

Review of the habilitation thesis

Name and surname of the candidate: Ing. Marta Kahancová, PhD.

Title of habilitation thesis: Institutional Regulation of Non-Standard Work: Challenges of Social Protection, Pay Adequacy and Collective Bargaining

Study/research field: Political Science

1) Evaluation from a formal perspective

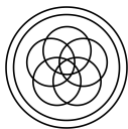
From a formal perspective, the habilitation thesis is submitted as collection of four published research papers, with the required introduction, overarching conceptual chapter combining the theoretical framework and methodology. In terms of length, this work (130 pages) meets the requirements for a habilitation thesis.

2) Evaluation from a content perspective

The thesis is a combination of four studies; all related to the different angles of non-standard work research. The first study addressed research on platform work in Poland and Slovakia, focusing on how stakeholders perceive the risks and opportunities associated with the EU Platform Work Directive. Considering the EU secondary legal source, the author(s) go beyond formal application of the multi-level governance and compliance in the transposition, but evaluated the practical aspects of the process of policy-making on the national level, while complying with the EU law obligations. Particularly relevant is the assessment of whether national actors passively comply with or actively shape the transposition of the EU, understanding the differences in the national material conditions in the labour market.

In the second empirical study, the author(s) actively contributed to the methodological gap in establishing adequate pay for non-standard work. Following the data collected across 184 countries, they created “index” to combine for different, most important factors to consider when addressing the payment for non-standard workers. The contribution is very clear and significant, proposing the concept of the “Living Tariff” as an extension of the living wage tailored to the conditions of self-employment.

The third paper examines how different industrial relations systems and actors therein shape access to social protection for specific groups of non-standard workers by cross-national and intra-national comparative design based on 36 semi-structured interviews conducted in Denmark, the UK and Slovakia. The study provides the example of using the mixed methods approach, interviews are accompanied by the scaling of perceived



access gaps and the scope of social partner initiatives. The comparative aspect of the standard to non-standard work is present, providing evidence to formulate recommendations for non-standard workers' protection in "labour" relation.

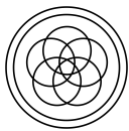
In the last paper, author(s) develop a nexus analysis of the relationship between legislation and bargaining and its application to non-standard work, particularly relevant due to the need of social protection, which is understood as the principle under the EU law, as well as under the international obligations. It very precisely and rigorously differentiates between the legislative limits for bargaining in working relations and the possibilities the legislative framework provides for the specific, collective regulation of social bargaining in the workplace. Specifically relevant is the latter approach, allowing the adjustment and discretion in the working relations, without the long-lasting process of legislative change.

Although all four studies are written in co-authorship, their methodological rigor, relevance, and the research conducted (interviews, comparison, etc.), provide sufficient insight to understand the author's contribution, by evaluating her sustainable high level of research quality and its formulation in the provided research papers. The innovation formulated through the lenses of either contributing to the methodology (see paper two and four), as well as the originality in formulating "Living Tariff" to alternate equal payment, are reflecting constant scientific approach of the author in the research area.

3) Assessment of the Candidate's Contribution

The candidate's distinctive contribution in the habilitation procedure undoubtedly lies in her effort to provide a comprehensive understanding, that non-standard work provides different perspectives of research, while considering the same effects to be achieved. Particularly valued is the understanding that non-standard work deserves to be provided with the same level of employment safeguards and that duty bearers' obligations are as foreseen in the EU Work Platform directive. The contribution to the extended understanding of one of the EU's fundamental freedoms – free movement of workers.

The author constructively and methodically elaborates on the different aspects of non-standard workers, while providing recommendations on how to address pending issues such as access to social security, ensuring adequate pay standards, and providing social protection to employees in different types of working arrangements for non-standard workers. The author's contribution builds on strong data-driven evidence, which is therefore unquestionable and provides a significant contribution to the political science development.



4) Recommendation and questions

The submitted habilitation thesis, together with its findings published in international publications, is important in contributing to the development of political science and I recommend it for defense, and, after successful defense, I recommend Ing. Marta Kahancová, PhD., be awarded the title of “Associate Professor” in the field of political science.

Q1: How does the non-standard work share in the Slovak labour market impact the “relevance” of (non)addressing the need of equal treatment of these workers?

Q2: Did you assess the fiscal impact of non-standard workers on GDP, or some related aspect, in any country? How would it be relevant in case of Slovakia?

Bratislava, 30 April 2026

prof. JUDr. PhDr. Lucia Mokrá, PhD.