



REVIEWER'S POSITION

on a PhD thesis for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the Higher education field: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field: 3.8. Economics, Scientific specialisation: "Economics and Management (Agriculture)"

Author of the PhD thesis: *Getoar Lubeniqi*

PhD student (on an extramural study) in the department of „Economics” of Agricultural University - Plovdiv

Topic of the PhD thesis: *“The Role of Subsidies for Sustainable Development of Agribusiness in Kosovo”*

Reviewer: *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariya Marinova Peneva*

Department of Natural Resources Economics, UNWE, Sofia, 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, 3.8. Economics, "Economics and Management (Agricultural Economics and Policy)", appointed as a member of the scientific jury, order № ПД-16-547 / 25.06.2020 of the Rector of AU

1. Brief introduction of the PhD candidate.

Getoar Lubeniqi graduated ILIRIA College in Kosovo in the field of Finance and Accounting achieving Bachelor and Master degrees. The candidate is a PhD student on an extramural study at the Department of Economics at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv since 2018, in the scientific specialty of "Economics and Management (Agriculture)". Since 2012 he is a lecturer at ILIRIA College in Kosovo. The attached references for the preparation and scientific activity of the PhD student (participation in projects and exchange / internship programs) show his great attitude to the research and constantly improving knowledge and experience in the field of economics and management.

2. Excellence and novelty.

The thesis has many positive achievements as: up to date on the current topic, correctness of the studied (field) work of other authors and accuracy of the conducted research; originality of the developed methodology, the conducted analyses and the presented summaries and conclusions are with the respective significance for the professional community. The qualities of the thesis are indisputable, and the topic of assessing the role of subsidies for the sustainable development of agriculture in the Republic of Kosovo is important and of current interest. Therefore, I believe that the proposed development is timely, with a significant contribution to both scientific theory and practice. Practical relevance is also justified by the need for reforms to support Kosovo's integration into the European Union and the serious importance that agriculture and the processing industry acquire for the country's economy and foreign trade. In this regard, research in this direction is undoubtedly useful for the development and implementation of adequate policies, programs, measures and instruments for the overall sustainability of the sector, rural areas and the economy.

3. Goals, research questions/tasks, hypotheses and research methods.

The initially defined goal, hypothesis and research questions are clearly formulated, scientifically sound and achieved through the project development. The PhD student "based on the analysis of the state, developments and potential of agriculture in the Republic of Kosovo" assesses the "role of institutional support for its sustainable development" and as a result proposes "measures to optimize the tools used" so far in the country. To achieve this goal, the PhD candidate formulated eight tasks, which logic set up the logic for conducting the research. The research questions are realistically defined and are possible to be answered by using the proposed methods as well as they are consistent with the goal. The chosen research methodology corresponds to the set goals and objectives. Through different research methods,

comparative and critical analysis, the PhD student checks and proves the hypothesis stated at the beginning. The content of the dissertation shows that the doctoral student seeks to contribute precisely to clarifying the complex nature of subsidies and how their distribution by regions and sectors affects the economic sustainability of agriculture in Kosovo.

4. Visualization and presentation of the results.

The PhD student applied a correct approach in the collection, summarization and analysis of empirical data, which were interpreted and used to study the processes and to formulate conclusions at the end. To illustrate and present the information and the obtained results in the thesis 47 tables and 28 figures are used. Relevant sources of information are correctly indicated.

5. Discussion of the results and used literature.

I believe that the obtained scientific and applied practical results fully correspond to the goals and tasks set in advance by the PhD student. My assessment of these results is positive.

In the first chapter the PhD student has successfully presented the nature and specifics of the various forms of institutional support, respectively the effects on each of the axes of sustainable development and the effectiveness of achieving the objectives for each intervention. Following this the PhD student successfully developed an appropriate methodology for research and analysis of the impact of subsidies on the sustainable development of agribusiness in Kosovo, namely a policy analysis matrix that he used in the formation of other indicators and indicators for analysis as well. I also consider the selection of OECD indicators for measuring and evaluating support for agriculture from all considered in the first chapter to be successful.

