



## OPINION

on a dissertation for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in: field of higher education 3.0 Social, economic and legal sciences professional field 3.8 Economics, the scientific specialty Organization and Management

**Author of the dissertation:** *Jelena Miroslav Milanovic* PhD student (part-time) at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv

**Topic of the dissertation:** Competitiveness of agricultural distribution systems in Serbia

**Prepared the opinion:** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petar Borisov Borisov, Agricultural University of Plovdiv, Social, economic and legal sciences appointed a member of the scientific jury by order № RD-16-267 /05.03.2020 by the Rector of AU.

### **1. Relevance of the problem.**

Agriculture is an important branch of the national economy of the Republic of Serbia. The importance of the sector is determined by the large share it occupies in GDP, national income, exports and employment. The Republic of Serbia has a real chance to strengthen its agricultural production and expand exports of agricultural products, both to the EU and to the rest of the Balkans. Although the country has lost its market position in the international market in recent years, agriculture is one of the industries that manages to withstand market challenges through the development of organic production, food quality, food produced in a healthy and safe way, as well as rural development.

### **2. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and research methods.**

The purpose of the dissertation is clearly formulated and refers to the analysis of the factors that determine the competitiveness of the distribution system of agricultural products and to propose a model for increasing these competitiveness. Thus, the main goal of the dissertation research corresponds to the chosen topic.

PhD student Jelena Milanović defends the thesis that by maintaining and developing a competitive distribution system of agricultural products, sustainable development of both rural areas and agriculture as an important sector of the national economy of the Republic of Serbia is being achieved. The formulation of the main thesis stems from the analysis of the factors determining the horizon of the research that the doctoral student has conducted. The object and the subject of research are correctly selected. This proves that there was a fruitful connection between the doctoral student and his research supervisor, which led to the formation of a quality dissertation. In the course of his work, the doctoral student formulates and tests two main working hypotheses as well as two research models (covering a total of 9 sub-theses).

The choice of research tasks allows to achieve the main goal of the dissertation. The

research tasks form the logical framework of the analysis in the subsequent chapters in the content of the dissertation. The logical framework presented in this way allows the reader to easily trace and understand the direction of the research.

The main methods that the doctoral student uses to collect, analyze and interpret information needed for the purposes of the dissertation are logically substantiated and reasoned. Methods for situational analysis, diagnostic analysis and prognostic analysis were used in the study of the issue. The methods of analysis use a rich database of empirical data collected through field research, the personal work of the doctoral student.

### **3. Visualization and presentation of the obtained results.**

The doctoral student has used a wide range of tools to illustrate and summarize the results in tables, graphs and diagrams, which allow him to correctly systematize and objectively present the results. In the dissertation 18 figures and 146 tables were used, as well as 137 literature sources were cited. This gives reason to believe that the information presented in the field study is mainly illustrated in tabular form. The tables and graphs used are sufficient and make it possible to trace the origin of the data collected by the various methods of collecting information used by the doctoral student in his research.

### **4. Discussion of the results and used literature.**

In his dissertation, the doctoral student has studied a major part of the modern specialized scientific literature in connection with the theory of competitiveness. Opinions of well-known authors are commented and presented, and on their basis the author's understanding of the essence of the socio-economic category "competitiveness" is formed.

The doctoral student defines and correctly uses the terms in the subsequent analytical research. Jelena Milanovic successfully summarizes the state and problems of competitiveness of distribution systems in the agricultural sector. This enables it to formulate concrete conclusions for competitiveness management in these systems and to make concrete proposals for increasing their competitiveness in the future.

### **5. Contributions to the dissertation.**

In the presented reference for the scientifically-applied moments in the dissertation the following stand out:

1. The essence of the competitiveness of the distribution system as an element is clarified for sustainable development of agriculture;
2. A conceptual framework for assessing the competitiveness of the distribution system with agar products in the Republic of Serbia has been developed;
3. The competitiveness of the distribution system with agricultural products in the Republic of Serbia is analyzed and evaluated;
4. It has been established which factors are critical in the organization and development of the distribution system with agricultural products;
5. Models of competitive distribution systems that can be used in practice are formulated.

I accept the contributions formulated in this way and I believe that they are original



and are the work of the author of the dissertation.

#### **6. Critical remarks and questions.**

I have no critical remarks or questions.

I have a recommendation to the doctoral student to continue his scientific work on the problems of competitiveness in the future. There are still unclear points in the management of this multifaceted problem in business development.

#### **7. Published articles and citations.**

The reference for publications presented by Jelena Milanovic contains 5 publications, which can be said to correspond to the topic of the dissertation.

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

#### **CONCLUSION**

The presented dissertation meets the requirements of ZRASRB and the Regulations of the Agrarian University for its application, which gives me reason to evaluate it POSITIVE.

I take the liberty of proposing to the Honorable Scientific Jury that it also vote in favor and award **Jelena Milanovic** the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Organisation and Management".

**Date:** 15.07.2020

Prepared the opinion: .....  
(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petar Borisov)

