STATEMENT

on a dissertation for the educational and science degree of **"Doctor"** in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, the scientific specialty Organization and management of production (agriculture and sub-sectors)

Author of the dissertation: Pavel Georgiev Chervenkov
Full-time PhD student at the Department of Management and Marketing, Agricultural University - Plovdiv

Dissertation topic: strategy for the digitalization of the wine sector

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Nikolay Ivanov Tsonkov, University of National and World Economy; field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, Professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, scientific specialty Administration and Management (Regional Business and Utilities)

appointed as a member of the scientific jury by Order No. RD-16-519/22.04.2025 of the Rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv

1. Relevance of the problem.

The digitalisation of the Bulgarian economy is a no-brainer. This process is characterized by global dimensions, which implies the rapid adaptation of the Bulgarian economy in this dynamic process. In this way, the Bulgarian economy and specifically agriculture can remain not only competitive, but also increase its productivity. Therefore, the digitisation of Bulgarian agriculture as a process must be developed based on the principles of sustainable development. This is why the wine sector in particular, as a traditional sector of the Bulgarian economy, must benefit from modern technologies that will increase its competitiveness. Of course, this process does not exclude taking into account the principles of the circular economy, together with the use of bio-based technologies and products. All these issues are explored and closely covered in Mr. Chervenkov's dissertation submitted for review. The paper analyses the possibilities of applying modern tools, such as internet connectivity, IoT, and digitalization of business processes in wine farming. In this sense, the dissertation is very relevant and timely, outlining the directions for the development and modernisation of the wine sector.

2. Aim, objectives, hypotheses, and research methods.

The research methodology is well defined, contemporary, and fully corresponds to the title, statement, and results achieved in the dissertation. Mr. Chervenkov applied the following methods in his research - system analysis; situational analysis; comparative analysis; diagnostic analysis; and statistical methods

The main objective, "**is to develop a strategy for the digitalisation of the wine sector, taking into account the sector specificities**", has been largely met.

The author proves the formulated research hypothesis, namely that "the **digitalization of the sector is a critical factor for achieving competitiveness and competitive development of the wine sector in Bulgaria**".

In conclusion, it can be concluded that the main objective has been met and the research hypothesis has been proven.

3. Illustration and presentation of the results.

Within the study, the author used a graphical method to present the analyzed information and the results of the analysis. In this sense, doctoral student Chervenkov illustrates and presents the research results obtained in the course of the study, as evidenced by the list of all figures, tables, and graphs (115 items).

4. Discussion of results and literature used.

The conclusion presents the main results reached by doctoral student Chervenkov. They are relevant and reflect the formulated aim and research objectives. The obtained results represent basic benchmarks for the long-term development of the wine sector in Bulgaria. At the same time, the author demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the accumulated theoretical and practical experience in the field under study, as evidenced by the list of literature used, containing 97 Bulgarian and foreign sources, including electronic resources.

5. Contributions of the dissertation.

PhD student Pavel Chervenkov achieved undeniable results from his research in the dissertation, which enriches the science and offers practical solutions about the digitalization of the wine sector in Bulgaria. I accept the contributions thus proposed. They can be grouped as follows:

Scientific contributions

1. The essence of the role of digitalization in the management of business processes in the sector is clarified.
2. The processes of digitalization and their impact on the competitiveness of wine enterprises are analyzed;
3. The impact of digitalisation on the competitiveness of the wine sector is analysed and assessed.

Scientific and applied contributions

4. Challenges to the imposition of digitalization of the industry and the application of precision agriculture in wine enterprises are identified;
5. A digitisation strategy for the wine sector has been developed and validated;
6. A strategy has been developed to engage stakeholders in the process of digitisation of the wine sector.

6. Critical comments and questions.

I have no substantive criticism.

7. Published articles and citations.

Three (3) publications were submitted for peer review:

1. Chervenkov, P. (2022). Digitalization processes in precision farming and their role in sectoral competitiveness. Journal of Bio-based Marketing vol. 2, 2022, 59 - 75, ISSN 2683-0825

article_5-1.pdf

2. Chervenkov, P. (2023). Impact of digitalization on the competitiveness of viticulture enterprises. Journal of Bio-based Marketing vol. 2, 2023, 11 - 19, ISSN 2683-0825

article_2-1.pdf

3. Chervenkov, P. (2023). Main determinants of demand for digital services in viticulture. Journal of Bio-based Marketing vol. 2, 2023, 21 - 28, ISSN 2683-0825

journalbbm.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/article_3-1.pdf

The presented publications fully reflect the main results achieved by the research in the thesis. I appreciate the three publications.

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

CONCLUSIONS:

Based on the different research methods learned and applied by the PhD student, the correctly derived experiments, the generalizations and conclusions drawn, I consider that the presented dissertation meets the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act, and Agricultural University Regulations for its application, which gives me reason to evaluate it **as POSITIVE**.

I take the liberty of proposing that the esteemed Scientific Jury also vote positively and award Mr. Pavel Georgiev Chervenkov
the educational and scientific degree **"Doctor"** in the scientific specialty Organization and Management of Production (Agriculture and sub-sectors) in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics

Date: 02.05. 2025.
Plovdiv

RESPONSE: ....
(Prof. Dr. Nikolay Tsonkov)

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