

Dissertation opinion

by

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Member of the scientific jury in the procedure for obtaining the educational and scientific degree
"Doctor" in the doctoral programme "Economics and Management (Industry)"
at D.A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov

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Topic of the dissertation: 'Sustainable Development of Industrial Enterprises'

I. General presentation of the thesis:

This opinion has been prepared in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the D.A. Tsenov Academy of Economics for the acquisition of Ph.D. degree and the regulatory requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulations for the Application of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and the Regulations for the Application of the Development of Academic Staff Act at the D.A. Tsenov Academy of Economics.

The dissertation work was discussed and proposed for defense under the Academic Staff Development Act and its Implementing Regulations at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics - Svishtov by the Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship at the Faculty of Production and Trade Business of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics - Svishtov.

The dissertation precisely formulates the object and subject of the research, the research thesis, the main objective and the research tasks to be solved to achieve it. They correspond to the thematic field in which the PhD candidate conducts her research and develops her scientific search.

The thesis consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of references used and appendices. Its length is 178 pages, of which a title page, contents, introduction - 6 pages, main text - 142 pages, conclusion - 1 page, sources used - 9 pages. The dissertation includes tables - 2 pcs and figures - 17 pcs. The list of used literature includes a total of 110 references, of which 71 are in Cyrillic and Latin and 39 are electronic sources. Appendices are 4 in number (20 pages) and are presented in a separate supplement.

With these characteristics, the dissertation meets the requirements of Article 27, paragraph 2 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act. The declaration of originality and authenticity required by the Regulations has also been submitted.

II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation:

The topic of the dissertation is devoted to a topical and important economic problem - sustainable development. This problem is global and unprecedented in its magnitude and forms of manifestation, and as the doctoral candidate notes, it is unsolvable without regional and national goals and strategies for its implementation. The object of the dissertation is specifically

defined - these are the active non-financial enterprises of sector C - "Manufacturing industry", section 10.4 "Manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats", item 10.41 - "Manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats, except margarine" according to the NICI-2008, which is a traditional subsector of the light industry in Bulgaria. The subject of the study is the best practices for the sustainable development of enterprises in the vegetable oil and fats industry, focusing on the programmes and initiatives developed and implemented in order not only to achieve sustainable development, but also to ensure it in the long term. The research thesis states that sustainable development is the modern concept of business development; its application provides opportunities to increase brand value and enhance competitiveness of enterprises.

The aim of this thesis is to establish the status of sustainable development in the plant and butter industry and to outline the main directions of sustainability policy based on the study and analysis of existing policies and mechanisms of sustainable development and through research, analysis and synthesis of the practical dimensions of sustainable development.

The structure of the dissertation includes an introduction, an outline in three chapters, a conclusion, a list of references cited and used, and appendices. The length of the dissertation meets accepted academic standards. A considerable amount of literature sources have been processed. With her analyses, the author demonstrates a high competence in the studied issues, highlights and explores both the essential characteristics of sustainable development policy, and also presents a methodology for assessing the sustainable development of industrial enterprises and evaluates the economic sustainability of enterprises in the vegetable and oil industry. In accordance with the defined main aim and objectives of the dissertation research, the conclusion summarizes the results obtained from the theoretical and empirical study related to the sustainable development of one part of the oil mills

The more important conclusions supporting and confirming the research thesis of the dissertation are formulated. Recommendations for follow-up actions are made, which guide the companies towards the understanding that sustainable development in the face of diminishing or disappearing resources is achieved by adopting responsible behavior at organizational and societal level and incorporating the calculation and analysis of sustainable development methods and indicators in the annual financial report and forecasts. The thesis is thus a successfully completed independent research study with results that are presented in a comprehensible, logical and well argued manner. The abstract correctly reflects the main facts, arguments, conclusions and contributions of the dissertation and has been prepared according to the necessary requirements. The rules of scientific ethics have been respected.

III. Scientific and applied contributions of the thesis:

On the basis of the theoretical and empirical research conducted, the following major contributions of the dissertation are highlighted and are formulated on page 46 of the abstract:

First: As a result of an in-depth literature review, the emergence and institutionalization of the idea of sustainable development has been traced. The relation sustainable development - industrial enterprises is thoroughly presented.

Second: A methodology for assessing the level of sustainability of industrial enterprises has been adapted.

Third: An own empirical study of the level of sustainability of enterprises in the vegetable oil industry has been carried out.

Fourth: Conclusions and recommendations have been formulated on improving the level of sustainability of enterprises in the vegetable oil industry. Guidelines for optimizing the sustainability programs and initiatives of industrial enterprises have been outlined.

Through the contributions, the author of the thesis strongly demonstrates the ability to research, argue, propose ideas and generalize. The main body of the dissertation has received

publicity through the PhD student's publications. These include one study, one article and three research papers.

IV. Dissertation questions

Taking into account the undisputed merits of the dissertation research related to the evaluation of the effectiveness of retailers' own brands, I have the following questions for the PhD student:

1. What is her opinion on the factors that led to the oil crisis in Bulgaria in 2022 and on the behaviour of the companies in the industry at that time?
2. How is the feedstock price in the industry formed and what is the government policy in this regard?

V. Summary evaluation of the dissertation and conclusion

The dissertation submitted for opinion meets the established standards for obtaining the degree of Doctor of Education and Science. The thesis is distinguished by the characteristics of a comprehensive and complete scientific study and proves the author's participation categorically. The merits of the dissertation work on "Sustainable Development of Industrial Enterprises" are unequivocal and give me grounds to propose the award of the degree of Doctor of Education and Science in the PhD programme "Economics and Management (Industry)" to the doctoral candidate Ayten Bayriam Sabri. This will be a well-deserved recognition of the research work she has carried out and an incentive to apply the proposed ideas to carry out other similar research useful to the industrial sector.

20.08.2023 r.

Prepared by: 
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