



OPINION

on the dissertation work for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in:
field of higher education 3.Social, economic and legal sciences, professional strand 3.8
Economy, scientific specialty: Economy and management (agriculture sector)

Author of the dissertation work: Georgi Borisov Gerov ,
PhD student in the Department of Economics at the Agricultural University, Sofia Plovdiv

Theme of the dissertation work: "Strategies for managing the profitability of wineries"

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Tony Bogdanova Mihova, Technical University – Sofia, Plovdiv
Branch, Higher Education Area: 3.Social, Business and Legal Sciences, Professional
Direction: 3.7 Administration and Management, Scientific Specialty: Economics and
Management,
appointed as a member of the scientific jury by order No RD-16-969/03.10.2025. Rector
of Agricultural University-Plovdiv.

1. Topicality of the problem.

The complex situation in which rural areas in Bulgaria find themselves today is reflected, on the one hand, in the deepening economic and demographic imbalances and, on the other, in the need to implement policies such as the Green Deal and the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. For Bulgaria, the importance of agriculture is directly linked to its identity, social structure, and territorial sustainability. In this regard, finding a balance between European environmental goals and Bulgarian national interests is an extremely important issue that needs to be studied in depth and comprehensively.

I believe that the topic of adapting Bulgarian agriculture and striking a balance between national interests and EU green policies is highly relevant and significant in scientific and applied scientific terms.

2. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and methods of examination.

The purpose of the dissertation is clearly defined – a well-founded proposal for a framework for balancing the implementation of European regulations and preserving the specific characteristics of the Bulgarian agricultural sector, including its historical, cultural, and structural features. Nine tasks have been set for its implementation. The methods used are appropriately selected and correspond to the aim of the dissertation research.

3. Visuality and presentation of the results obtained.

The dissertation has a well-balanced structure and consists of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, and a list of references — 245 pages in total. The results are illustrated and presented in 28 tables and 23 figures.

4. Discussion of results and literature used.

The introduction to the dissertation justifies its relevance and outlines the aim, object, subject, and methodology of the study. The historical framework of agriculture in Bulgaria is examined in the first chapter. This chapter provides an overview of theories on adaptation and sustainability in the agricultural sector. A strong point of the literature review is the examination of the diversity of theoretical approaches to adaptation and sustainability in agriculture, as well as the comparison of theories in an agricultural context: Bulgarian and European perspectives. The EU's green policies and national interests and the specifics of Bulgarian agriculture are examined in depth. The focus is on the points of conflict and synergy between local needs and European regulations.

The research methodology is outlined in Chapter Two. It is based on an integrated approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods for assessing the adaptation of Bulgarian agriculture to the Green Deal and EU policies. The critical selection of indicators, on the basis of which the author's indices were developed, is of high scientific value, as a result of an in-depth comparative analysis of existing international practices and the specific features of Bulgarian agriculture. The logical connection between the theoretical part and the empirical analysis is made in the second chapter, through clearly specified methods, indicators, and author's tools for assessing sustainability.

Chapter Three contains an analysis covering a 32-year period (1990–2022) and covering key economic, environmental, and social indicators. The focus is on the Strategic Plan for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas 2023–2027, where sustainability appears as a goal, indicator, and result. The analysis reveals that sustainability is often reduced to formal reporting through quantitative indicators, without an in-depth understanding of the processes that generate it. The fourth chapter examines the strategies, scenarios, and policy instruments for balancing national interests and EU green policies. Specific proposals are formulated related to cooperative and integration models for territorial consolidation, digitization and precision agriculture, the integration of monitoring systems, adaptive management mechanisms, and community participation in political processes.

The conclusion summarizes the results of the study. The literature review covers 236 literary sources that correspond to the main directions in the dissertation.

I believe that the doctoral student is highly familiar with the current state of the problem under consideration.

5. Contributions of the dissertation work.

I accept the submitted reference to the contributing points in the dissertation study. I appreciate the essential importance of the following

Scientific contribution:

- Developed a methodology for analyzing sustainable development in the agricultural sector, based on critical discourse analysis of a wide range of macro indicators, strategic documents, institutional review, and functional mapping of management processes.
- Proposed the concept of "forced sustainability" as an analytical tool for diagnosing the

formalization of processes in the context of EU agricultural policy;

- Author's definition of sustainability in the agricultural sector with practical application in the evaluation of public policies.

Scientifically applied contribution:

- Developed a critical analysis of the Strategic Plan 2023–2027, identifying inconsistencies between objectives, measures, and indicators;
- created a methodology for assessing the degree of consistency between different levels of management — from national strategies to Adaptation of Bulgarian agriculture: balance between national interests and EU green policies;
- An index system has been developed, including three proprietary indices: the Agroclimatic Footprint Index (AFI); the Livestock Density Index; and the Cooperative Agricultural Climate Index (CACI).

6. Critical notes and questions.

The dissertation is a completed study with achieved goals and solved tasks. The results of the study are highly applicable in practice. The dissertation is distinguished by the author's clearly expressed position on the issues studied.

The comments are of a recommendatory nature and in no way diminish the scientific value of the study.

1. Formulation of conclusions after each chapter to achieve greater clarity and summarization of the study.
2. Based on the recommendations formulated, develop a step-by-step model with a high degree of specificity for the adaptation of Bulgarian agriculture in future scientific research.

Question:

1. What is your assessment of the capacity of the participants in the process for effective adaptation of Bulgarian agriculture?

7. Published articles and citations.

Five independent publications by the doctoral student have been presented on the topic of the dissertation.

The abstract presented objectively reflects the structure and content of the dissertation.

Conclusion:

On the basis of the studies learned and applied, by the PhD student, various methods of research, the correctly derived experiments, the summaries and conclusions made, I believe that the thesis presented meets the requirements of the ZRASB and the Rules of the Agricultural University for its application, which gives me reason to evaluate it **POSITIVE.**

I allow myself to propose to the honorable Scientific Jury also to vote positively and

to award Georgi Borisov Gerov the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**" in the scientific specialty Organization and Management (agriculture and subsectors).

Date: 03.11.2025.
Plovdiv

OPINION
PREPARED BY:
(Assoc. Prof.. Tony Mihova)