

STANDPOINT

on

the qualities of dissertation for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree of "doctor"

Standpoint's author: Prof. Lyubcho Varametzov, PhD, D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship

Dissertation's author: Alexander Tihomirov Lichev, full-time doctoral student in the Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship, doctoral program "Economics and Management (Industry)"

Dissertation topic: „Entrepreneurship in the context of the concept of sustainable development“

Grounds for providing of the standpoint: Order No.1058/26.10.2023 of the composition of the Scientific Jury and the opening a procedure for a public defense of a dissertation, as well as the decision of the Scientific Jury at its first meeting on November 2, 2023.

I. General characteristics of the dissertation work

The volume of the dissertation is 255 pages. The volume meets and even exceeds the generally accepted requirements for the volume of a similar kind of scientific research. Structurally, it consists of a title page, table of contents, abbreviations used, list of tables, list of figures, introduction, three main parts (chapters), conclusion, list of used and cited literature, appendices. The main text contains 66 figures and 7 tables.

The **subject** of the study are the attitudes and behavior of Bulgarian industrial entrepreneurs in the context of understandings of sustainable development, and its **object** - contemporary Bulgarian entrepreneurs, active in sector "C" - processing industry.

The aim of the research is, on the one hand, to examine the current state and prospects for the development of entrepreneurship in Bulgaria through the prism of sustainable development, and on the other hand - to derive and approve a modern model for the deployment of entrepreneurial activity, based on the motivation for achieving stability and economic prosperity. In order to achieve the goal thus set, the author defines 6 research **tasks** that are successfully linked to the research goal and allow its achievement.

The main research **thesis**, defended in the dissertation work, is expressed in the statement that at the modern stage, reasonably implemented

transformations with assuming responsibilities in the spirit of understanding sustainable development, is a decisive condition for the long-term success of one's own business and achieving competitive advantages for our national economy. On this basis, the author defined three hypotheses, which were tested during the course of the research.

The successful formulation of the topic of the dissertation facilitates its structuring and the development of the doctoral student's ideas. The main parts of the dissertation work are interconnected and developed in a logical sequence. Different research approaches, methods, as well as ways of registering information (observation, direct surveying, conducting interviews, etc.) were used. The methodological toolkit corresponds to the goals and tasks of the research, and its use provides the necessary information for conducting analyzes and assessments, achieving the research goal and proving the thesis of the dissertation work. Limitations defining the conceptual framework of the overall scientific research are correctly formulated.

The dissertation contains scientific and applied scientific results, which will be discussed later, and is proof of the author's theoretical knowledge and ability to conduct independent scientific research. Its type and volume meet the requirements of Art. 68, para. 1 and 2 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at the Tsenov Academy of Economics.

II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation

The large-scale transformations in the socio-economic environment in the 20th century put the development of the entrepreneurial business in front of problems and serious challenges, while also providing new opportunities for prosperity. The topic of entrepreneurship, considered in the context of sustainable development, is current, complex, with great practical potential, linked to processes and trends on a national, local and international scale. In addition, the chosen topic is dissertationable and allows the PhD student to develop his research potential. Although PhD student Alexander Lichev conscientiously refers to other developments, it is correct to note that his research is an original scientific work. The structure of the presentation, as a whole, is logically supported and allows the consistent development of the dissertation idea.

In the **introduction**, doctoral student Lichev emphasizes the topicality of the topic, defines the object, the subject, the thesis, the purpose and tasks of the research and outlines its main limitations.

Chapter **one** is entirely theoretical in nature. In it, the author clarifies the main scientific and theoretical statements about the essence of entrepreneurship and the concept of sustainable development. The evolution of the concepts of "entrepreneur" and "entrepreneurship", the figure of the entrepreneur and the essence of entrepreneurship are successively examined. Based on formulated criteria, the various factors for the development of entrepreneurship are classified. The subject of the dissertation study requires clarification of the concept of sustainable development, as the author traces its historical path, its main aspects and the criteria and indicators of sustainable development. The **second** chapter has both a theoretical and a methodological character. In it, the author clarifies the possibilities for assessing the sustainable development of entrepreneurship in Bulgaria. Different periods in the development of entrepreneurship in Bulgaria and the main indicators of Bulgarian industrial entrepreneurship, its state and problems are examined. A conceptual framework and methodology was built for conducting an empirical study to establish the attitudes and behavior of modern Bulgarian entrepreneurs. The **third** chapter has an appended character. The profiles of the respondent entrepreneurs were created and the main problems in the development of the entrepreneurial business were revealed. Priorities and guidelines for sustainable development of entrepreneurship in Bulgarian conditions are outlined. A model of sustainable development of entrepreneurship has been built and tested. After the end of each main part, the doctoral student makes relevant conclusions and summaries.

At the **conclusion** of the dissertation, the doctoral student draws conclusions and summarizes the results achieved, which confirm the formulated research thesis. It also makes a number of recommendations to address the problems and challenges identified during the research.

In developing the dissertation, the author followed the rules of scientific ethics. Literary sources are used in good faith and correctly cited.

Along with the dissertation, the doctoral student submitted, as required, an abstract. It is developed according to the usual practice, synthesized and faithfully reflects the achievements of the dissertation work. The abstract additionally contains: reference to the scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the dissertation work; a list of the doctoral student's publications related to the topic of the dissertation; declaration of originality and authenticity.

III. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation work

The dissertation contains achievements having both a purely scientific and a scientific-applied nature. The main contributions can be formulated as follows:

√ Various theoretical positions on entrepreneurship and the figure of the entrepreneur have been examined and critically analyzed.

√ The development of entrepreneurship in our country and the impact on entrepreneurial culture have been traced.

√ A methodological toolkit was developed and an empirical study of the attitudes and behavior of modern Bulgarian entrepreneurs was conducted.

√ Profiles of the entrepreneurs were developed and the problems in the development of the entrepreneurial business in our country were revealed.

√ A model of sustainable development of entrepreneurship is proposed.

IV. Notes and recommendations

A careful reading of the manuscript gives me grounds for the following remarks:

√ The issues of entrepreneurship, on the one hand, and those of sustainable development, are well developed in themselves, but the impression remains that they are mechanically assembled and the connection between them is difficult to discern.

√ In addition to the note made above, it should be noted that in the survey card there is only one question related to sustainable development, and it rather establishes the attitude of the respondents to this concept.

√ The author notes that, apart from the participants in the survey, the information was collected in other forms - from the opinions and behavior of other participants in the entrepreneurial activity in our country. Is the additional information comparable to that received by survey participants?

√ The motives for directing the author to the specific economic activity are not clear.

Pointing out these weaknesses is not an end in itself and does not detract from the qualities of the dissertation work and the research results achieved. Doctoral student Alexander Lichev is at the beginning of his creative journey and such remarks would be useful for his growth as a researcher.

V. Summary conclusion and opinion

The dissertation presented for evaluation is a current and original scientific research, with achieved results, which are of interest both for science and for practice. It has a completed character, with fulfilled goals and tasks, and meets the requirements of the Law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at the Tsenov Academy of Economics for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor". All this gives me sufficient reasons to declare my positive vote and to suggest to the respected members of the scientific jury to support the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to Alexander Tihomirov Lichev in professional direction 3.8. Economics, Doctoral Program "Economics and Management (Industry)".

Svishtov
18.11.2023

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