

OPINION

by Prof. Virginia Zhelyazkova, DSc (Econ.)
Economic Research Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and VUZF – Sofia
Member of the Academic Jury

Author of the Dissertation: Todor Georgiev Gogov

Title of the Dissertation:

“Internal Audit in the Prevention and Detection of Fraud in Organizations

(on the Example of Public Enterprises in the Republic of Bulgaria)”

I. General Presentation of the Dissertation

The dissertation of Todor Gogov is a thorough, comprehensive, and scientifically substantiated study devoted to one of the most important and current challenges facing modern organizations—fraud—and more specifically, the role of internal audit in its prevention and detection. The topic is extremely timely and socially significant, particularly in the context of increased requirements for transparency, accountability, and effective management in the public sector.

The dissertation comprises 205 standard pages and includes an introduction, three logically sequenced and well-argued chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography of numerous sources in different languages, and four appendices. The exposition is illustrated with a latitude of tables, charts, and diagrams, which enhance the clarity and perception of the results.

The introduction clearly defines the object and subject of the research, states an ambitious yet achievable objective, outlines four specific research tasks, and formulates the main thesis. The methodology is described in detail, combining theoretical analysis with an empirical survey conducted among internal auditors in public enterprises in Bulgaria. The questionnaire, consisting of 22 questions, is an original development by the PhD candidate and represents a valuable contribution to the research framework.

The first chapter has a theoretical and review-oriented character, examining the essence of fraud, the role of management, and the significance of internal audit in combating it. The second chapter analyzes the specific responsibilities of internal auditors, approaches to assessing and managing fraud risk, and the audit tools used. The third chapter provides opportunities for improving existing practices and includes specific recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of internal audit in the public sector. In the conclusion, the author synthesizes the main findings and clearly formulates practically applicable proposals.

The dissertation is distinguished by a deep analytical approach, excellent argumentation, methodological rigor, and a high degree of systematic structure. The choice of research object—

public enterprises in Bulgaria—is well justified, considering their economic importance and vulnerability to fraud. The work is a valuable study with both theoretical and practical merit and fully meets contemporary academic standards.

II. Evaluation of the Form and Content of the Dissertation

The issues addressed in the dissertation are highly relevant and well defined. The author explores in detail the nature, types, and consequences of fraud, the institutional mechanisms for its prevention, and the place of internal audit in this process. The object and subject of the research are clearly outlined; the goals and tasks are precisely formulated.

The language of the exposition is academic, correct, and terminologically consistent. The applied research toolkit includes methods such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, survey research, and statistical data processing. The text is logically and consistently structured, and the style is academically disciplined.

The abstract fully reflects the content, goals, tasks, and contributions of the dissertation. The candidate's publications related to the topic of the dissertation complement his research efforts and support his profile as an ambitious scholar-practitioner with a strong interest in addressing real-world problems. The publications meet the minimum national requirements under the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) and its Implementing Rules (IRLDASRB) for awarding the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in field 3.8 Economics. As of the date of this opinion, there is no information that casts doubt on the authenticity of the candidate's research works.

III. Scientific and Applied Contributions of the Dissertation

The dissertation contains both scientific and practical contributions and results:

- A comprehensive classification of fraud is provided, and its reputational and systemic threat to organizations is substantiated.
- The importance of internal audit as part of the internal control system and as a barrier to fraud is well grounded.
- The regulatory and methodological framework is analyzed, including the International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF), COSO, and national legislation.
- An analytical model for assessing the role of internal audit is presented, based on a survey conducted among internal auditors.
- Concrete proposals are made for improving internal audit practices in public enterprises.

IV. Questions Regarding the Dissertation

1. What are the possibilities for enhancing the internal audit model in the context of the fight against corruption?

2. How does the author assess the applicability of the study's findings in the private sector?
3. To what extent is it realistic to implement the proposed measures in public enterprises with limited administrative capacity?

V. Summary Evaluation of the Dissertation and the Publications, and Conclusion

The dissertation of Todor Gogov is excellently structured, in-depth, and methodologically sound. The research demonstrates a high level of analytical insight, scientific rigor, and practical applicability. The author shows deep knowledge of the subject matter and the ability to formulate relevant conclusions and practical recommendations. His publications—three in total, published in academic journals and volumes—confirm his scholarly commitment.

I am fully convinced that the dissertation meets the requirements of the LDASRB and the IRLDASRB, and I support the awarding of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” to Todor Gogov.

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Sofia

Prepared by:

Prof. Virginia Zhelyazkova, DSc (Econ.)

Economic Research Institute at BAS and VUZF – Sofia