

## **OPINION**

**by Prof. Dr. Silvia Trifonova Trifonova-Pramatarova,**

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of dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, Doctoral Program "Finance, Insurance and Insurance", Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF), Sofia

**Author: PhD student Marek Wolanin**

**Topic: “Optimizing human, material and financial resources in municipalities in the Republic of Poland”**

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

By Order № 132/22.03.2023 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF), Prof. Doctor of Law Boris Velchev, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to ensure the procedure for the defence of a dissertation on “Optimizing human, material and financial resources in municipalities in the Republic of Poland” for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, doctoral program “Finance, Insurance and Insurance”.

The materials submitted by the VUZF University include all necessary documents for the procedure, namely: CV in English, dissertation in Russian, abstract in Russian and in Bulgarian, list and annotations of publications on the topic of the dissertation, publications of the doctoral student in the topic of the dissertation, declaration for fulfillment of the national minimum requirements for obtaining a doctoral degree in professional field 3.8. Economics.

### **2. Brief biographical information of the candidate**

Marek Wolanin received his Master’s degree in Economics and Industrial Organization from the Academy of Social Sciences, Warsaw, in 1990. He has since gained numerous additional qualifications. He currently works as the Deputy Mayor of the Rural Municipality of Zgorzelec, Poland, since 2015. He also holds many other positions related to entrepreneurship, education and development of this municipality. In 2018-2019, he studied in the doctoral program "Management Sciences" in the field of economic sciences at the University of Economics in Bydgoszcz for 6 semesters. He also carries out academic work at the Higher School of Humanities in Szczecin, where he leads classes on the organization and management of education in local self-government. As a member of the scientific group "Management Researchers" at the University of Economics in Bydgoszcz, the author also carries out scientific activity.

### **3. Relevance of the topic and relevance of the goals and objectives**

The topic of Marek Wolanin's dissertation is very relevant for the modern development of every municipality. It makes a positive impression that the doctoral student is focusing on the research of a problem that has been poorly analyzed so far, namely the role of village self-government bodies and the optimization of their human, material and financial resources.

The problems of rural municipalities are poorly represented in the scientific literature and affect a large group of rural municipalities in Poland, as well as, indirectly, non-urban municipalities in the countries of the European Union. These rural municipalities are not structured in the legal system, but are considered by government representatives as a special group within the non-urban municipalities.

The main objective of the dissertation is to determine the factors for the functioning of rural municipalities (peripheral communes) as a special type of such municipalities in Poland. The following specific goals have been adopted, which in practice are tasks of the research: 1/ Outline of resources for development and income of the peripheral communes in Poland. 2/ Acquiring knowledge about how to respond to expectations and development tasks. 3/ Determination of strategic guidelines and tools to guarantee sustainable development for peripheral municipalities. Formulated in this way, the aim and tasks of the research are too general.

#### **4. Knowledge of the problem**

The doctoral student is well versed in the problems of dissertation research.

The research thesis is that peripheral communes stimulate the sustainable development of non-urban rural areas. Three working hypotheses have been defined, which are as follows: 1/ The development of peripheral communes determines their economic results. 2/ The financial results of peripheral communes are comparable to the results of the cities around which these communes are located. 3/Peripheral communes as rural communes with a specific location are structural units, most of which are capable of effectively managing their resources.

#### **5. Research methodology**

Formal-logical methods, methods of empirical research and theoretical knowledge, were used to reveal the goals and tasks of the dissertation work. Among the formal-logical methodological tools, the following are used: historical-logical approach, review of literary sources and normative acts on the research problems, methods of comparison, description, analysis, synthesis, analogy, induction, deduction.

From the group of empirical research methods, the following were used in the dissertation: statistical data analysis, data from conducted research, survey method, descriptive analysis, case-study, etc.

