

## Thesis report: reviewer 2

**For:** Lukáš Procházka

**Title:** EU enlargement in the context of Europeanization: the case of Serbia.

The Master's Thesis examines the implementation of the EU environmental policy within the EU accession process with Serbia within the theoretical framework of Europeanisation. The author clearly dedicated a lot of work to the study of the EU-Serbian relations. I appreciate the currency of the topic, especially the choice of environmental policy and how the author tries to apply the theoretical framework throughout the analytical section.

While I appreciate the topic, the extensive use of resources and the obvious work of the author, the thesis suffers of some substantial weaknesses. The author works with too many research questions; instead of selecting less research questions that would be further developed and operationalised. Consequently, the work is fragmented in both the theoretical and analytical sections. The theoretical part presents several concepts the author promises to apply, and it becomes unclear, which concept is the main tool of his methodology. As the research questions are not focused, the theory is too thin spread even though it is clear that the author tried to get a thorough picture of the Europeanisation literature. Consequently, it is not well developed because it is too broad and for the most part works with seminal but very old Europeanisation literature (also most sources on Western Balkans-EU relations are rather old), which does not reflect the current state of knowledge especially with respect to the accession process. It is then problematic to talk about "current research" as the author does. The author also only summarises the literature and for the most part fails to provide a critical overview.

The chapter on twinning is not linked to the other parts of the thesis, it seems out of place even though it could have been a very interesting addition to the analysis of the Europeanisation of Serbian environmental policy within the accession process. I deem problematic that we do not learn why he chose environmental policy until well into the reading and the historical overview is unnecessarily long. The actual analysis is interesting, the sections well divided but the author fails to describe the method of his work and its possible limitations – it seems that the author mostly relied on the official documents. Did he consider the relevancy of the documents in assessing implementation and transposition? It would be highly advisable to use a table which would make the findings clearer. The section on EU-Serbia relations seems out of place – the context of their relations should have been provided earlier and not by the end of the thesis and it is not clear how some of the information relates to the Europeanisation of Serbian environmental policy. On the other hand, the discussion on page 71 is crucial of the thesis but unfortunately remains incomplete – it is a pity because the author clearly could be more specific in contextualising the analysis.

The structure and the language are comprehensible, the formal requirements are met, however, the author at times makes claims that are not sufficiently supported by literature (e.g., pages 31-32, 45, 54-55, 58).

The thesis complies with the Master thesis requirements but due to the aforementioned weaknesses, I recommend the grade C.

Olomouc, 18 January 2022

Mgr. Lucie Tungul, Ph.D., M.A.

## Evaluation Master Thesis

Name student	Lukáš Procházka	
Title of Thesis	EU Enlargement in the Context of Europeanization: The Case of Serbia	
Supervisor	MMag. Dr. Doris Wydra, Mönchsberg 2, 5020 Salzburg, Tel. +43 662 8044 76076, <a href="mailto:doris.wydra@sbg.ac.at">doris.wydra@sbg.ac.at</a>	
Date	21.1.2022	
Evaluation		
Statement of problem/ research question	Satisfactory (3)	
Outline and Structure	Satisfactory (3)	
Explanation of Concepts and Terminology	Satisfactory (3)	
Coverage of literature (relevance and extent) and Citation	Good (2)	
Critical analysis and application of theoretic approaches/ Methodology	Sufficient (4)	
Language (Grammar, Orthography, linguistic expression)	Satisfactory (3)	
Comments		
<p>EU Enlargement policy has often been assessed as the most successful policy when it comes to prove the transformative power of the European integration process. Driven by conditionality with the clear aim of granting member state status, candidate countries had to adopt not only the full <i>acquis communautaire</i> of the Union, but also its norms, standards, processes, so in many ways the mechanisms of decision making, the institutional processes, but also discourses and actors' identities were "europeanized". The Europeanization literature, focusing on these processes in the context of enlargement, has therefore developed considerably in recent years – and because of the difficulties the Western Balkan countries still seem to face in this process - in particular by taking an interest in questions what hinders successful Europeanisation. It asks why conditionality seems to work less effectively in these settings, looks at veto players, institutional misfits and political costs. The thesis talks to this literature and builds its arguments on different strands of this literature. However, there are several aspects, which have to be addressed critically.</p> <p>Lukáš Procházka draws on the most prominent authors in this research area: Tanja Börzel, Claudio Radaelli, and Frank Schimmelfennig. He presents their approaches by way of summarization and thus makes a good first step towards the theoretical basis for his research design. Unfortunately he does not continue to develop an analytical framework for his analysis. He repeatedly mentions that there is not one single approach to Europeanization and so he leaves the different strands widely unconnected. On page 25 he states that he will build his analysis mainly on Filipec and Schimmelfennig. But he does not connect these two theories, does not indicate how the "interactions" approach is connected with Schimmelfennig (and which aspects of Schimmelfennig's rich writings on Europeanization are to be applied to the case of Serbia, the external incentive model e.g. is only partly explained). But, when the case study of the "Europeanization" of environmental policies is analysed, the thesis rather refers to the concepts of Radaelli. The</p>		



