and sufficient resolution. The thesis is written in a style that is sometimes not easy to follow. There are some typos in the text and in the tables, but not an extremely large number.

Overall evaluation and proposed grade

Despite a large number of weaknesses, I believe that the thesis meets the minimum standard of the master thesis at GLODEP International Development Studies program. Therefore, I do recommend the thesis for defense with grade E.

Date: 16/8/2021

Signature: