



OPINION

on a dissertation for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, Scientific specialty "Organization and management of production"

Author of the dissertation: Avni Ilmi Gashi, PhD student in self-study at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv

Topic of the dissertation: Comparative analysis of the agricultural policies of Bulgaria and Kosovo

Prepared the opinion: Prof. Dr. Faith Krasimirova Slavyanska, Higher School of Agribusiness and Regional Development, Plovdiv, 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.7 Administration and management, Scientific specialty "Social management"

appointed a member of the scientific jury by order № RD-16-1077 / 25.11.2020 by the Rector of AU.

1. Brief introduction of the candidate

Avni Ilmi Gashi studied as a doctoral student in independent training at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv, majoring in Organization and Management of Production.

2. Relevance of the problem

The agricultural sector is of strategic importance for the national economy of both Bulgaria and Kosovo. Its economic efficiency and sustainable development need an active and consistent government policy.

Kosovo is the youngest European country whose economy is in the process of transformation. As the Kosovo government is currently seeking to harmonize its agricultural policy with that of other EU Member States, and our country has already embarked on the arduous path of successful fundamental transformation, it could serve as a source of valuable practices to help this process.

For this reason, the implementation of An in-depth comparative analysis of the agricultural policies of Bulgaria and Kosovo is an issue whose relevance and significance undoubtedly deserves research attention.

3. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and research methods

Understanding the problem and its meaning is the basis of the correct formulation of the goal and the specific tasks developed in the dissertation.

The main goal of the study, namely - "to compare in a comparative plan the agricultural policies of the Republic of Kosovo and the Republic of Bulgaria and to transfer, and to propose approaches to improve the agricultural development policy of the Republic of Kosovo" is directly related to the defined five research tasks (presented as

"stages"), successively solved in the paragraphs of the dissertation.

In the work on the dissertation quantitative and qualitative methods are used, such as: research and generalization of theoretical and empirical information sources; interviewing; collection, systematization and summarization of statistical data; graphical and tabular presentation of statistical information, etc. The methods are appropriate and applicable in the considered problem area.

4. Knowledge of the problem

As can be seen from the extensive bibliography, which includes 109 literature sources, Avni Gashi is well acquainted with the state of the problem.

5. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation

The dissertation is developed in a volume of 124 pages, illustrated with 29 figures. Structurally, it includes an introduction, two chapters and a conclusion, which follow the logic of the set goal and the sequence in solving the defined research tasks.

In terms of content the dissertation meets the requirements for this type of scientific development, and provides sufficient grounds for high rating considering:

- appropriately selected issues of indisputable relevance and significance for both the Bulgarian and Kosovo economies, in particular the agricultural sector;
- focusing on the opportunities for improving the agricultural policy of the Republic of Kosovo through the application of good practices, including Bulgarian;
- logical structuring of the overall dissertation research in accordance with the tasks solved in it;
- demonstrated abilities for systematization and analysis of a large amount of theoretical and empirical information for summarizing and synthesizing conclusions;
- performing an in-depth SWOT analysis by applying expert methods;
- use of an understandable and at the same time terminologically sound style of presentation, including precise design of the work in technical terms;
- preparation of an abstract, corresponding to the requirements and reliably reproducing the content of the work in a synthesized form.

6. Contributions to the dissertation

The developed dissertation definitely enriches the existing knowledge in the field of agricultural and structural policies, by proposing ideas for their improvement. PI would like to highlight the following more significant contribution moments in it:

1. Carrying out a comprehensive theoretical analysis and on the basis of critical thinking of different concepts and points of view, clarification of the essence and content of agricultural and structural policy.
2. Detailed presentation of the main measures and instruments aimed at optimizing the structure of the agricultural sector in Bulgaria and Kosovo.
3. Carrying out a comparative analysis (in chronological terms) of the policies in Bulgaria and Kosovo both with regard to the implemented agrarian reform and restructuring of agricultural holdings, as well as with regard to the state support in agriculture.
4. Based on an in-depth SWOT analysis, identification of problems and opportunities to increase the competitiveness of Bulgarian and Kosovo agriculture.

I am convinced that the conducted dissertation research is entirely a personal work of the doctoral student, respectively the indicated contributions and obtained results are his personal merit.

7. Published articles and citations

The doctoral student has 3 published papers and 1 noticed citation.

8. Critical remarks, questions and recommendations

I have no significant remarks on the content of the dissertation research, but at the same time I would like to recommend:

- refinement of the conceptual framework in the introduction of the work, especially with regard to the object and the subject of research, methodology / methodology and accepted limitations in the research;
- renaming of Chapter Two - the title is currently inappropriate;
- clearer highlighting of the author's personal views in the course of the exhibition;
- reference to up-to-date statistics (it is somewhat puzzling to present the main trends in the development of modern farms mainly by citing sources from 1999, 2004, 2005, 2009, etc. - see pages 21-26).

If possible, I would like the PhD student to take a stand on the following issues in the course of the defense:

1. In relation to the application of the expert method, how can it be explained the range of fluctuation in the assessments of experts (from 1 to 6)? The application of the expert method is described in item 5.1. and item 5.2, but more details would definitely be useful - for example, when the survey was conducted, how many specialists from the agricultural sector and in what positions participated in the SWOT analysis, what is their expertise, etc.
2. The paper repeatedly emphasizes the negative results of the implementation of neoliberal agricultural policy in our country and the need for transition to protectionist policy, in line with the common agricultural policy of the European Union (p. 18, p. 26, p. 47 and so on. n.). In the light of the many mentioned "defects" of the agrarian reforms in Bulgaria and Kosovo and criticisms and recommendations to our agricultural policy (Fig. 6 on page 60, and in many places below), it is not clear who is more the good example? Can Bulgaria really serve as a model and which Bulgarian policies does the author recommend to be "transferred"?

The questions and remarks are not related to any serious weaknesses and do not underestimate the importance and qualities of the dissertation, nor do they question the future prospects for its development.

Given the high evaluation I give to the dissertation contributions and results, I recommend the doctoral student to promote the results of his creative work among a wider audience and especially among representatives of government institutions interested in the issue.

CONCLUSION

The presented dissertation has the character of a completed scientific research dedicated to an important problem and of interest not only for the academic community, but also for professional practice. Its content is indicative of a comprehensive knowledge of the specialized literature and scientific achievements in the specific field, as well as the possession of qualities and skills for independent research. The dissertation contains scientific and applied results which represent an original contribution and meet all the requirements of ZRASRB and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its application, which gives me reason to evaluate it POSITIVE.

I allow myself to suggest to the Honorable Scientific Jury that it also vote in favor and award Avni Ilmi Gashi the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Organization and management of production"

Date: 12.01.2021
Plovdiv city

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