

## RECENZIA

by a member of the scientific jury, determined by Order № 1058/26.X.2023 year of the Rector of SA "D. A. Tsenov" - Svishtov on a dissertation work for the award of the ONS "doctor"

**Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Lyuben Dimitrov Kirev**, higher education area 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8. Economy

**PhD student Alexander Tihomirov Lichev** wrote the dissertation for the PhD program in Economics and Management (Industry).

**Dissertation topic:** "Entrepreneurship in the context of the concept of sustainable development"

### I. General presentation of the dissertation work

#### 1. Subject

The subject of research of the dissertation work is the attitudes and behaviour of Bulgarian industrial entrepreneurs in the context of the understanding of sustainable development. The goal is to study the current state and prospects for the development of entrepreneurship in our country through the prism of sustainable development. For the realization of the set goal, six scientific tasks have been set out, which correspond to the structure and content of the dissertation. The thesis is defended that "at the modern stage, reasonably implemented transformations with the assumption of 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 in our national economy". Three hypotheses have been defined, affecting the attitudes and motivation for entrepreneurial activity, and the level of competence and support of Bulgarian entrepreneurship, verified during the study.

#### 2. Volume

The dissertation has a volume of 238 standard pages, of which 220 pages are the main text. The study is richly illustrated graphically and tabularly with 66 figures and 7 tables.

#### 3. Structure

The structure of the dissertation study is classic for such studies and includes an introduction, an exposition in three chapters, appendices, and a list of the used literary sources. It covers the stated goal and tasks and contributes to the unfolding of the problem. The interpretation of the topic is both hypothetico-deductive empirically inductive and historical-logical.

#### Introduction.

The introduction contains all the necessary structural elements for an introductory part of dissertation research. It highlights the relevance of the research, the theoretical and

empirical basis of the analysis, the object, the subject, the main goal and tasks of the research. The formulated aim and objectives of the research have been successfully achieved. The results obtained from the analysis confirm the derived hypotheses and the thesis of the doctoral student. Empirical and logical-theoretical research methods used, information security, restrictive conditions and the approbation of the research are indicated.

In **the first chapter**, a correct theoretical statement is given about the essence of entrepreneurship, and the evolution of the concepts of entrepreneur and entrepreneurship. The figure of the entrepreneur is outlined, and the factors for the development of entrepreneurship, and the relationship between motivation and entrepreneurship are studied. Based on it, in a theoretical aspect, the essence and features of "sustainable development", the historical path of the concept and its main aspects are explored, and the criteria and indicators for sustainable development are revealed.

**Chapter two** impresses with the doctoral student's awareness of the genesis and development of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial culture in our country. Five stages of entrepreneurship development are distinguished, with an emphasis on its evolution in modern conditions. Many authors in our country develop separately the problems of entrepreneurship and sustainable development, but in the dissertation, the focus is on the development and national specificity of entrepreneurship in our country in the conditions of sustainable development. The conceptual framework and methodology of the empirical study are also developed.

**The third chapter** is dedicated to the applied aspects of the study of entrepreneurship in Bulgaria in the context of sustainable development. The profiles of the respondents-entrepreneurs and their enterprises are outlined, the problems, priorities and obstacles in the development of the entrepreneurial business are identified, the environment is characterized and directions for change are identified. A model for sustainable development of entrepreneurship has been created and tested.

**Conclusion.** A good impression of the conclusion is made by the fact that it does not have the character of a review of the written work, but contains summarizing conclusions and recommendations from the research.

**Literature.** The doctoral student used a total of 198 literary sources, of which 125 were in Cyrillic, 25 were foreign in Latin and 48 were Internet sources.

**Applications.** The dissertation contains 13 appendices, including the questionnaire from the conducted empirical research

## **II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation**

### **1. Assessment of the relevance and development of research in the dissertation scientific problem**

The transformations in the socio-economic environment of the second half of the 20th century presented entrepreneurship on a global scale, including new requirements for Bulgarian entrepreneurs. On the one hand, the need to possess the



necessary knowledge, skills, professional competencies, innovativeness, motivation, etc. in the struggle for the conquest of competitive advantages and the realization of profit as the root cause and ultimate driving force of any economic activity (according to V. Sombart). On the other hand, the need for social and environmental commitments that exceed purely economic benefits and meet public expectations is united by the concept of sustainable development. A need arose for a dynamic balance between the interests of entrepreneurs and society, related to the exhaustibility of resources and the need for environmental responsibility, to satisfy the needs of generations in the long term. This gives an extraordinary relevance with great practical potential to the dissertation research.

**The dissertation is a comprehensive, completed scientific study of a current and significant problem of our economic development. The development is distinguished by a logical structure, successfully realized goals and tasks, and a defend scientific thesis. The theoretical preparation of the doctoral student is very good.**

**2. Opinion on the language, volume and instrumentation of the dissertation work**

The style of expression is laconic, the language is clear and precise, and the scientific apparatus is used correctly. Knowledge of literary sources and structured questionnaire research is at a high level. The theoretical preparation of the doctoral student and the visualization of the research are impressive.