In the second chapter, the PhD student presents the state and the role of agriculture for the economy of Kosovo by sectors and as part of the country's foreign trade and its role for the rural economy. An important point is to bring out its strengths and weaknesses. The doctoral student examined in details the development of the agricultural policy and the achieved results from its implementation, monitoring the state of the various program documents and the amount and the budget distribution by priorities and measures. Of great practical importance are the results of the assessment of public support in agriculture and their analysis, as well as the constructed matrices in the main sectors, which allows the identification of key sectors for Kosovo's agriculture and where to focus policy efforts on their sustainable development.

Of particular interest is the assessment presented in the third chapter where the institutional opportunities for improving the sustainable development of agribusiness are assessed. The evaluation and analyses of the conditions for doing business and the results of field research of factors, benefits and obstacles that provide direct support specifically for its development are of crucial importance for further recommendations.

I also agree with the formulated conclusions and recommendations related to overcoming the barriers to the sustainable development of Kosovo's agriculture.

The list of used literature includes 172 sources, 5 of which are in Cyrillic. All of sources are described correctly.

6. Contributions achieved in the PhD thesis.

The scientific and applied practical contributions formulated in the autoreferat are correct and correctly reflect the achievements in the thesis. I accept them and give them a positive assessment, as here I will highlight some of them.

Scientific contributions

- 1) A theoretical model is developed and presented in order to clarify the relationship between sustainable development and subsidies in the agricultural sector, which specifically addressed the study in Republic of Kosovo.
- 2) An integrated methodology for research and assessment of the impact of public support on the sustainable development of agribusiness in Kosovo has been developed and implemented.

Applied practical contributions

- 1) A comprehensive comparative analysis has been carried out and an assessment of changes in Kosovo's agricultural policy and their effects has been made.
- 2) A policy analysis methodology has been applied, clarifying the impact of the institutional environment on the sustainable development of agriculture in Kosovo.
- 3) Possibilities for improving the sustainable development of agribusiness through institutional adaptation are justified.

7. Critical notes and questions.

The reviewed thesis has its merits and the mentioned critical notes below do not decrease its qualities, but rather are recommendations for future work for the PhD candidate. This is also my main recommendation to him: to continue his research on the topic, because it is important and promising for Kosovo, and he has already gained knowledge and tools for analysis and proves that he can use them.

The thesis would benefit from greater criticality in the analysis, in which the author's personal opinion can be seen in comparison with similar research for his country and / or neighbouring countries and / or those from the EU. I recommend to the author in future to study and include more such researches, which will allow him to better highlight the place and role of his own study and contributions. In this regard, it is advisable to include and follow up on research and publications from the last 5 years, as the ones currently presented in the reference list do not fully reflect the EU's today's perspectives and their relevance to Kosovo. I would also like to encourage the author to cite each of the sources listed in the bibliography, as it is not clear at this moment how some of the publications are reflected in the thesis.

My next recommendation is technical but it any study benefits from it, namely: to add a list of abbreviations used and a list of tables, graphs, figures at the beginning. It is important to define and explicitly indicate the limitations within which the study was carried out, especially for field research as well.

8. Published articles and citations.

The PhD student presented a list of 5 publications, two published in the journal Agricultural Sciences, two published in the journal ILIRIA International Review, and one published in the journal Prizren Social Science Journal. Three of the publications were developed in co-authorship. With the presented publications such as number, volume and quality, the minimum quantitative requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" are met.

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

CONCLUSION:

Based on the different research methods learned and applied by the PhD student, the correctly performed field studies, the final conclusions and recommendations, I believe that the presented thesis meets the requirements of Bulgarian national law and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its application, which gives me reason to evaluate it **POSITIVE**.

I feel confident to propose to the highly esteemed Scientific Jury also to vote positively and to award **Getoar Lubeniqi** the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agriculture)"

Date: 31.07.2020r.
Sofia

REVIEWER:

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariya Peneva)