#### **6. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation**

Marek Wolanin's dissertation has a total volume of 234 pages and consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusion, references, appendices. A list of scientific publications, a list of Internet sources, a list of documents, laws and regulations, a list of tables, graphs and charts, a list of used acronyms and abbreviations are presented. The bibliography of the dissertation includes a total of 333 titles, including:

264 monographs, research and scientific articles, 23 normative sources, 46 titles of online sources. The work contains 29 tables, 28 graphs and 2 diagrams. The dissertation includes 18 appendices, 13 of which are summary tables of the data obtained from the survey.

The first chapter of the work is devoted to an analysis of the main aspects of the functioning of local self-government in Poland and in Europe. It contains ten sections. The second chapter contains nine sections and is devoted to the research methodology. The third chapter includes six sections and in it the comparisons made, research results and conclusions are expressed. An analysis is made here of the place of peripheral communes in comparison with other communes, their ratings and competition between them, as well as the financial and social aspects of the functioning of rural peripheral communes and indicators of the development of the commune of Zgoźelec compared to similar structural units for territorial self-government in Poland.

The main results of the study are presented in the conclusion. In general, it can be summarized that the author was able to achieve the purpose and tasks of the dissertation.

## **7. Scientific contributions and significance of research results for science and practice**

The contributions of the PhD student are indicated in the submitted abstract. But some of these contributions are in the nature of the results of the research. The scientific and applied contributions of Marek Wolanin's dissertation I can summarize as follows:

- This is one of the first dissertation works in the European Union, presenting a study of the communes located around the cities.
- A complete characterization of rural self-government bodies - peripheral communes in Poland was made.
- Highlighting important problems in the functioning of municipal formations affecting a large number of municipalities in the European Union.
- Guidelines are given for the optimization of the human, material and financial resources of rural self-governing bodies - peripheral communes in Poland.

## **8. Evaluation of the publications on the dissertation**

The doctoral student has presented 7 scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation. Four of them are independent scientific publications and the others are co-authored. Three of them are articles in the journal of the VUZF - "VUZF Review".

## **9. Assessment of compliance with national minimum requirements**

The reference of the doctoral student on the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements for acquiring educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in professional field 3.8. Economics shows that the publications submitted by the PhD student form 224 points at the date of the materials submitted to me.

## **10. Personal participation of the candidate**

I believe that the dissertation is the work of the doctoral student himself.

## **11. Abstract**

The abstract corresponds to the content of the dissertation. But the Bulgarian translation of the abstract is not very good. Even the title of the dissertation is wrong. The title should be written "Optimization of the human, material and financial resources of a rural municipality in the Republic of Poland", not "Optimization of the human, material and financial resources of a peripheral commune". Even the Republic of Poland is completely missing from the title in the author's abstract in Bulgarian. Such a discrepancy between the individual documents of the procedure is unacceptable. In this way, the topic of the work indicated in the abstract does not even correspond to what was written in the Order No. 132/22.03.2023 of the rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF), Prof. Doctor of Law. Boris Velchev.

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

To the dissertation of Marek Wolanin I have the following remarks:

1. Too generally formulated and insufficiently clear stated purpose and tasks of the research.
2. Not a very good translation into Bulgarian of the abstract of the work.
3. Discrepancies and inconsistencies in names between individual documents under the procedure.

**I have the following question for the PhD student to answer during the defense:** How should the human, material and financial resources of rural municipalities - peripheral communes in Poland be optimized?

## **13. Personal impressions**

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

## **CONCLUSION**

The dissertation on "Optimizing human, material and financial resources in municipalities in the Republic of Poland", by Marek Wolanin, is a comprehensive study of this problem, which has scientific value for theory and practice. The presented materials comply with the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Personnel in the Republic of Bulgaria (LASRB) and the Ordinance on the Implementation of the LASRB, as well as the Ordinance on Admission and Training of Doctoral Students at the VUZF University.

Based on this, I give a positive assessment of the research presented in the above peer-reviewed dissertation and abstract, and I propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to award Marek Wolanin the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Field of Higher Education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional field 3.8. Economics, PhD program "Finance, Insurance and Security", Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF), Sofia.

5.05.2023

Sofia

Reviewer: .....

(Prof. Dr. Silvia Trifonova-Pramatarova)