

# 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. Mateusz Kaczmarek**

**Title: “Conditions for socio-economic development of regions in Poland, considering the sustainable development of rural regions, mountain and foothill territories”**

## **1. General description of the presented materials**

By order No. 109 of 01.03.2023 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF) Prof. DSc. 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 “Conditions for socio-economic development of regions in Poland, considering the sustainable development of rural regions, mountain and foothill territories” for the award of a scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the Area of Study 3. Social Sciences, Economics and Law, Field of Study 3.8. Economics. The author of the dissertation is Dr. Mateusz Kaczmarek – a candidate for the “Finance” Department of the VUZF.

The materials presented by the VUZF include all the necessary documents for the procedure, namely: CV in English, copy of the diploma for the acquired educational-qualification degree "Doctor", dissertation in Russian, abstract in Russian, abstract in Bulgarian, list of publications in Russian, summaries of publications in Russian, reference to pre-doctoral and post-doctoral publications, certificate of fulfillment of the national minimum requirements for acquiring a scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in a professional direction 3.8. Economics, scientific jury order, presentation by Dr. Mateusz Kaczmarek, reference of contributions in Russian.

In the abstract, the candidate has attached a total of 28 publications, and in the list of publications - they are 26. In the abstract, 2 monographs, 7 scientific articles in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in the world-famous scientific information database Web of Science, 6 publications in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes. Also listed are 5 expertises, whatever that means,

and 2 publications called a regional program, the meaning of which is also not understood. However, the list of publications also indicates 1 section in a monograph, 1 developed project (whose place is not there) and the development in question for regional development.

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

Mateusz Kaczmarski has an educational and scientific degree „doctor“ in agricultural sciences from Agricultural University Hugo Kołłątaj in Kraków Poland since 2015. The topic of his dissertation work is „Environmental assessment of bottom sediments from the Rzeszów Reservoir“. He completed a master’s degree in agricultural sciences at the same university in 2009 and in business administration at the Cracow University of Economics in 2021. He has post-graduate training in “Health management with elements of medical law" elements of medical law“ at Jan Grodek State University in Sanok, Poland.

Since 2010, he has been an academic lecturer at Jan Grodek State University in Sanok, Poland, since September of the same year he has been rector of the university, and before that he held various academic positions. For 4 years he managed the Institute of Agricultural and Forestry Economy, Poland and for 2 years - Department of Agriculture at the same institute. He has participated in numerous research projects funded by the EU and is the institutional coordinator of the Erasmus+ Program at Jan Grodek State University in Sanok, Poland.

## **3. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work**

The dissertation work of Dr. Mateusz Kaczmarski has a total volume of 275 pages. It is structured in an introduction, seven sections, a conclusion, a bibliography, lists of tables, figures, graphs and a statistical appendix. 72 tables, 42 figures and 6 graphs are presented. The bibliography includes 297 literary sources, including 286 monographs, studies and scientific articles, and 11 Internet sources.

The **main goal of the study** is to assess the socio-economic development of the regions and the sustainable development of the rural and mountain and foothill regions of Poland in 2007-2019. The author formulated 5 specific tasks of the study, although they are called goals.

The **subject of the study** is the assessment of the socio-economic development of Poland’s regions in 2007-2019 and the sustainable development of rural, mountain and foothill areas.

The **main thesis of the study** is that the socio-economic development of the regions and the sustainable development of rural and mountain and foothill regions of Poland in 2007-2019 are territorially diversified and determined by factors and barriers to development. The author formulated 5 research hypotheses. In addition, 5 additional research questions were formulated.

The applied methods of scientific research are: method of induction and deduction, method of analysis and synthesis, comparative analysis, survey method with a questionnaire developed by the author, descriptive analysis, factor analysis, empirical analysis, Helwig<sup>1</sup>'s method, correlation analysis, graphical and tabular analysis, critical analysis.