**3. Opinion as to how well the abstract accurately and completely reveals the work**

The abstract reveals correctly and completely the content of the dissertation. It also contains a Reference for the scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the dissertation, a List of publications of the doctoral student, a Reference for participation in scientific forums of the doctoral student, a Declaration of originality and credibility, a Reference for compliance with the national requirements under the Regulations for the Application of the Law for the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. From the latter, it is clear that the total number of points gained by the doctoral student with the published 2 articles and 2 scientific reports exceeds the total number of nationally required points. All four publications are directly related to the topic of the dissertation.

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

With the development of the dissertation work, the doctoral student reaches some indisputable achievements in the nature of scientific and scientific-applied contributions:

1. On the basis of an in-depth retrospective analysis of primary literary sources in our country and abroad, the origin and evolution of the concept of entrepreneurship have been traced, the essence of the concepts of entrepreneur and entrepreneurship has



been revealed, and the figure of the entrepreneur has been outlined. The conclusion about entrepreneurship as an interdisciplinary category is justified. The factors for the development of entrepreneurship have been identified, and classified into several main groups and their impact has been established, the importance of motivation for entrepreneurial behaviour has been revealed.

2. Using the historical-logical approach, the doctoral student reveals the origin and evolution of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial culture in our country. Five stages of development of Bulgarian entrepreneurship have been successfully identified. Enriching the theory of entrepreneurship in Bulgaria is the examination of its development in the context of the relationship between national specificity and global trends for sustainable growth.

3. The essence and features of sustainable development, the genesis and development of the concept, its main aspects, the criteria and indicators of sustainability and the tasks specific to each sphere in the context of sustainability are presented in detail and adequately interpreted. The analysis of the concept of sustainable development is not an end in itself, because sustainable development confronts entrepreneurs with new conditions and challenges, a new "environment" of functioning and is subject to the logic of entrepreneurship in the context of sustainable development.

4. An indisputable scientific achievement and a prerequisite for successful dissertation research is the developed methodological conceptual framework for the empirical study of the attitudes and behaviour of modern Bulgarian entrepreneurs. Through the conducted empirical study, the profile of the respondent entrepreneurs and their enterprises, the problems in the development of the entrepreneurial business and the attitudes of the entrepreneurs in the processing industry in our country have been outlined. The adverse conditions that hinder the development of entrepreneurship are presented in detail and adequately interpreted. A scientific-applied contribution is the indicated directions and some paths for change in this regard.

5. A model aimed at stimulating the development of responsible and sustainable entrepreneurship in our country has been developed and substantiated. At the heart of the model are the goals and objectives (specific, long-term and sustainable development), entrepreneurial strategies and opportunities (resources and driving forces), a set of behavioural acts (business activity), behavioural control and utilitarian support and sanctions. The model for achieving sustainable entrepreneurship in Bulgaria is valid not only for the processing industry and SMEs but also for other sectors, industries and size classes of enterprises of the economy.

#### **IV. Critical notes and questions**

Some critical remarks can be made on the dissertation work in the form of recommendations for future research activity:



➤ The doctoral student's desire to bring as many confirmations of his point of view as possible in some cases has led to an unnecessary circumstance, which in some places exceeds the subject and the object of research and violates the purposefulness of the research (item 1.2.1 - Criteria for differentiation - p. 38-41), (item 2.2.1 - Trends in the development of business in the world at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, (item 2.2.2 - The business economy of the EU), p. 44 on youth unemployment;

➤ According to BDS-ISO 690-2021, when citing in the main text (Harvard system), the last name and the year and, if necessary, the page of the source is indicated. In many places in the text (pp. 83-85, 89, 98, 101, etc.) it is allowed to write the works of the authors in full;

➤ There are also some inaccuracies of an editorial nature: it is unnecessary to mention in the text the names of the authors who worked on a given problem after this has been done in the introduction (on the economic development on the Bulgarian lands, p.80 and the value orientations and motivational attitudes of entrepreneurs - p.119); the expression business population is inaccurate (population - from an interpretive dictionary - individuals of a biological species that permanently inhabit a part of the species' range, have similar ecological requirements, interbreed freely with each other and remain a fertile generation - from Latin populus - people), there is tautology in the phrase business economics.

## **V. Summary evaluation of the dissertation work and conclusion**

The dissertation work of Alexander Tihomirov Lichev on the topic "Entrepreneurship in the context of the concept of sustainable development" is an independent, comprehensive, theoretically in-depth and conscientiously performed scientific study of a significant and current problem. The development presents the doctoral student as a competent connoisseur of the problems of entrepreneurship, and his consideration in the context of sustainable development complements and enriches scientific knowledge in the researched field. With the development, the doctoral student demonstrates abilities to conduct theoretical and practically applied empirical research, to critically interpret scientific theses and interpret their results, to reveal unsolved problems, and potential for generalizations and to offer recommendations for improvement. The development fully complies with ZRASRB and its regulations, as well as the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of the SA "D.A. Price". These merits and the mentioned points of contribution are a reason with conviction to propose to the respected members of the scientific jury to award Alexander Tihomirov Lichev the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional direction 3.8. "Economics" and scientific speciality "Economics and Management (Industry)".

Sofia  
24. XI. 2023

Reviewer:  
(Prof. \_\_\_\_\_).