

## **OPINION**

**by Assoc. Prof. Kapka Svetoslavova Georgieva-Atanasova, PhD, lecturer at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”**

of a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree of **“Doctor”**

in: Field of Higher Education **3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences,**

Professional Area **3.6. Law**

Doctoral Program: **Constitutional Law**

Author: **Todor Ivanov Rogoshev**

Topic: **Acquisition of Citizenship in the Republic of Bulgaria: Constitutional and International Legal Aspects**

Scientific Supervisor: **Prof. D.Sc. Veselin Hristov Tsankov**

### **1. General Overview of the Procedure and the Doctoral Candidate**

By Order No. PD 22-1523 of July 27, 2026, issued by the Rector of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the academic jury to oversee the defense of a dissertation titled “Acquisition of Citizenship in the Republic of Bulgaria: Constitutional and International Law Aspects” for the award of the educational and scientific degree of “Doctor” in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.6. Law, doctoral program “Constitutional Law.”

The set of materials submitted by Todor Rogoshev complies with Article 36 (1) of the Regulations on the Development of the Academic Staff at Plovdiv University.

The doctoral candidate has attached the required three articles on the research topic addressed in the dissertation.

Todor Ivanov Rogoshev earned a master’s degree in law from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv in 2021, and since 2022, he has also held a master’s degree in public international law from Leiden University. From 2022 to 2023, he served as an “intern” in the

legal department of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Since 2023, he has been an assistant professor of constitutional law at Paisii Hilendarski University. The doctoral candidate has been admitted to the dissertation defense by decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Law, Minutes No. 141 of June 2, 2026.

He is fluent in English and French, which allows him to freely explore foreign legal theory and practice, as well as the practice of international courts and arbitration tribunals.

## **2. Relevance of the Topic**

The scholarly work presented by Todor Rogoshev represents the first comprehensive monographic study in the field of acquiring Bulgarian citizenship over the past 20 years or so. At the same time, the need for such a scholarly study is indisputable and is justified both by the country's membership in the European Union and the Schengen Area, as well as by the practical problems arising from the application of the subject matter under consideration.

## **3. Understanding the Problem**

In his research, the author has drawn upon an exceptionally extensive bibliography—51 monographs in Bulgarian and 30 in foreign languages, as well as 30 articles/studies in Bulgarian and 51 in foreign languages—all of which are properly cited. The volume of case law examined is also enormous. The relevant case law of international courts, the European Court of Human Rights, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Bulgaria, and the limited case law of national courts has been examined. Based on this, I can confidently assert that Todor Rogoshev has succeeded in gaining an in-depth understanding of the subject of his research, namely, the constitutional and international legal aspects of acquiring citizenship in the Republic of Bulgaria.

## **4. Research Methodology**

Todor Rogoshev employed an appropriate scientific methodology, drawing on the legal-dogmatic, doctrinal, historical, and comparative law approaches. He also utilized the scientific methods of synthesis, induction, and deduction. The author's writing is of a high standard. The terminology is clear and consistent.

## **5. Description and Evaluation of the Dissertation and Its Contributions**

The dissertation consists of an introduction, five chapters, and a conclusion summarizing what the doctoral candidate considers to be the main contributions, as well as a list of the scientific literature and other sources used. The first chapter of the thesis is devoted

to a general description of the concept of citizenship, which is examined from various perspectives—as a legal status, as a legal relationship, and as a human right. Important distinctions are also drawn between citizenship and related concepts such as “nationality,” “ethnicity,” “people,” and others. The second chapter is devoted to the sources, examining both the national legal framework as it has evolved and the relevant instruments of international law and European Union law. Chapter Three discusses the significance of the institution of citizenship at the individual, national, and international levels. In my opinion, the most valuable chapters in the study are the last two. They contain a detailed analysis of the procedure for granting Bulgarian citizenship and identify and explain the discrepancies between national and international legal frameworks. The following key contributions can be highlighted:

5.1. In terms of its scope, content, and interdisciplinary nature, this work exceeds the requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree of “Doctor”;

5.2. The author’s conclusions regarding the subject matter discussed in Chapter Three represent a valuable contribution, particularly those related to the significance of citizenship for the state, the democratic process, and the personal status of the individual, as well as the connection of these conclusions to the evaluation of the legislation and future proposals *de lege ferenda*;

5.3. A practical contribution is the proposal to introduce, at the legislative level, a requirement for periodic changes to the interview questions for citizenship applications, based on relevant analysis;

5.4. I view positively the proposal *de lege ferenda* to amend Article 15 of the Bulgarian Citizenship Act by replacing the term “origin” with “national belonging”;

5.5. Another contribution is the proposal to bring national legislation into line with the requirements of the European Convention on Nationality and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;

5.6. The analysis of the ineffectiveness of the derogation clauses under Articles 11 and 12 of the European Convention on Nationality is valuable from both a theoretical and a theoretical-practical perspective;

5.7. I fully agree with the author’s arguments and conclusions regarding the 2023 constitutional amendments, as set forth on pages 118–120 of the dissertation;

The contributions mentioned are not exhaustive but are intended to illustrate the merits of the dissertation.

## **6. Evaluation of the Ph.D. Candidate's Publications and Personal Contribution**

The three articles submitted by Todor Rogoshev meet the legal requirements in terms of content and length and fully satisfy the minimum national requirements under Article 2b of the Law on Scientific Research and Academic Development in the Republic of Bulgaria.

## **7. Abstract**

The attached abstract accurately reflects the content of the candidate's dissertation and realistically presents his scientific contributions.

## **8. Recommendations for the Future Use of the Dissertation's Contributions and Findings**

I would recommend that, in any future revision of this scholarly work, the author provide further justification for the thesis that presidential decrees are administrative acts, as this thesis is controversial and not without contradictions. It would be beneficial for both theory and practice to examine in greater detail any potential changes to the legislation related to the introduction of the possibility to challenge the proposal of the Minister of Justice or, respectively, the opinion of the Citizenship Council. To improve the quality of the work, the repetition of certain passages (for example, regarding the Nottebohm case) could also be avoided.

## **CONCLUSION**

This dissertation contains scientific, applied scientific, and applied results that represent an original contribution to science and meets all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ZRASRB, and the relevant Regulations of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The dissertation demonstrates that doctoral candidate Todor Ivanov Rogoshev possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in his field of study, and has demonstrated the qualities and abilities necessary to conduct independent research.

In light of the foregoing, I confidently give my positive assessment of the research presented in the dissertation, the abstract, the results achieved, and the contributions made, and I propose that the distinguished academic jury award the academic and scientific degree

of “Doctor” to Todor Ivanov Rogoshev in the field of higher education: 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.6. Law, doctoral program “Constitutional Law.”

August 20, 2026

Opinion prepared by:.....

Assoc. Prof. Kapka Gerogieva-Atanasova, PhD