



REVIEW

on a dissertation for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

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

Professional field: 3.8 Economy

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

Author of the dissertation: Ana Milojevic, PhD - 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. Petar Borisov Borisov with competencies in 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", Professional field - 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Organization and Management by Sub-Sectors - Agriculture" appointed as a member of the scientific jury by Order RD - 16 - 1176 of 17.11.2025.

I. Brief presentation of the candidate

Ana Milojevic is a PhD candidate enrolled in an independent study program at the Department of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Economics, Agricultural University – Plovdiv. She has previously acquired substantial professional experience as a marketing specialist in several marketing firms operating in the Republic of Serbia. Ana holds two master's degrees from Serbian universities, one in Business Administration and the other in Economics. Her background reflects extensive expertise in both the theoretical foundations and practical applications of marketing management.

II. Relevance of the problem

The topic of the dissertation is highly relevant. Globally, there is a growing interest in sustainable agriculture, the protection of natural resources, healthy nutrition, and the greening of agricultural practices. At the regional level — particularly in Serbia — the significance of organic

production is increasing in the context of aligning national policies with those of the European Union. Challenges such as environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, health risks associated with the use of pesticides and chemicals, and consumer trust in certified organic products render the research question particularly important. The dissertation addresses a critical and relatively novel aspect in the scientific discourse: the process of “conventionalization” in organic agriculture, further enhancing the contemporary relevance and significance of the study.

III. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and research methods

The main objective of the dissertation is clearly and precisely defined: to conduct an in-depth comparative analysis of organic and conventional production in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2016–2021, examining the economic, environmental, social, and health dimensions of both systems. The research tasks are logically structured to reflect the progression of the study: theoretical analysis, statistical comparison, assessment of health and environmental impacts, investigation of consumer behavior, and verification of the proposed hypotheses. The hypotheses are scientifically grounded and address key aspects, including the health attributes of organic products, environmental sustainability, the role of consumer awareness, and the phenomenon of conventionalization. The methodology is appropriately chosen and integrates both qualitative and quantitative approaches, including comparative analysis, statistical methods, literature review, and empirical survey.

IV. Visualization and presentation of the obtained results

The dissertation submitted for review demonstrates a high level of clarity and precision in presenting the results. It includes 81 tables, 41 diagrams, 24 graphs, and 6 images, reflecting a strong commitment to accuracy and the visual accessibility of information. The graphical tools and data structures employed enable clear tracking of the dynamics of organic and conventional agriculture, including changes in cultivated areas, yields, the number of farmers, and certified operators. The comparative analysis with neighboring Balkan countries further enriches the study. Notably, the effective integration of survey results adds a socio-behavioral perspective, enhancing the overall interdisciplinary character of the work.

V. Discussion of the results and literature used

In conducting the literature review, the doctoral student demonstrates analytical maturity and the ability to interpret data in the context of theoretical frameworks and scientific models relevant to agricultural sector management. Her conclusions are drawn from a careful comparison between the two production systems: organic agriculture is shown to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly, whereas conventional agriculture is more productive but entails significantly higher environmental and health costs. The survey results corroborate the central thesis of the dissertation, highlighting the importance of consumer awareness and trust for the future growth of the organic market. The analysis of the transition from conventional to organic agriculture is particularly noteworthy, as it is conducted within the framework of prevailing global models and trends. The literature base is comprehensive, diverse, and current, encompassing international publications, statistical sources, and scientifically significant studies.

VI. Contributions

I agree with the contributions as presented in the abstract. They are comprehensive and accurately reflect the achievements of the dissertation research. In my view, some contributions could be consolidated to reduce their overall number, thereby creating a more concise and streamlined presentation of the dissertation's contributions. I acknowledge that all contributions are the original work of the doctoral candidate and can be considered objective, arising directly from the analyses conducted within the dissertation.

VII. Critical notes and questions

Despite the substantial amount of work carried out by the doctoral student, it is important to note a few minor weaknesses, which do not significantly detract from the overall high quality of the dissertation. These include:

- The survey research is primarily limited to the urban environment of Belgrade, raising questions regarding the representativeness of the data.
- The inclusion of more detailed econometric analyses could provide a more precise assessment of the economic aspects of the research problem.

- Certain sections contain extensive historical descriptions; condensing these passages would enhance the analytical density of the text.

I also have the following questions for the doctoral student:

The dissertation analyzes the trend of “conventionalization” in organic production and highlights that this process represents a growing risk at both the global and regional levels.

1. What specific indicators would you recommend for the early identification of this process in the agricultural sector of the Republic of Serbia?
2. Which institutional or market-based measures do you consider most effective in mitigating this trend?

VIII. Published articles, citations and abstract layout

The abstract presents the doctoral student’s publications, which reflect the principal results of the dissertation. The student has published a total of six scientific articles, effectively disseminating the findings of the research to the broader scientific community. Through these publications, the doctoral student fulfills the minimum required criteria for verification in the NACID database in Sofia.

Regarding the abstract itself, it fully captures the main points of the dissertation research and work. The layout is professional, clear, and compliant with institutional requirements. The structure is coherent, citations are accurately presented, and the overall length conforms to the standards for this type of scientific document.

IX. Conclusion

Based on my analysis of the documents submitted in the procedure for obtaining the academic degree of “Doctor,” I can confidently state that the dissertation of Ana Milojevic represents a comprehensive, in-depth, and scientifically rigorous study with both theoretical and practical contributions. The work meets all academic criteria for scientific validity, originality, and relevance. The results are convincing, well-reasoned, and supported by statistical data as well as empirical evidence. The author demonstrates a high level of scientific competence and analytical thinking.

On this basis, I hereby provide a “**POSITIVE**” evaluation of the dissertation entitled “*Comparative Analysis of Organic and Conventional Production in the Republic of Serbia*” by Ana Milojevic. I recommend that the dissertation be admitted for public defense, and I consider that the doctoral candidate fully merits the award of the academic and scientific degree of “**Doctor**” in the scientific specialty: *Organization and Management of Production (Agriculture and Undergrowth)*.

Date: 01.12.2025

City of Plovdiv

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/Prof. Dr. Petar Borisov/