

## Habilitation thesis reviewer's report

<b>Masaryk University</b>	
<b>Faculty</b>	Faculty of Economics and Administration
<b>Field of study</b>	Public Economy
<b>Applicant</b>	<b><i>Ing. Gabriela Vaceková, PhD.</i></b>
<b>Unit</b>	Department of Public Economics Faculty of Economics and Administration Masaryk University
<b>Habilitation thesis (title)</b>	<i>The Nonprofit Sector in Economic Theory: Beyond Mainstream Explanations</i>
<b>Reviewer</b>	Éva Kuti, PhD, retired professor
<b>Unit</b>	Budapest College of Management

### Reviewer's report

It is crucially important that students have professors who are able to analyze the social and economic phenomena in a theoretical perspective. The habilitation paper proves that Gabriela Vaceková belongs to this relatively small group of academics. Her overview of the nonprofit theories reflects a comprehensive knowledge of the subject. It is very clearly written, the text could be used as a teaching material.

It is also very impressive that the Applicant tries to test the nonprofit theories and she does not confine herself to the use of anecdotal evidence. However, the statistical analysis of the survey data from Slovakia is rather vulnerable. The extremely small sample size (N=60) makes the use of sophisticated statistical methods and the reliability of the results at least questionable. It is also doubtful whether the reason for establishment (as remembered by respondents, who were not necessarily among the founders) offers an appropriate and sufficient basis for identifying a nonprofit theory behind the creation of a specific organization.

By contrast, the "Czech part" of the analysis based mainly on personal interviews and statistical data is much more convincing. The Applicant manages to explore the theoretical aspects of two hot issues of the Czech nonprofit sector, namely the commercialization and the sustainability. Another merit of the thesis is its focus on the rural nonprofit sector. This approach is relatively rare in the nonprofit literature, thus the findings of the author are both innovative and inspiring.



As far as its last part is concerned, the thesis goes not only beyond mainstream explanations, as stated in its title, but also beyond economic theories. Though the author's effort to find out how the nonprofit sector responds to real-world challenges is obviously legitimate and respectable, these challenges are much too numerous and manifold, thus their discussion can hardly be comprehensive. This is probably why the Applicant focuses almost exclusively on the nonprofit organizations' role in the solution of immigration problems, which results in a very interesting and timely analysis of a really important phenomenon.

### **Reviewer's question for the habilitation thesis defence**

While describing the supply side theory (pp 36-37) you seem to agree that its key element is ideological entrepreneurship, the presence of entrepreneurs seeking to maximize nonmonetary returns (and unsatisfied demand is only a necessary but insufficient condition in this respect). How do you explain, then, that in the empirical analysis every nonprofit organization is assigned directly to the supply side theory if it "was created based on the personal interests of its founder, i.e. founder followed their own needs and motives for self-fulfillment. Or (the organization) wanted to provide a service to ourselves; we created an association that provides mutual benefits to its members" (p. 60)? One could argue that this latter kind of motivation (closely connected to unmet needs and personal interests) fits much better the demand side theories, especially if the service provision is an outcome of collective action and (ideological or any other type of) entrepreneurs are not involved, as it is often the case when mutual benefit organizations are created.

### **Conclusion**

The habilitation thesis submitted by Gabriela Vaceková entitled "The Nonprofit Sector in Economic Theory: Beyond Mainstream Explanations" *meets* the requirements applicable to habilitation theses in the field of public economics.

In Budapest on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2017

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