

**Statement, written by a member of scientific jury for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "PhD" within a procedure of the Tsenov Academy of Economics - Svisthov**

**Prepared by: Assoc. Prof. PhD Georgi MARINOV Georgiev, UE-Varna**

**Author of the dissertation: Aneta Ivanova Lazarova**

**Topic of the dissertation: „Opportunities for internationalisation of own fashion brand for Bulgarian small and middle-sized enterprises“**

**I. General presentation of the dissertation:**

1. object - the study explores the complex of strategies, factors and mechanisms for building, development and internationalisation of own fashion brand of Bulgarian small and middle-sized enterprises;

2. volume - 228 pages, including the main text on 207 pages, and an addendum, bibliography, indexes and declaration for originality and authenticity of the text:

3. structure - the study has the classical structure of introduction, three main chapters, conclusion, bibliography and addendum;

4. bibliography - used is a big volume of scientific literature in several languages, incl. 179 sources in English and 46 in languages with cyrillic alphabets;

5. addendum - in addendum is presented the main instrument that was used in the study.

**II. Assessment of the form and the contents of the dissertation.**

1. The studied in the dissertation scientific problem is simultaneously topical and relatively weakly explored. Its topicality stems mainly from the fact that in our country there are a multitude of successfully acting companies in the fashion industry, and these are mainly small and middle-sized enterprises. On the other hand, the lack of strong traditions in internationalisation of such enterprises in our country, combined with the need for internationalisation, emanating naturally from the mere nature of the functioning of the industry, makes this type of studies potentially being of a big benefit to the development of the economy in our country. Insofar as the industry is dominated by enterprises, for which it is hard to do their own research, the topic is relatively underdeveloped and the presented dissertation solves current problems.

The author has participated as either a speaker or audience in five scientific forums, which witnesses that the scientific community in our country was successfully familiarised with the ideas of the dissertation, as well as that they have been discussed. In connection with

the dissertation one research paper and two articles were published, which meets the minimum national requirements.

2. As a language, as well as a volume, the dissertation is fully comparable to the established throughout the years tradition for similar works in our country. The scientific instrumentarium used in the dissertation, although based on a relatively limited empirics, is in this case entirely appropriate, especially given the potential practical usage of its application by other enterprises.

3. The abstract of 39 pages fully and entirely reflects the text of the dissertation.

### **III. Scientific and scientific-practical contributions of the dissertation.**

The presented text contains new scientific ideas and results. I accept the scientific and scientific-practical contributions claimed by the author.

The summarised integrated conceptual framework for the internationalisation of SME in the fashion industry with its corresponding interpretation of brand strategy with adaptation and widening of the concept of brand personification to the context of Bulgarian fashion SMEs represents an interesting point for the Bulgarian business science.

Among the significant from the scientific point of view results, especially given the importance of the sector in the economy of our country, are also the presented integral analytic framework for assessment of the competitiveness of fashion SMEs with a scenario model for strategic development in the fashion industry and a defined two-stage model for strategic planning, oriented to Bulgarian conditions and the realities in the fashion industry.

Especially useful, incl. from the point of view of the acting industry, are the formulated practically applicable recommendations for strengthening the efficiency and the internationalisation.

The summary of the mutually penetrating ambiental factors, passing through synthesising of strategies for each aspect of SWOT and applied as a case study possesses high potential for transfers to other Bulgarian enterprises, for their successful internationalisation.

### **IV. Questions to the author of the dissertation.**

To what extent the presented in *Figure 5. Matrix to assess the competitive status of the brand at the global market* can be up-to-date from the point of view of how in principle it is possible to measure the strength of the brand and the geographical coverage?

To what extent possible is the elaboration of a strategy through internal teams in Bulgarian fashion SMEs and how adequate is the usage of external consultants?

Which of the existing financial instruments for supporting the SMEs in our country seem most suitable for the Bulgarian fashion SMEs and what potential changes in them could be appropriate?

## V. General assessment of the dissertation and conclusion.

The PhD thesis of Aneta Lazarova is a comprehensive scientific study on a relevant economic issue. The study comprises both theoretical and empirical components and has been elaborated at the level of contemporary science. The research meets the standards for similar works. The thesis contains both scientific and practical contributions, offering originality in the field. The thesis is entirely an achievement of its author, who demonstrates in-depth knowledge about the problem studied, as well as ability for independent thinking. Taking all of the above into account, I strongly support the awarding of the academic title "PhD" to Aneta Ivanova Lazarova and I encourage the scientific jury to also vote positively.

Date: 26.01.2026

Prepared by:

заличен подпис  
осн. чл. 59  
от ЗЗЛД

(Assoc. Prof. PhD Georgi Marinov)