

# OPINION

**From Prof. Dr. Silvia Trifonova Trifonova-Pramatarova,  
University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Sofia**

of a dissertation for the award of the scientific degree “Doctor of Sciences”

in Area of Study 3. Social Sciences, Economics and Law

Field of Study 3.8. Economics

**Author: Dr. Piotr Frączek**

**Title: „Management of financial costs and the effectiveness of the chosen methods in the social assistance system of Poland on the example of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship”**

**Grounds:** Order №111/21.04.2022 for determining the scientific jury of the Rector of VUZF  
Prof. D.Sc. Boris Velchev

## **1. General characteristics of the presented dissertation**

The dissertation on “Management of financial costs and the effectiveness of the chosen methods in the social assistance system of Poland on the example of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship”, authored by Dr. Piotr Frączek, is dedicated to extremely current topic. There is a logical sequence of the exposition, appropriate structure, in-depth analysis, reasonable conclusions and summaries, and formulated recommendations for practice.

The dissertation is in a total volume of 290 pages. Structurally, it consists of an introduction, a four-chapter exposition, a conclusion, a bibliography, a list of tables, a list of charts and a list of figures. The dissertation includes 132 tables, 15 figures and 12 diagrams. A detailed list of literature sources is presented.

The dissertation is structured in accordance with the set goals, research tasks, research thesis and the subject of research. The subject of the dissertation is the functioning and financing of the social security system in Poland and the effectiveness of the individual instruments used in this system.

The main goals of the dissertation are formulated in 2 groups – first, theoretical and cognitive goals, and second, practical goals and objectives for implementation, which is a strange wording. In my opinion, all goals are to be achieved.

The dissertation is written in Russian, the abstract is in Bulgarian and Russian.

The key thesis of the dissertation (cited in Bulgarian on page 6 in the abstract) comes down to the statement that there are no changes in the Polish social assistance system, as declared by the state bodies that announced the rejection of remittances in favour of intangible, social and professional activation, as well as expanding the participation of people in the process of providing assistance. Meanwhile, the cost of cash benefits continues to predominate, with non-cash benefits being of secondary importance. Social assistance in Poland takes the form of a transfer of funds to certain social groups (for example, families raising children), instead of targeting those most in need. Such instruments used in the social assistance system as social contracts, despite the statements of public authorities about their benefits, are ineffective and do not contribute in any way to the independence of people receiving social assistance, do not improve their living conditions and do not contribute to the acquisition of complete independence. In addition, the social assistance system in Poland, despite the increase in state budget expenditures, is not ready to solve social problems that will become very important in Poland in the future, such as the problems of the elderly or support for foreigners.

The presented dissertation fills a gap in the analysis of financial management in the social security system on the example of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship (one of the sixteen regions of Poland). The theoretical overview, although sometimes very conceptual, is sufficiently thorough and varied.

Theoretical and empirical research methods have been used to solve the research problem. The chosen research methodology allows the achievement of the set goal and gives an adequate answer to the tasks set and solved in the dissertation.

The author has shown extremely good skills for independent research. He knows very well the researched issues, both in theoretical and practical aspect. The multifaceted examination of the problems reveals his in-depth knowledge in this field of science and knowledge.

## **2. Brief biographical data about the candidate**

Dr. Piotr Frączek received his PhD in Economics in 2009 from the Warsaw School of Economics, Poland. He is a lecturer and director of the Institute of Social Sciences at the Jan Grodek State University in Sanok, Poland. Since 2014, he has been the lecturer of disciplines that deal with the problems of financing social assistance in Poland. He combines his teaching and research work in the field of social assistance management. In addition to his teaching work, he holds positions in practice related to the topic of his dissertation. He is a member of

the regional municipal council for people with disabilities in the office of the governor of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship, the supervisory board for economics of municipal enterprises in Sanok and others.

### **3. Evaluation of the obtained scientific and scientific-applied results**

The author is undoubtedly very well acquainted with the problems of scientific research, given his extensive professional experience in the field of economics. The dissertation uses a variety of research methods – theoretical and methodological analysis, systematic approach, functional and structural approach, descriptive analysis, empirical analysis, method of observation, method of analysis and synthesis, statistical methods and more.

The presented dissertation has emphasized theoretical and applied significance, based on the author's research in the field. Based on the analysis made in the dissertation, it can be assessed that the goal and objectives of the research have been achieved, the key thesis has been proven and adequate solutions and recommendations for practice have been made. In his dissertation, the author has made proposals that contribute to economics. He formulated important recommendations for improving the efficiency of the functioning and financing of the social security system in Poland.

### **4. Evaluation of scientific and scientific-applied contributions**

The dissertation contains scientific and applied research contributions. But they are described in great detail and are quite diluted. In the abstract they are indicated by bullets, but for clarity I have numbered them here as follows:

1. Development of a new theoretical and methodological approach in the field of economic research in the public sector in Poland with regard to the social security system.

