



## REVIEW

on doctorate proposal for awarding on ONS "DOCTOR"

**Field of higher education:** 3.0 Social, economic and legal sciences

**Professional field:** 3.8 Economics

**Scientific specialty:** Organization and management of production (Agriculture and sub-sectors)

**Author of the dissertation:** Ana (Dragolyub) Milosevic , doctoral student in independent preparation at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

**Topic of the dissertation:** *Comparative analysis of organic and conventional production in the Republic of Serbia* " in accordance with Art. 30 (3) of the PPZRASRB and Art. 49 (3) of the PPZRASAU.

**Reviewer:** Prof. Dr. IVAN YOCHEV BOEVSKY Area: 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", Professional field: 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty: "Business Marketing and Business Management", appointed as a member of the scientific jury by Order RD – 16 – 1176 of 17.11.2025.

### 1) Candidate's presentation

Doctoral student Ana (Dragolyub) Milošević is enrolled in an independent study program at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Faculty of Economics of the Agricultural University, Plovdiv.

Before starting her doctoral studies, she gained professional experience as a marketing specialist in a number of companies operating in the Republic of Serbia. She holds two master's degrees (in business administration and economics) obtained in Serbia. The candidate demonstrates significant and solid theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the field of marketing management.

All of this acquired knowledge and skills are an adequate basis for the successful development of a doctoral thesis on the topic "Comparative analysis of organic and conventional production in the Republic of Serbia".

## 2) Relevance of the doctorate

The topic of the dissertation is of high relevance , especially in the context of global trends towards sustainable agriculture, protection of natural resources and increasing health and environmental sensitivity of customers. At the regional level, especially in Serbia, interest in organic production is growing due to the processes of harmonization with European Union policies. Problems such as environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, risks from pesticide use and decline in trust in certification systems emphasize the significance of the study. Particularly significant and timely, in my opinion, is the focus on the process of " conventionalization " of organic agriculture. This is a topic that is relatively new and therefore in the initial stage of development in the scientific literature.

## 3) Evaluation of the goal, tasks, hypotheses and methodology of the doctoral thesis

The presented dissertation demonstrates the following presentation of its purpose: "The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to conduct a comparative analysis of organic and conventional food production in Serbia in the period 2016–2021. The dissertation aims to examine the leading factors in the world for comparison, to statistically analyze organic farming in the Balkan countries against the global context, and to investigate whether the " conventionalization hypothesis" is correct, i.e. whether organic farming is essentially just a slightly modified conventional farming. It also seeks to show the main benefits of organic production, namely that it yields better quality food with healthier ingredients and fewer harmful substances compared to conventional production. Additionally, the dissertation investigates whether a wider adoption of organic principles would improve people's health, extend life expectancy, and help establish a better balance in the planet's ecosystem. Ultimately, it seeks to determine whether raising public awareness and disseminating knowledge are essential prerequisites for the development of organic farming and understanding its principles." (pp. 2-3 abstract). In the dissertation, which is in English, " The primary objective " (p. 28) main goal and tasks. The definition of a main goal also implies sub-goals, which, however, are missing. Instead of sub-goals in the English text, the author includes the concept of " Key tasks ", which also implies tasks or sub-tasks, but this is also missing.

**Suggestion:** The goals and objectives could be more adequately, clearly and precisely structured and formulated.

The hypotheses are four in number and have a good degree of operationalization. They reflect key assumptions regarding: (1) the nutritional and health value of organic products; (2) their impact on the preservation of the ecosystem balance; (3) the role of mass awareness as a condition for the expansion of organic farming; and (4) the potential for conventionalization under market pressure. The hypotheses are adequate to the theoretical framework and reflect a balanced approach between established scientific concepts and contemporary debates on sustainable development.

The methodology of the study is complex and combines descriptive and comparative statistical analysis, a literature review and an empirical survey among the population of Belgrade. This methodological combination is suitable for investigating the multidimensional nature of organic and conventional production and allows valid conclusions about the economic, social and environmental parameters of both models. A strength of the methodology is the use of official statistical data and the inclusion of a consumer perspective through the survey, which adds a socio-psychological perspective to the analysis. However, a limitation can be found in the lack of in-depth econometric models or multi-factor analysis, which could offer greater analytical rigor.

**Conclusion:** The PhD presents a relatively well-formulated goal, relevantly structured tasks, adequately formulated hypotheses and a corresponding methodology. Thus, all of them meet the standard for research within a PhD. This design creates a solid basis for achieving valid scientific results and enriching the discussion on sustainable agricultural practices.