The first section of the work is devoted to the theoretical foundations of regional development and the development of rural areas, the factors, barriers and indicators of regional development. The second section is devoted to the methodological foundations of the research and occupies only 6 pages. The third section assesses the differentiation of the level of socio-economic development of Poland's regions, as well as the sustainable development of rural and mountain and foothill regions of Poland during 2007, 2015 and 2019. In addition, voivodships and rural areas are arranged by region according to the Helwig synthetic development indicator in 2007, 2015 and 2019 and their classification according to the level of development achieved. The fourth section assesses the impact of the sustainable development of rural areas on the economic activity of rural residents, newly registered business entities, the area of personal farm plots and the average monthly disposable income. The fifth section assesses the impact of innovation and research activity in the voivodeships on the balance of migration in them in 2007-2019 and on the taxation of the population. The sixth section assesses the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy 2014–2020 and the Rural Development Program 2014–2020 on the sustainable development of mountain and foothill regions in Poland. The last section defines and synthesizes the determinants of the socio-economic development of the voivodships in Poland, as well as the sustainable development of rural, mountain and foothill areas. Recommendations have also been formulated for the socio-economic development of the regions and the sustainable development of rural and mountain and foothill regions in Poland.

#### **4. Contributions and significance of the development for science and practice**

In the list of contributions, which is in Russian, the main objectives and scientific results of the research are indicated, but not the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of Dr. Mateusz Kaczmarek's dissertation work. There are no clearly articulated contributions to his dissertation. So the reference of contributions incorrectly includes only research objectives and results.

In my opinion, the following **scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the candidate's dissertation can be highlighted:**

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<sup>1</sup> Hellwig, Z. (1968). "Usage of taxonomic methods for the typological divisions countries", Stat Overview, Vol. 15, No. 4, pp. 307-327.

(1) An assessment of the impact of research, development and innovation activities on the development and socio-economic progress of the regions of Poland, as well as the impact of the development of technical infrastructure on maintaining the development potential of the regions.

(2) An assessment of the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy 2014-2020 and the Rural Development Program 2014-2020 on the sustainable development of mountain and sub-mountain regions in Poland.

(3) Identification of the potential for development of the regional development policy and the Common Agricultural Policy for 2023-2027, specifying priority areas for socio-economic development of the regions and sustainable development of rural areas in Poland and the significant risks faced they are upright.

(4) Formulated recommendations for the future socio-economic development of the regions and the sustainable development of rural areas in Poland.

### **5. Assessment of dissertation publications**

In the abstract, the candidate has attached a total of 28 publications, and in the list of publications - 26 publications. In the author's abstract, 2 monographs, 7 scientific articles in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in the world-famous database with scientific information Web of Science, 6 publications in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes are indicated. As mentioned, 5 expertises are also indicated, which are not clear what they represent, and 2 publications called regional program, the meaning of which is also not understood. However, the list of publications also indicates 1 section in a monograph, 1 developed project (whose place is not there) and the development in question for regional development. It is completely unclear to me why such a classification of publications has been made and all references are not harmonized.

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

From the presented Reference for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for awarding the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional direction 3.8. Economics, which the candidate of Dr. Mateusz Kaczmarek has applied, it is evident that there is an over-fulfilment of these requirements.

### **7. Abstract**

The content and quality of the abstract reflects the main results achieved in the dissertation work of the candidate. But the Bulgarian translation of the abstract is not good enough.

### **8. Critical remarks and recommendations**

My critical notes and recommendations to the presented dissertation work of Dr. Mateusz Kaczmarek are the following:

- Imbalance of the structure of the dissertation work. Need for more argumentation of rather exposed theses and statements.
- In practice, there are no formulated scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation work in the reference of contributions, since it only states the main goals and scientific results of the research.
- Ambiguity regarding the number of publications on the dissertation work. It is not clear what expertises submitted for publications and publications called regional program mean. The development of a project is not a publication, but the end result of it. Publications need to be refined.
- I also recommend in the reference for the fulfillment of the national minimum requirements for the acquisition of a scientific degree “doctor of sciences” in professional field 3.8. Economics to state the title of the dissertation in English. This will avoid different translations by all reviewers. The author should know best how his dissertation should be translated into English.

## CONCLUSION

Mateusz Kaczmarek’s dissertation work contains scientific and scientific-applied contributions and **meets** 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. Due to the above, I give my *positive assessment* of the research conducted, presented by the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and *I propose to the honorable scientific jury to award the scientific degree „Doctor of Sciences“* to Mateusz Kaczmarek in the Area of Study 3. Social Sciences, Economics and Law, Field of Study 3.8. Economics.

12.04.2023

Reviewer:

(Prof. Dr. Silvia Trifonova-Pramatarova)