

REVIEW

From Prof. Dr. Andrey Boyanov Zahariev
on a dissertation on the topic:

"Restructuring, consolidation and competition in the Bulgarian banking market" by author **Orlin Chavdarov Yaprakov**, Ph.D. № d020219186

Form of doctoral studies:

Part-time

Department leading the course of study:

Department of Finance and Credit at the Faculty of Finance, SA "D. A. Tsenov "

Academic supervisor:

Prof. Dr. Stoyan Prodanov

Doctoral program:

"Finance, Money Circulation, Credit and Insurance" (Finance)

1. Fulfillment of the formal requirements for the dissertation work and presentation of the dissertation

The dissertation presented for review was developed in compliance with the classical research framework in three chapters. The introduction presents and substantiates the specific area of research, as follows: relevance, object, subject, thesis, goal, tasks and methodology. In this respect, the research paper fully meets the standards and requirements for dissertation work.

Dr. Yaprakov speaks several languages and has advanced computer skills. During his studies for an ONS "Doctor" he participated with publications in scientific conferences. He has a rich career as a consultant and administrator in the field of the economy and the financial and credit system. As of the date of preparation of the work he occupies the post Deputy Minister of Economy of the Republic of Bulgaria.

2. Structural assessment of the dissertation

The presented dissertation is in a volume of 210 pages. Includes an introduction; Chapter One "Theoretical Statements and Review of Concepts in the Field of Banking Consolidation, Restructuring and Competition"; Chapter Two "The Bulgarian Banking Market in the Conditions of Interbank Competition"; Chapter three "Empirical study of the ecosystem and the processes of consolidation and restructuring of banks in Bulgaria"; and a conclusion, where the main results of the dissertation are presented, key points are summarized and guidelines for future research on the topic are devised. As a supplement to the study, a bibliographic reference in APA style is presented, encompassing 128 titles (50 in Bulgarian, 78 in English), among which research articles of the department staff is also included. An ample number of tables and figures are included in the research work. The review of the used citations, the main content and the bibliographic reference proves the author's adherence and compliance to the requirements for bibliographic citation and bibliographic description (<http://www.uni-svishtov.bg/?page=page&id=71>). The reference for compliance with the national requirements under the Regulations for application of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria includes 3 titles, forming the necessary ones in the NACID register: one independent article and 2 peer-reviewed scientific reports. Other publications of the doctoral student are also being published, including an indexed in SCOPUS article.

3. Scientific and substantive assessment of the dissertation

The research is on a topic of undisputed relevance, scientific and applied direction.

- 3.1. Object and subject of the research** - The object of study is the Bulgarian banking market. The subject of the dissertation are the problems of restructuring, consolidation and competition on the Bulgarian banking market in the light of an evolving regulatory framework and prudential measures.
- 3.2. Aim and tasks of the dissertation** – The aim of the dissertation is by researching the theoretical aspects and analyzing the practical

standpoint to identify the main driving trends and evidence for the Bulgarian banking market in order to prove the link between restructuring and consolidation and the need to comply with evolving regulatory requirements in an environment of intensified interbank competition.

The established research **tasks** are formulated as follows:

First. To conduct a critical review of the theory in the field of bank consolidation and restructuring and to derive the basic theoretical interpretations of the concepts.

Second. To perform an ex post analysis of interbank competition in the Bulgarian banking market for the period of the emerging banking crisis in the country in 2014 by exposing correlative and determinant links between the indexes of the banking system and the macroeconomic development indicators.

Third. To empirically study the effects of the restructuring and consolidation of commercial banks in Bulgaria and to draw conclusions about the development of the Bulgarian banking system.

3.3. Research thesis - The leading research thesis in the dissertation is related to the statement that the Bulgarian banking market is developing in conditions of interbank competition, requiring institutional restructuring and consolidation in order to comply with the evolving regulatory framework and supervisory mechanisms of the Central bank and prudential measures and targeted indicators of capital, risk, profitability and return.

3.4. Research methodology - In order to achieve the abovementioned tasks, publicly available data from official information databases was used and the following methods and approaches for analysis and assessment were applied: theoretical analysis, synthesis and generalization of information, deductive and inductive methods of reasoning, systematization, descriptive statistics, vector-verbal analysis, statistical application of rank classification.

4. Achieved results

In the dissertation in the foreground a wide range of theoretical and empirical

aspects are studied: research, regulatory norms and legislation for the implementation and control of the processes of restructuring and consolidation of banks in Bulgaria; the analytical indicators of the banking market and the processes in it; the Bulgarian banking market in the conditions of interbank competition; the empirical parameters of the ecosystem and the processes of consolidation and restructuring of banks in Bulgaria; the interrelations between the main banking indexes and the macroeconomic indicators for development and the study of the effects of the restructuring and consolidation of the commercial banks in Bulgaria on the basis of the CAMEL system.

The author's empirical results are presented; the factors, goals, conditions, types, advantages and challenges related to restructuring, consolidation and competition are systematized. The author's interpretations of the three key concepts, on which the dissertation focuses, namely: the restructuring in the banking sector; bank consolidation; and banking competition, bear a noteworthy character.

The summary presented in the research through the Abstract meets all the requirements. I evaluate the formulated contributions as authentic and related to the conducted research.

Summary: The final product is a doctoral programme, lead with skill under the academic supervision of Prof. Dr. Stoyan Prodanov in a research collective with significant achievements in banking and finance. The depth of the analysis, the methodological scope, the publishing initiative and most of all the research approach to the problem and the undeniable positive personal qualities of the doctoral candidate are the factors that led to this complete and rich in scientific contributions work.

Conclusion:

The presented dissertation for the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" possesses the required by the Regulations for RAS in SA "D. A. Tsenov" quantitative and qualitative characteristics. The dissertation contains scientific and scientific-applied research results, which represent an original contribution to science. The dissertation clearly demonstrates that the candidate has in-depth theoretical knowledge in the respective field, as well as the necessary skills to

conduct independent scientific and practical research. All of these comments give grounds to suggest to the staff of the academic jury to vote unanimously "For" the award of the ONS "Doctor" to Dr. Orlin Yaprakov in the doctoral program "Finance, Money Circulation, Credit and Insurance (Finance)".

25.11.2021

Reviewer:
(Prof. Dr. Andrey Zahariev)