

HABILITATION BOARD DECISION ON THE NOMINATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Masaryk University	
Faculty	Faculty of Social Studies
Procedure field	Political Science
Applicant	Alena Kluknavská, PhD.
Applicant's home unit, institution	Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University
Habilitation thesis	Populist communication: content, actors, opportunities, and impacts in times of crisis

Board members

Chair

Members

prof. PhDr. Jan Holzer, Ph.D. (FSS MU)

doc. PhDr. Roman Chytilek, Ph.D. (FSS MU)

doc. PhDr. Oľga Gyárfášová, Ph.D. (Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University in Bratislava)

Assoc. Prof. Benjamin Stanley (Faculty of Social Sciences, SWPS University, Warsaw)

prof. Joanna Rak (Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

Evaluation of the applicant's scholarly/artistic qualifications

Habilitation Board appointed by the Scientific Council of FSS MU for Habilitation Procedure Alena Kluknavská, PhD. met the documents submitted for the habilitation procedure, her habilitation text and all three review reports. The members of the commission stated that they had all the documents required by law.

On the basis of this, the Habilitation Board notes that Alena Kluknavská, PhD. is one of the prominent representatives of the middle generation of Czech social sciences with visible international impact.

She is a graduate of the MA (2011) and the PhD (2015) in Political Science at the Faculty of Arts at Comenius University in Bratislava. After 6 years of working at the Department of Public Economics (Faculty of Economics and Administration, Masaryk University), since 2021 she works as a researcher and then an Assistant Professor at the Department of Media Studies and Journalism at the Faculty of Social Studies at Masaryk University.

Generally speaking, her publications belong to the area of theory of communication, public discourse research, and populism research. She dedicated her key texts to the issue of current extreme right actor's communication on social media. Specifically, Alena Kluknavská is the author or co-author of 11 articles in the scholarly journals listed in the WoS database (4 of them belong to the Q1, for instance *Mass Communication and Society; Information, Communication & Society; or West European Politics*), 4 articles in the scholarly journals listed in the SCOPUS database, 4 articles in another peer-reviewed journals, and 7 chapters

in monographs (include a publication in Palgrave Macmillan Press). She has 236 citations in international databases and 81 other citations.

The committee notes that most of the publications were prepared in collaboration with other authors, including foreign authors, which it interprets positively as the applicant's ability to integrate into research networks that focus on populism. The committee also formulates this statement in view of the high proportion of first authorship by Alena Kluknavská. Publication excellence is also related to the applicant's ability to research populism in an interdisciplinary way, integrating the methods of political science and communication studies.

Alena Kluknavská has extensive experience in participating in scientific projects. Twice as a principal investigator (Grant Agency of the Czech Republic and AKTION Czech Republic - Austria) and seven times as a member of the research team (Grant Agency of the Czech Republic, SYRI, European Structural funds, Open Society Foundation, Slovak Research and Development Agency, VEGA). In this context, the committee acknowledges the experience and successful role as principal investigator on two grant projects.

In general context, it should be emphasized that in 2023, Alena Kluknavská received the GACR President's awards, which is awarded by the President of the Czech Science Foundation as an appreciation of outstanding results achieved within projects funded by GACR. The award is another symbolic proof of Dr. Kluknavska's research excellence.

As regards contacts with foreign institutions, Alena Kluknavská spent several one-semester study stays: Northwestern University in Illinois, University of Vienna, or University of Amsterdam. In addition, Dr Kluknavská collaborates with the ECPS think-tank on research reports on populism and populist parties in Europe. And finally, in spring 2024 she became a member of the Steering Committee of the ECPR Standing Group on Political Communication.

Conclusion: The applicant's scholarly/artistic capabilities **meet** the requirements expected of applicants participating in a habilitation procedure in the field of Political Science.

Evaluation of the applicant's pedagogical experience

Alena Kluknavská teaches subjects related to the areas as *Politics and Media, Political Communication, Civil Society, Economy and the State, Right-wing extremism and radicalism*, etc. in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs at the Department of Journalism and Social Media. She also has experience lecturing as part of an ERASMUS teaching exchange (University of Ljubljana).

Alena Kluknavská has also been / is head of six successfully defended bachelor and master's diploma theses. And she is the supervisor of one doctoral thesis.

The Habilitation Board therefore notes that Alena Kluknavská's pedagogical focus has long been in line with its scientific and research activities.

Conclusion: The applicant's pedagogical capabilities **meet** the requirements expected of applicants participating in a habilitation procedure in the field of Political Science.

Habilitation thesis evaluation

On the basis of a decision of the Habilitation Board, Assoc. Prof. Monika Brusenbauch-Meislová from FSS MU, Assoc. Prof. Vladimír Naxera from the University of Pilsen and Assoc. Prof. Alessandro Nai from the University of Amsterdam prepared reviews to the habilitation work. The members of the Habilitation Board got acquainted with the reviewers' opinions, which clearly showed the positive opinion of all three reviewers. Considering these

assessments, the committee notes that the habilitation work submitted by Alena Kluknavská presents both the original elaboration of the topic and a significant contribution to the general conceptualization of the phenomenon of communication of populist actors in the era of so-called democratic backsliding. The submitted text therefore fully complies with the requirements for habilitation work, and therefore the Habilitation Board recommends continuing the habilitation procedure.

Conclusion: The applicant's habilitation thesis **meets** the requirements expected of habilitation theses in the field of Political Science.

Secret ballot results

Number of board members	5
Number of votes cast	5
Number of votes in favour	5

Board decision

Based on the outcome of the secret vote and following an evaluation of the applicant's scholarly or artistic qualifications, pedagogical experience and habilitation thesis, the board hereby submits a proposal to the scientific board of the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University to

appoint the applicant associate professor of Political Science.

terminate the procedure.

Date: October 8th, 2024

prof. PhDr. Jan Holzer, Ph.D.



