

STATEMENT

The statement was prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Lyubka Mincheva Ilieva, PhD at Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics - Svishtov, Department of Tourism Economics and Management, professional direction: 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)"

Author of the dissertation thesis: doctoral student Elena Dimitrova Tashkova, studied in the doctoral program "Economics and Management (Agricultural Economics)" at the Department of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Industry and Commerce at Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics - Svishtov

The theme of the dissertation: "Possibilities for applying digital technologies in the agricultural sector"

Research supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Violeta Blazheva, PhD

Reason for submitting an opinion: This opinion was prepared on the basis of Order No. 681/10.07.2023 of the Rector of the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics - Svishtov and Protocol No. 1/11.07.2023 of the first meeting of the scientific jury.

I. General presentation of the dissertation thesis

The subject: The formulated subject of the dissertation research are the possibilities of applying digital technologies in the agricultural sector, as a model supporting the implementation of digital technologies in agricultural holdings is presented. The subject is defined with the necessary clarity and is predetermined by the economic problem studied by the doctoral student.

Volume: The dissertation has a total volume of 185 standard pages and consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of used literary sources and appendices. 31 tables and 22 figures are included in the main text.

Structure: Structurally, the dissertation thesis is built in a logical sequence and connectedness. The introduction substantiates the relevance of the dissertation topic and presents the theoretical-empirical framework of the scientific research, by formulating the object, subject, main goal, tasks and research thesis of the dissertation thesis. The exposition, structured in three chapters, systematically and consistently examines theoretical-methodological and practical-applied aspects of the possibilities of applying digital technologies in the agricultural sector.

Literature: The list of literary and other sources, on the basis of which the scientific research was made, numbers 111 sources, which are grouped as follows: 18 in Cyrillic, 18 in Latin and 75 sources from the Internet. Literary and other sources in Bulgarian and English are studied, used and summarized in sufficient volume and content. This helps to form a deep literary awareness of the author. The doctoral student correctly cites and refers to the theoretical statements of the studied researchers.

Appendices: In support of the exhibition in her dissertation, the doctoral student presents 3 applications presenting data on digital technologies with applicability in the agricultural sector, a strategy for the development of e-government in the Republic of Bulgaria and measures towards the updated national plan for next-generation broadband access infrastructure.

II. Assessment of the dissertation format and content

Opinion on the dissertation thesis: The topic of the dissertation thesis is distinguished by its indisputable relevance and practical significance. Stimulating digitization is defined as one of the priorities not only of the state, but also of the European Commission. The strategic documents and specific measures at the EU and national level have been studied, and the role of the state in introducing digital technologies in the economy has been highlighted, proving that the digital transformation affects all aspects of the economy, society and government. It should be emphasized that the chosen topic is fertile for a dissertation, due to its practical importance and insufficient elaboration. At the same time, its development requires good theoretical training and very good analytical abilities.

The aim of the dissertation thesis is a specific economic problem - "to trace and analyze the application of digital technologies in the agricultural sector".

The main **research tasks** are arranged in a logical sequence and are the basis for realizing the research thesis, which is precisely formulated, in my opinion.

The object of research is digital technologies, and the empirical study focuses on the benefits of the implemented ONDO system in six agricultural holdings.

The subject of research are the possibilities of applying digital technologies in the agricultural sector.

The doctoral student defends **the thesis** that it is necessary to use digital technologies to develop sustainable solutions for current and future challenges, including in the agricultural sector.

Various scientific methods and approaches were used in the research process: the method of comparative analysis, the method of induction and deduction, retrospective analysis, structural and dynamic statistical analysis, etc. The literary sources used are indicated in good faith and are cited correctly. The content of the problems, differentiated by chapter, can be presented as follows:

In the first chapter, formulations of a theatrical nature related to digitalization and the application of digital technologies in the economy, respectively in the agrarian sector, are examined. Basic concepts are derived. The factors influencing the ongoing processes of digitization of the economy have been studied.

The main highlights in **the second chapter** of the dissertation are the European and national policies for promoting the implementation of digital technologies in the

economy, and in particular in the agrarian sector. Models for digital decision support in agricultural holdings are presented.

Chapter three of the dissertation is aimed at researching the factors influencing the introduction of digital technologies in the agricultural sector by examining the benefits of implementing the ONDO system in six agricultural holdings.

The issues addressed in each chapter of the dissertation are summarized in conclusions. The proposed illustrative material (figures and tables) is at the required level and supports deeper insight into the discussed matter. The style used by the doctoral student is scientifically sound and meets the requirements for developing a dissertation.

Opinion on the abstract: the presented abstract has a volume of 38 standard pages and fully reflects the main author's judgments, conclusions, summaries and recommendations presented in the dissertation thesis. The content of the abstract meets the quantitative, structural and qualitative writing requirements. The abstract contains a reference to the contributions in the dissertation thesis, a list of the author's publications on the researched topic, as well as a declaration of originality and credibility. On this basis, the abstract is evaluated as correctly structured and fully reflecting the content and results of the dissertation thesis.

III. Scientific and applied contributions of the dissertation thesis

The doctoral student outlined four main contributions from the theoretical-practical research. The following can be noted as more significant scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation thesis:

1. An in-depth analysis of the strategic documents outlining the European and national policies regarding the entry of digital technologies into the economy, society and state administration has been carried out.
2. A model supporting the implementation of digital technologies with application in the agricultural sector is presented.
3. The practical applicability and usefulness of the results of the conducted empirical research give the doctoral student a reason to formulate relevant conclusions and recommendations for the implementation of digital technologies in the agricultural sector.

IV. Critical comments, questions, and recommendations on the thesis

The dissertation presents the potential of digital technologies and the opportunities they provide for application in the agricultural sector. The difficulties faced by entrepreneurs in the agrarian sector in the process of their implementation are presented. Recommendations have been made for their faster adaptation to the changes taking place and effective use of digital technologies in production processes and the organization of activities in their farms. Regarding the dissertation work, including the

main exposition and argumentation I have no significant critical comments and recommendations.

Dissertation Question:

1. Given that sustainable development is the basis of European and national policies, present examples of digital technologies enabling the development of sustainable solutions in the agricultural sector!
2. Try to present your opinion on the prospects for the ongoing process of entering digital technologies in the agricultural sector by outlining the factors that will support and those that will slow down this process?


V. Summary conclusion and opinion

The presented dissertation on the topic: "Possibilities of applying digital technologies in the agricultural sector" by doctoral student Elena Dimitrova Tashkova, meets the requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff in the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics. Through it, the doctoral student demonstrates the ability to conduct bona fide scientific and applied research in an area of significant relevance in modern conditions. The ideas and results of the conducted research are popularized through participation in conferences and scientific publications.

All this gives me the reason to give a positive assessment of the dissertation thesis and to propose to the members of the honorable Scientific Jury to vote positively for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the doctoral program "Economics and Management (Agricultural Economics)" in professional direction 3.8. "Economics" by doctoral student Elena Dimitrova Tashkova.

Svishtov,
04/09/2023

Author of the statement:


The signature was deleted on the basis
of Article 4, Paragraph 1 or Regulation
679/2016 r.
(Assoc. Prof. Lyubka Ilieva, PhD)