

SCIENTIFIC STANDPOINT

**from Professor PhD Stanislav Dimitrov Petkov,
Professor at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance - Sofia, VUZF-Sofia**

of dissertation for awarding the scientific degree "**Doctor of science**"
in the Field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences,
Professional field 3.8. Economics,
doctoral program "Finance, Insurance and Social Security"
at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF) – Sofia

Author: PhD Alina Walenia

**Topic: "Competitiveness of the member states of the European Union in the light of the
implementation of the strategy "Europe 2020""**

1. General description of the presented materials

By order No. 170 of 03.04.2023 and order No. 106 of 01.03.2023 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance Prof. Doctor of Law Boris Velchev, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to ensure a procedure for the defense of a dissertation on the topic "Competitiveness of the member states of the European Union in the light of the implementation of the strategy "Europe 2020"" for the acquisition of a scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the Field of Higher Education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field 3.8. Economics, PhD program "Finance, Insurance and Social Security". The author of the dissertation is Dr. Alina Walenia.

By decision of the scientific jury dated 24.03.2023, I have been designated as a reviewer of the candidate's works within the framework of the present procedure.

The materials submitted by the candidate, Dr. Alina Walenia, include the following:

1. dissertation - in Russian;
2. abstract of the dissertation work in Bulgarian and in Russian;
3. reference on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for acquiring the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional field 3.8. "Economics";
4. statement of contributions - in Russian;
5. list of the publications - in Russian;
6. summaries of the publications - in Russian;
7. brief biographical data – in English;
8. copy of doctor's diploma - translated and notarized;
9. presentation related to the dissertation work.

2. Brief biographical data about the candidate

The candidate Dr. Alina Walenia holds a Master's degree in Production Economics and Agricultural Trade from the University of Agriculture, Krakow. Dr. Alina Walenia holds a PhD in Agricultural Sciences from the University of Agriculture, Lublin and a PhD in Economics from the Higher School of Economics, Warsaw.

From the data presented, the candidate has significant experience in academic activity, teaching, scientific activity, as well as in areas outside of scientific circles.

3. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work

In the presented dissertation, the author has correctly justified the topicality and importance of the topic. Nowadays, the issue of competitiveness of individual EU member states is an important issue for the citizens of the respective country.

The author examines the implementation of the "Europe 2020" strategy to increase the competitiveness of the economies of individual EU member states. The "Europe 2020" strategy is a long-term program for socio-economic development of the EU, formulated as a Strategy for sustainable and inclusive growth. The implementation of the "2020" Strategy ended in 2020. The main objective of the "Europe 2020" Strategy was to create conditions for the economic development of the EU, based on two priority components: an innovative economy and a sustainable economy.

The dissertation has a volume of 284 pages. The work is structured in Contents, Introduction, Five Chapters, Conclusion, Bibliography, List of Tables and List of Figures.

The candidate has met the technical requirements for preparing a dissertation.

The introduction presents the author's idea and is an introduction to the problem.

The first chapter is entitled «Methodological issues». The volume of the First Chapter is 20 pages. This part of the study is structured in two points. Dissertation objectives and hypotheses are discussed. The research area of the dissertation, the empirical material and research methods are described.

The second chapter is entitled «Theoretical aspects of the competitiveness of the economy». The volume of the Second Chapter is 51 pages. This part of the study is structured in four points. The competitiveness of the economy according to economic theories is examined. A definitional approach to the international competitiveness of the economy is described. Factors that shape the international competitiveness of the economy are analyzed. Indicators of international competitiveness of the economy have been studied.

The third chapter is entitled "Financial instruments of the European Union in support of the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy within the cohesion policy". The volume of the Third Chapter is 69 pages. This part of the study is structured in four points. An analysis of the cohesion policy was carried out in the context of increasing the competitiveness of the European Union for the period 2014-2020. The guidelines of the EU development policy were studied in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The financial instruments supporting the competitiveness of the EU were reviewed.

The fourth Chapter is entitled "Assessment of the degree of implementation of the main guidelines of the "Europe 2020" Strategy in the EU member states in 2010-2020". The volume of the Fourth Chapter is 55 pages. The main goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy have been defined. An analysis of the degree of implementation of the indicators of the "Europe 2020" Strategy by the EU member states during the period 2010-2020 was carried out. The competitive position of the EU on the international stage was examined in connection with the implementation of the "Europe 2020" Strategy ".

The fifth chapter is entitled "Competitiveness of the economies of the European Union and the member states according to the international competitiveness rankings". The volume of the Fifth Chapter is 56 pages. The economic position of individual EU member states from the point of view of GDP is analyzed. Income inequality, risk of poverty and other aspects of social isolation in EU member states are explored. Various indices were considered, such as the Regional Competitiveness Index (RCI), the Human Development Index (HDI), the Economic Freedom Index (IWG) and the index prepared by the Institute for Management Development (IMD).

The study ends with a Conclusion. It is noteworthy that the Conclusion is 11 pages long, which is relatively long for this kind of research.

Based on the dissertation thus presented, I can assume that the research represents a significant development of the chosen topic.

The dissertation thus presented gives me certain reasons to assume that the dissertation of candidate Dr. Alina Valenia contains scientific and scientific-applied results that represent an original contribution to science.

The dissertation shows that the candidate has in-depth theoretical knowledge of the relevant scientific field and the ability to conduct independent scientific research.

4. Contributions and significance of the dissertation for science and practice

The candidate, Dr. Alina Valenia, presented a report on the contributions to science and practice of the dissertation work. The reference lists 11 contributions.

I can accept as contributions a significant part of the contributions of the dissertation work formulated in this way.

5. Assessment of dissertation publications

Dr. Alina Valenia has presented a reference for 20 scientific publications.

A positive certificate for the candidate's work is the fact that he publishes in English as well as in foreign forums and publications.

A recommendation to Dr. Alina Valenia is to carry out research and, accordingly, co-authored publications.

The publications fulfill and exceed the requirements for the award of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences", laid down in the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for its implementation.

At the time of preparation of this review, there is no information that would give grounds for doubting the authenticity of the candidate's dissertation work and scientific publications.

6. Assessment of compliance with minimum national requirements

According to the presented materials, I can conclude that the candidate, Dr. Alina Walenia, fulfills the minimum national requirements for obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional field 3.8. Economy.

7. Abstract

An abstract is attached to the dissertation work. The abstract is 26 pages long.

The abstract contains a description of the main characteristics of the dissertation work, structure and content of the work, summary presentation of the dissertation, publications on the topic of the dissertation.

The abstract of the dissertation work has to some extent been prepared in accordance with the requirements accepted for this kind of scientific work.

8. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no significant critical remarks and recommendations for the candidate.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation **contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science** and meet all the requirements of the Law on the

Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB. The presented materials and dissertation **results fully comply** with the specific requirements of the Regulations for the admission and training of doctoral students at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, as well as the Rules for the terms and conditions for obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

The dissertation shows that the candidate, Dr. Alina Walenia, **has in-depth** theoretical knowledge and professional skills in Professional Field 3. 8. Economics, demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

Due to the above, I give my **positive assessment** of the conducted research, presented by the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and I propose to the respected **scientific jury to award the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" to Dr. Alina Walenia** in the Higher Education Field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; Professional field 3. 8. Economics; PhD program in Finance, Insurance and Social Security.

13.04.2023

Reviewer: (s)
(Prof. PhD Stanislav Dimitrov)