#### **4) Assessment of the degree of knowledge of the problem . Visualization and creative interpretation of the literary material used.**

Ms.'s doctorate Milošević demonstrates a high level of knowledge of the state of the problem, integrating a wide range of international, regional and national scientific sources, official statistics and current research on organic and conventional agriculture. The author skillfully positions his research in the context of global scientific debates related to sustainable food production, the environmental risks of conventional agriculture, the social consequences of changing consumer attitudes and the economic challenges facing organic production systems. This shows a deep awareness of the different dimensions of the problem and an ability to work with multi-layered literature.

The literature review is structured logically and covers the historical development of both types of production, the ecological arguments in support of organic farming, the economic trade-offs between yields and sustainability, the social advantages of organic production and the key role of consumer awareness. An important contribution is the critical introduction of the concept of “conventionalization” of organic farming – a phenomenon extensively discussed in the international literature, but rarely applied in the Balkan context. In the dissertation, this concept is interpreted creatively, by integrating concepts such as appropriation and substitution, which allows for an original understanding of the structural trends in the sector.

In terms of visualization, the work is distinguished by its rich graphical and tabular content – 81 tables, 41 diagrams, 24 graphs and additional images. These visual tools not only support the analytical process, but also demonstrate the author's ability to synthesize large data sets into clear, comparable and interpretable forms.

The creative interpretation of the literary material is also manifested in the way the author combines theoretical statements with empirical results. Through a conceptual framework that unites environmental, social, health and economic arguments, the dissertation achieves its own analytical style and offers original conclusions for the sustainable development of agriculture in Serbia. This interdisciplinary perspective goes beyond conventional classifications of agricultural systems and shows the ability for conceptual thinking and derivation of new dependencies.

**Conclusion:** The degree of knowledge of the problem and the quality of the interpretation of the literary material are at a high scientific level. The author demonstrates excellent awareness, analytical depth and the ability to use literary and empirical evidence in a creative and productive way, which significantly enhances the scientific value of the PhD.

### 5) Contributions

The formulated contributions are clear, reasoned and stem from the analysis. It is possible that some of them could be summarized to avoid excessive fragmentation and detailing. This action would not reduce their significance and scientific value.



**Conclusion :** The contributions are original and adequately protected. All of them are the original work of the author of the doctoral thesis. I define them as objective and based on the dissertation analysis performed. Therefore, I accept them.

#### 6) Critical notes and questions

I have no critical remarks. I have made suggestions for improving the development in the relevant points, where I have any.

questions for the doctoral student .

#### 7) Publications, citations and abstract

The doctoral student submits 6 publications that fully correspond to the topic of his/her doctoral thesis. They meet the requirements for minimum scientific contribution.

The presented abstract demonstrates a good level of scientific and systematic summary of the dissertation work. It clearly and consistently reflects the structure, goals, hypotheses, methodology, main results and contributions of the dissertation, successfully fulfilling its function. It is well structured, linguistically correct and contains summarized, but sufficiently informative descriptions of the theoretical framework, the empirical part and the key conclusions. A significant advantage is the clear analytical line and the consistent tracking of the research steps from goal setting to the results and contributions. **Conclusion:** The abstract is structured professionally, clearly and in accordance with the normative rules. The citation of sources in the dissertation is correct, consistent and in accordance with academic standards.

#### 8) Summary conclusion and proposal

The relevance, the appropriately selected and correctly used research methods, the correctly formulated and defended thesis, the precisely, adequately and accurately formulated and verified hypotheses, the adequately made generalizations and conclusions on the one hand, as well as the obtained solid scientific and scientifically applied results and contributions of the doctoral thesis on the other, give me reason to make the justified conclusion that the doctoral thesis presented to me for judging represents a fully completed and comprehensive scientific product, enriching both science and practice, and which meets the requirements of the ZRASRB and gives me reason to evaluate it **POSITIVELY** .



Furthermore, I believe that the doctoral candidate possesses both in-depth theoretical and significant practical knowledge of the subject and demonstrates sufficient abilities to conceptualize , conduct and successfully finalize an independent scientific study. These qualities allow her to both search, find and report, as well as analyze, summarize and interpret scientific data in an adequate manner. In addition, she can formulate the relevant scientific conclusions and inferences.

The above-mentioned merits of both the doctoral thesis and the doctoral student give me convincing and unambiguous arguments to propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award the candidate the educational and scientific degree of "**DOCTOR** " in the specialty "Organization and Management of Production (Agriculture and Undergrowth)".

Sofia 01.12.2025

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