

STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL OPINION

Delivered by:

Associate Professor MINA NIKOLAEVA ANGELOVA, PhD

University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski

based on the materials submitted for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

field of Higher Education **3. Social, economic, and legal sciences**

Professional Field **3.8. Economics**

PhD Program **Economics and Management (Industry)**

for the candidate **Megi Zdravkova Dakova.**

Dissertation Title: *"Interaction between Higher Education and Industrial Enterprise in the Conditions of a Competitive Business Environment"*

Research Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Angel Dimitrov, University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski

1. General Presentation of the Procedure and the PhD Student

It is the Order № RD-21-221 of February 01, 2023 of the Rector of the University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski (PU), which designates me as a Full Member on duty for the Scientific Jury Panel to deliver professional assertion on a procedure for the defense of a dissertation work on the topic *"Interaction between Higher Education and Industrial Enterprise in the Conditions of a Competitive Business Environment "* for acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, PhD program Economics and Management (Industry). The author of the dissertation is Megi Zdravkova Dakova - PhD student in full-time studies at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences with a supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Angel Dimitrov from University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski.

In accordance with Art. 36. (1) of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the PU, the Doctoral Student has attached six scientific publications, which are reports of international and national scientific conferences. The documents are in accordance with the for the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB).

2. Relevance of the Topic

The dissertation work's relevance is clearly argued, correlating to the possibilities for effective interaction between education, science, and business. Harmonization of activities between the mentioned countries is a prerequisite for the development of education and scientific research, thus creating innovations and increasing the country's competitiveness, with the active support of the state. The doctoral student identified a number of circumstances and considerations that led to the

determination of the need to study theoretical and methodological characteristics in order to achieve effective interaction and build a unified scientific-educational and practical-applied process. To achieve synergy from their joint activities, all stakeholders must be bound into a single ecosystem through the use of various approaches.

3. Understanding the Issue

The research's defined goal, tasks, object, subject, and thesis clearly correspond to the doctoral student's in-depth knowledge of the problem, and as a result of the research, a web-based platform was proposed to ensure a long-term connection between students, teachers, and business organizations. The presented scientific work has a total volume of 236 pages, which includes a dissertation work of 182 pages, a bibliography of 20 pages, appendices of 21 pages, and a declaration, a cover letter, a list of figures, tables, and others of 13 pages. Scientific literature, reports from international and national scientific conferences, papers indexed in primary and secondary databases, and business studies are all included in the bibliographic reference. The presence in the text of 39 figures, 6 tables and 6 appendices is an indication of a clear presentation of the obtained results.

4. Research Methodology

The research methodology chosen allows for the achievement of the goal and the acquisition of an adequate answer to the tasks solved in the dissertation work. The study employed a variety of scientific approaches and quantitative and qualitative methods, such as inductive and deductive reasoning, statistical methods, comparative methods, case studies, surveys, and observations. The genesis, characteristics, and possibilities for an effective partnership between education, science, and business are clarified using these methods.

5. Characterization and Evaluation of the Dissertation Work and Contributions

An introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, recommendations, contributions, and appendices comprise the dissertation. The first chapter of the dissertation is 51 pages long and presents systematized main theoretical propositions related to higher education, science, and business collaboration based on the "triangle of knowledge" model. I think the logical structure is good for creating innovation by bringing together higher education, science, and their relationship with business. As a high level of analytical abilities is evident, I can point to a categorical contribution of the doctoral student in a theoretical aspect. The second chapter examines the factors and forms of interaction between the university and the industrial enterprise, as well as the state of research and development in Bulgarian universities. National programs and development strategies are examined. The conceptual model and research methodology of the author are described. This section of the dissertation contains 65 pages and presents the constructs developed from the litera-

ture review. The third chapter (volume 46 pages) contains the findings of an empirical study conducted on the University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski case study. A questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews were used to conduct the research. A web-based platform developed by the author was proposed and established to provide a long-term connection between representatives of higher education, science, and business organizations. Individual question answers are visualized using figures and tables, and a variety of statistical methods are used. In terms of summarizing key points from the dissertation work, I rate the conclusion as good.

The contributions of the doctoral student are related to the enrichment, concretization, and refinement of existing scientific knowledge, as well as the application of existing methods for solving a specific economic problem with formulated conclusions and recommendations to relevant parties. The theoretical-methodological and scientifically applied contributions are convincingly argued. In terms of the volume of the individual chapters of the dissertation work, I believe that an excellent balance has been achieved in terms of the validation of the obtained scientific and applied results. The conclusion is well argued because it emphasizes the main findings of the research. Future research on the subject is suggested.

There was no plagiarism found in the review materials and based on a report from a scientific work check in the specialized software for checking plagiarism StrikePlagiarism.

6. Evaluation of the Publications and Personal Contribution of the Doctoral Student

The doctoral student has provided six publications in Bulgarian that reflect the dissertation results. The materials are reports from international and national scientific conferences, two of which are independent with the author Megi Dakova and four of which were written in collaboration. I was not given established citation information for the publications. The papers were published in edited collective volumes that were indexed in secondary databases.

My knowledge with the scientific works provided leads me to the general conclusion that they contain scientific results pertaining to the enrichment, concretization, and refinement of existing scientific knowledge, as well as the application of various methods for solving a specific economic problem, with formulated conclusions and recommendations for improving collaboration between education, science, and business. The total result of the accumulated points according to the national criteria in the rules for approbation of the LDASRB indicates that the publications fulfill the requirements in *the LDASRB, Group of indicators A, item 1. Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"* - total 50 points and *Group of indicators G, item 7. Articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes* - a total of 36.66 points. I highly appreciate the personal participation of the doctoral student in the conducted dissertation research and I believe that the formulated contributions and obtained results are a personal merit of Megi Dakova.

7. Abstract

The content and quality of the abstract reflect the main results achieved in the dissertation and correspond to the requirements of the Regulations of the UP.

8. Recommendations for Future Use of Dissertation Contributions and Results

Three contributions of a theoretical-methodological nature and three of a scientific-applied nature are argued based on the references for the contributions in the dissertation work. I can make the following notes and recommendations to help the PhD student's future research work:

- 1) to continue publication activity in high impact factor/rank publications;
- 2) to develop a new direction in areas of interest such as digitization;
- 3) to present the results of her studies at international conferences;
- 4) to investigate in greater depth other problems, no less important for improvement and directly related to the sustainability of the relationship between education, science, and business.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific and scientifically applied results that represent an original contribution to science and meet all of the requirements of the Law on Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for LDASRB Implementation, and the relevant UP Regulations.

The dissertation demonstrates that Megi Dakova, a doctoral student, has extensive theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Industry), demonstrating qualities and skills for independent scientific research.

As a result of the foregoing, I confidently give my positive assessment of the conducted research, as presented by the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results, and contributions, and I propose to the honorable scientific jury that **Megi Zdravkova Dakova** be awarded the educational and scientific degree "**doctor**" in the field of higher education. **3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional guidance 3.8 Economics, PhD in Economics and Management (Industry).**

17.02.2023

Author of the opinion:

Assoc. Prof. Mina Angelova, PhD

UP "Paisii Hilendarski"

Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences

E-mail: mina.angelova@uni-plovdiv.bg