С.А."Д.А.Ценов" - Свищов
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OPINION

on a dissertation submitted for the award of the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov

Prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolina Grozeva, Department of Economics, Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar", Professional Field 3.8 Economics, pursuant to Order No. 1/28 August 2026 of the Rector of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov.

Author of the dissertation: Miroslav Georgiev Marinov

Dissertation title: "Development of Human Resource Development Strategies in Business Organizations in the Chemical Industry"

I. General Overview of the Dissertation:

The dissertation comprises 160 standard pages. Structurally, it includes an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography containing 114 sources in Bulgarian and English, and 13 pages of appendices. The study follows the classical structure of a dissertation research project.

The introduction defines the object and subject of the dissertation. The object of the study is business organizations in Bulgaria's pulp and paper industry. The subject of the study comprises the processes, methods, and relationships involved in developing long-term strategic plans for human resource development in the industrial sector.

The author's research thesis, the aim, and the objectives addressed by the study are clearly and convincingly defined. The scope of the research and its limitations are also specified. The methodology presented in the introduction is appropriately implemented throughout the research. The conclusion formulates the main findings and results of the research.

The individual parts of the dissertation are logically interconnected and presented in a coherent sequence.

II. Assessment of the Form and Content of the Dissertation

The dissertation topic is relevant, as it examines the need for strategic human resource development in enterprises in Bulgaria's pulp and paper industry, emphasizing the central importance of intellectual capital as an asset that is key to achieving sustainability in the context of current objective and regulatory requirements. Accordingly, the study of human resource management in this industry advances the view that adequate planning requires long-term investment, which contributes both to the development of theory and to management practice

in this economic sector. In my opinion, implementing the theoretical and applied findings and practical models proposed in the dissertation would be extremely useful for enterprises operating in various economic sectors.

By formulating the research objectives appropriately, the doctoral candidate has achieved the stated aim: to examine the current state of strategic human resource planning in the sector and to develop and test an innovative model for predictive and strategically flexible management through data processing and artificial intelligence. The research thesis is substantiated with convincing arguments. This has been achieved through appropriate research methods, including a systems approach, semi-structured in-depth interviews with senior and middle management representatives, statistical assessments, diagnostic synthesis, and hypothesis testing. These methods have enabled the candidate not only to identify existing problems and shortcomings in strategic human resource management and planning in the pulp and paper industry, but also to propose well-founded and applicable solutions.

The dissertation is logically coherent and scientifically substantiated. The writing style could be further refined. The dissertation is of an appropriate length for the requirements applicable to this type of scholarly work. References are cited correctly.

The abstract accurately reflects the content of the dissertation. A list of four scholarly publications related to the dissertation topic has been submitted: two articles and two conference papers. All have been published in non-indexed peer-reviewed publications or edited collective volumes. The submitted report indicates that the minimum national requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" under the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria have been met.

III. Scientific and Applied Scientific Contributions of the Dissertation

In my assessment, the doctoral candidate has appropriately formulated the scientific contributions, namely:

- Based on a critical analysis, the challenges facing strategic human resource management in the enterprises under study have been systematized and identified. A conceptual framework has been developed for the transition from reactive to flexible strategic planning, taking into account three drivers of change: digital transformation, demographic imbalances, and the requirements associated with the European Green Deal.
- A comprehensive empirical study was conducted using interviews in enterprises in Bulgaria's pulp and paper industry, through which the dissertation's research hypotheses

were statistically tested. Deficiencies in personnel management were identified, substantiating the need for a new professional profile for specialists in the industry.

- The author has developed the HIRA human resource management model, which integrates data from production systems with HR environments.

In summary, the contributions are theoretical, methodological, and applied in nature. They combine an in-depth analysis of existing practice with specific proposals for improving human resource management in the pulp and paper industry, in line with current requirements for digital transformation and, not least, environmental sustainability.

IV. Questions and Recommendations Regarding the Dissertation

I have no further questions regarding the dissertation. I would recommend that, in future research and in line with his own view, the doctoral candidate further develop and adapt the proposed HIRA model and digital tools for enterprises in other industries, thereby broadening the scope of his scientific contribution.

V. Overall Assessment of the Dissertation and Conclusion

The submitted dissertation, "Development of Human Resource Development Strategies in Business Organizations in the Chemical Industry," is an independent and fully completed scholarly study and meets the criteria and requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and its Implementing Regulations at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics. I therefore express my positive opinion in favour of awarding Miroslav Georgiev Marinov the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in Professional Field 3.8 Economics, doctoral programme "Planning."

Date: 30 September 2026

Prepared by:

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolina Grozeva)