theoretic concepts and models are not operationalised, no hypotheses are formulated. E.g. Under which conditions would we expect absorption rather than transformation? In cases of a more active or more passive EU? Without this analytical framework it remains unclear throughout the thesis which variables have to be included in the analysis, which factors lead to better or more reluctant application in specific areas, how in the end, the dynamics we see in the area of environmental policy can be explained. Thus there is no consistent link between the theoretic and the empirical part of the thesis and the conclusion that in the case of Serbia we are confronted with a case of "forced integration" is somewhat astonishing.

The research questions cover a wide range of topics and it remains unclear how they provide focus to the analysis. RQ 1 "How can Europeanization be defined in the context of EU enlargement?" is not a research question but directs us to the theoretic foundation of the research, in particular as the research design is about theory testing (how can aspects of the Europeanization approach explain the dynamics of the adaptation of EU standards in environmental policies in the case of Serbia) and not about theory development. What RQ 2 means by "defining features of the Europeanization" is not clarified, in particular how this differs from RQ1. RQ3 and RQ4 are then directed towards different goals. RQ3 asks within which twinning projects the Czech Republic and Austria co-operated with Serbia and which of the countries was the more active. Twinning projects can be important instruments to induce Europeanization dynamics, in particular as they are geared towards learning, best-practice and horizontal cooperation. But in this chapter no link is made to the theoretical framework of Europeanization. It also remains unclear how the hypothesis "Austria engages in particular in twinning projects related to JHA and security" (which is refuted) contributes to our knowledge about the dynamics of Europeanization. It is not a hypothesis which is developed on the basis of the underlying theoretic framework and therefore more a guess than a hypothesis: disproving it does not require an analytical effort, but a mere glance into the list of twinning projects suffices.

A further question is also how the analysis of twinning projects relates to the area of environmental policies in Serbia. As we see from the presentation of twinning projects Austria was particularly active in this policy field. One hypothesis could have been that in particular in those areas where co-operation between member states and candidate countries (in this case Serbia) was established through twinning projects, we see better transformation than in other areas. But these chapters remain unconnected as do the various research questions.

The presentation of the efforts and the progress of Serbia to implement European norms and standards in the area of environmental policy is interesting to read and shows a strong effort of the thesis to look at the details of the adoption and implementation of rules and mechanisms. But why exactly has Environmental policy been selected as a case study? The reasons for case selection could have been presented more clearly, also by showing why it is particularly this policy area which merits to analyse if one wants to learn about the mechanisms, dynamics, incentives for and constraints of Europeanization.

Questions	<p>After analysing the different strands of the Europeanization literature, what is your definition of "Europeanization"? How would you bring together these different approaches in an analytic framework to study Europeanization process within candidate countries?</p> <p>Do you think that twinning projects have an effect on the dynamics of Europeanization? How can we analyse them?</p>
Overall Grade	Satisfactory (3)