2. Identification of future challenges to the social security system in Poland, as well as confirmation that this system is not adapted to solving social problems, which will be a major challenge for Poland in the future.

3. Carrying out an in-depth analysis of the management of financial costs in the social security system in Poland and Podkarpackie Voivodeship.

4. Presentation of the socio-economic conditions of the Subcarpathia and their impact on the social security system.

5. Identification of barriers and restrictions in the implementation of effective financial policy in the social protection system.

6. Proposing a concept for the analysis of instruments (social contracts) used in the Polish social security system.

7. Empirical verification of the effectiveness of the instruments (social contracts) used in the Polish

social security system.

8. Determining the reasons for the low efficiency of the instruments (social contracts) used in the Polish social security system and the management of financial costs in the social security system.

9. Determining that in Poland there are no changes announced by the state authorities, which have announced the refusal of remittances in favor of intangible benefits, social and professional activities and increased participation of individuals in the support process. At the same time, the cost of cash benefits still predominates, and non-cash aid is of secondary importance.

10. Establish that Poland is in the process of "dismantling" the social protection system, as it takes the form of transferring funds to specific social groups (e.g. families raising children), instead of targeting the most deprived people.

11. Identify recommendations, the implementation of which will improve the efficiency of the functioning and financing of the social security system in Poland.

I believe that the 11 scientific contributions presented by the author should be consolidated and their formulation should be much more synthesized and summarized.

Currently, most of the above contributions are more of scientific research results. For example, positions 3, 4, 5 and 8 are the results of the survey, and items 9 and 10 should be reworded to look like contributions.

I approve items 1, 2, 6, 7 and 11 only as scientific and applied contributions.

## **5. Evaluation of the abstract**

The abstract reflects correctly and fully the content of the dissertation. The abstract is also prepared in Bulgarian. In the abstract, Dr. Piotr Frączek stated that the presented dissertation does not duplicate any of the fragments of his doctoral dissertation entitled „Persons with disabilities in the local labour market following the example of Sanok, Leska and Bieszczady districts” on the basis of which in 2009 he received a PhD in Economics from the Warsaw School of Economics, Poland.

In the section “Scientific publications” of the abstract, the author has presented a total of 33 publications related to his doctor of sciences dissertation – 1 monograph, 17 sections in monographs, scientific editing of 1 monograph, 2 scientific articles in publications indexed and referenced in the world-famous scientific database Web of Science, and 12 other scientific articles. The publications and citations of the candidate’s scientific output show that his research has received a sufficient degree of popularity among the academic and professional community.

## **6. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements**

From the submitted Reference for fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for awarding the scientific degree “Doctor of Sciences”, which the applicant has applied, it is evident that there is an over fulfillment of these requirements.

## **7. Critical remarks, recommendations and questions**

Based on my thorough acquaintance with the presented dissertation, I have no critical remarks or recommendations. I did not find any significant omissions, inaccuracies or contradictions in the scientific research made.

My main difficulties in preparing the opinion are related to the lack of unification of names and titles in the competition documents, due to the fact that the documents are translated from different languages – translations from Polish to Russian, from Russian to Bulgarian, etc. For example, in two places the title of the diploma for the educational and scientific degree „Doctor” of Piotr Frączek is written differently – very similar, but still different. I encountered a similar problem with the title of the doctoral dissertation itself, presented here for review. Even when writing the names of the candidate, there are difficulties in determining which is correct.

As a main remark, I would like to point out that the total of 11 scientific and scientific-applied contributions presented by the author are described in great detail and are quite diluted. I believe that they should be consolidated and their wording should be much more synthesized and generalized.

Currently, most of these contributions are more of scientific research results. For example, items 3, 4, 5 and 8 are the results of the survey, and items 9 and 10 need to be reformulated to look like contributions.

I approve items 1, 2, 6, 7 and 11 only as scientific and applied contributions.

## **8. Personal impressions**

I do not know the candidate and I have no personal impressions of him.

## **9. Conclusion**

The dissertation on “Management of financial costs and the effectiveness of the chosen methods in the social assistance system of Poland on the example of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship”, developed by Dr. Piotr Frączek, is an in-depth and valuable research. It contains scientific and applied research results that represent an original contribution to

science and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for the implementation of ZRASRB.

Based on this, I give my **positive assessment** of the research presented by the above-reviewed dissertation and abstract, and **I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award the degree of “*Doctor of Sciences*”** to Dr. Piotr Frączek in the area of study 3. Social Sciences, Economics and Law, field of study 3.8. Economics.

20.05.2022

Sofia

Signature: .....

(Prof. Dr. Silvia Trifonova-Pramatarova)