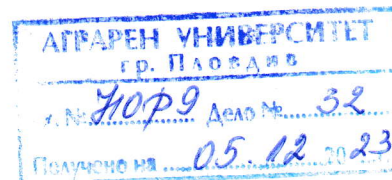


REVIEW



on a dissertation for acquiring of the educational and scientific degree “**doctor**” in area of higher education **3.0 Social, economic and legal sciences**, professional field **3.8. Economics**, PhD Program “**Organization and Management of production (Agriculture and subsectors)**”.

Author of the PhD thesis: **BESIM HAMDİ BİSLİMİ**, PhD student at the Department of Management and marketing, Agricultural University, Plovdiv

Scientific supervisor: **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova**

Title of the PhD thesis: **MANAGEMENT OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. **Dimo Atanasov Atanasov**, Agricultural University – Plovdiv, Department of Economics, area of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Agriculture)”, a member of the scientific jury, by the order № РД-16-908/26.09.2023 of the Rector of AU-Plovdiv.

1. Actuality of the research problem.

The sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas depends on natural resources, technologies, human resources, social environment, etc., but it is also influenced to a very large extent by the state and the management of infrastructure. The infrastructure itself depends on the investments that the state and regional governments can provide. Based on this, it could be said that Besim Bislimi's research is actual and well targeted. It can contribute to both the theory and practice, evaluating how investments in infrastructure can improve the sustainability of industries and regions.

2. Objectives, tasks, hypotheses and methods of research.

The aim of the dissertation research is to analyze the state and quality of infrastructure in the Republic of Kosovo and to assess its potential to improve conditions for sustainable development. Its achievement is determined by the solution of several scientific tasks, namely – defining the current state of agriculture in the Western Balkans; identification of the factors that influence its development; assessment of the impact of certain agro-economic factors on sustainable development in the Western Balkans; presenting of a model for development, based on the improvement of agro-economic factors' potential to contribute to sustainability; evaluation of the efficiency of investments in infrastructural projects, etc.

3. Visualization and presentation of the results obtained.

The dissertation is 205 pages long and includes an introduction, six chapters, conclusions and references. This structure has allowed the PhD student to present his research, and the 10 tables and 7 graphs contribute to the visualization of the obtained results. At the end, literature sources used are shown in a reference list.

4. Discussion of results and literature used.

The first chapter of the dissertation research, entitled "Characteristics of the transport infrastructure", presents the definitions of road infrastructure, its classification and the ways of its management. Attention is also paid to the importance that infrastructure has for the development of business and regions. The impact of policies and investment trends in infrastructure development is also examined.

In the second chapter, the "Theoretical foundations of sustainable development", the PhD student has attempted to clarify the concept of sustainability, including the conditions, principles and indicators for its measurement.

In the third chapter, an analysis of the agricultural economy and policy is made, as well as their role for the national economy. Oslo, some of the challenges to sustainable development of agriculture are discussed. The Common Agricultural Policy for the period 2021-2027 is reviewed too.

In the fourth chapter of the dissertation, the candidate has presented the connections and dependencies of agricultural development on the state of infrastructure. The influence of the road network on the prices of agricultural products has been analyzed.

The fifth chapter of the dissertation is dedicated to clarifying the importance of roads for the development of trade of agricultural products. Real-world examples of how infrastructure impacts trade are presented.

The sixth chapter is dedicated to presenting the countries of the Western Balkans and what is the state of their infrastructure. Their macroeconomic conditions are discussed. Agricultural policies, EU instruments for financing infrastructure projects, aimed on the integration of road networks with the transport corridors of the Community, are analyzed. At the end of this part of the research, the candidate has presented guidelines and recommendations for investments for improving the infrastructure in the region, with the aim of achieving complex sustainability.

In the conclusion, Besim Bislimi summarizes the results of the research and makes recommendations for the development of infrastructure in the Republic of Kosovo and in the countries of the Western Balkans, with a view to tracing the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas, as well as the entire economy.

5. Contributions of the dissertation.

I accept the contributions, presented in the autoreferat, which can be summarized into:

- The importance of road infrastructure for sustainable development of agriculture has been clarified;
- The essence of agricultural sustainability is evaluated and the role of infrastructure for its development has been studied;
- The vital role of agriculture in the context of sustainable development of economic branches is presented;
- A strategy for sustainable development of agriculture in the Western Balkans, based on the road infrastructure, has been drawn up and discussed;
- The role of road infrastructure for the sustainable development of agriculture in the Western Balkans is analyzed.

6. Critical notes and questions.

The presented dissertation has the structure of a scientific study, in which the propositions about infrastructure, sustainable development, agricultural policies and the complex relationships between them, which influence the development of agriculture, rural areas and trade with agricultural products, are relatively well connected.

I don't have serious criticisms on the thesis, but it would have been good to strengthen the methodological part of the research and to justify the analysis methods used in more details. I recommend to the candidate in his future research to show more clearly the connections between theory and practice and to make better interpretation of the obtained results.

I would like to ask the following question:

What is the state of infrastructure in the Republic of Kosovo and the Western Balkans countries, compared to the infrastructure of the rest of the Balkan Peninsula?

7. Published articles and citations.

Besim Bislimi has presented a total of 3 publications. In all of them he is the only author. With these publications, he accumulates the required 30 points, according to his individual study plan. Citation reference is not provided.

The autoreferate corresponds to the structure and logical sequence of the dissertation work.

CONCLUSION:

The dissertation submitted for the review meets the requirements of Bulgarian legislation, as well as the internal regulations of the AU-Plovdiv.

All this allow me to vote **POSITIVE** for awarding to **BESIM HAMDİ BİSLİMİ** the educational and scientific degree "**doctor**" in professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Organization and Management of production (Agriculture and subsectors)".

Date 16.11.2023
PLOVDIV

REVIEWER: 
/Assoc. Prof. Dimo Atanasov PhD/