

STANDPOINT

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

on dissertation for the award of the scientific degree “Doctor of Science” in the Area of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional field 3.8 Economics, Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF), Sofia

Author: Dr. Grazyna Kacicka

Topic: “Theoretical and methodological foundations for developing a system of anti-crisis management in the business sector under market economy conditions”

1. General description of the presented materials

By Order No. 131/11.04.2025 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF University), Corresponding member Prof. DSc. of Law Boris Velchev, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to ensure the procedure for the defense of a dissertation on the “Theoretical and methodological foundations for developing a system of anti-crisis management in the business sector under market economy conditions” for the acquisition of the scientific degree “Doctor of Science” in the Area of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional field 3.8 Economics. The author of the dissertation is Dr. Grazyna Kacicka from Poland.

The materials submitted by the VUZF include all the necessary documents for the procedure, namely:

1. CV in English;
2. Dissertation in Russian on the topic: “Theoretical and methodological foundations for developing a system of anti-crisis management in the business sector under market economy conditions” for the acquisition of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences".
3. Abstract in Bulgarian and Russian;
4. List of the candidate’s publications;
5. List of the candidate’s citations;
6. Summaries of the candidate’s publications;
7. Certificate of fulfillment of minimum national requirements for the acquisition of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional field 3.8 Economics;
8. Declaration of authenticity and originality.

The candidate’s application for admission to public defense states that an author's abstract for the contributions to the dissertation has been submitted, but I cannot find one. The scientific and applied scientific contributions of the dissertation are in practice formulated in the abstract (pp. 7-12).

2. Brief biographical information of the candidate

Grazyna Kacicka obtained a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Lodz, Poland in 2012 and a Master's degree in Management from the Lublin University of Technology, Poland in 2014. She obtained a PhD in Political Science from the Ivan Franko National University in Lviv, Ukraine in 2017. In the period 1986-2003, she worked as an expert in a notary's office in the city of Jarosław, Poland, and from 2004 to the present, she has been a spokesperson for the Dar-Pol Company in the same city. At the same time, since 2017, she has started working as a lecturer at the Higher School of Social and Economic Sciences in Przeworsk, Poland. Dr. Grazyna Katsicka is fluent in English and Russian.

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

The topic of the dissertation work of Dr. Grazyna Katsicka is extremely relevant, as it examines the problem of introducing anti-crisis management of entrepreneurial structures in the conditions of transition to an innovative economy. In the conditions of a market economy, characterized by dynamism, diversity and uncertainty of the external environment, the relevance of the study of theories of economic crisis, crisis phenomena and the development of crisis research is becoming increasingly obvious.

The dissertation research is aimed at formulating strategies and guidelines for preventing risks and minimizing the impact of crisis factors that have a negative impact on the sustainability and operational efficiency of companies in the entrepreneurial sector.

The focus of the dissertation research is on the impact of innovative technologies, such as business digitalization, process automation and the development of artificial intelligence, which on the one hand create new opportunities for entrepreneurs, but on the other hand, give rise to additional risks for companies in the entrepreneurial sector, which must be managed adequately. Through her research, Dr. Grazyna Kacicka proposes mechanisms for adapting companies in the entrepreneurial sector to the conditions of the crisis economy.

The dissertation work has a clearly theoretical and methodological character. However, as a weakness, I note that the work does not apply empirical analysis based on collected and studied input empirical data to support the author's statements and theses.

The purpose of the dissertation work is to develop theoretical statements, methodological approaches and methodological recommendations for the formation and development of the conceptual foundations of the system for anti-crisis management of entrepreneurial structures in the conditions of transition to an innovative economy.

The tasks of the dissertation work, specified by me, are the following: 1/ To study the nature and essence of crisis phenomena in the economy, to determine their influence on the sustainability of entrepreneurial structures; 2/ To analyze the theories of crisis phenomena and to develop the methodological aspects of crisis research to form the conceptual apparatus of anti-crisis management; 3/ To determine the key factors for the emergence of crisis phenomena in the entrepreneurial sector and to improve the methods

for their identification; 4/ To develop anti-crisis strategies based on innovative business models and comparative analysis of international experience; 5/ To determine the main methods and tools for the implementation of an effective risk management mechanism in the entrepreneurial sector; 6/ To develop methodological foundations for assessing the effectiveness of anti-crisis management, including the application of innovative technologies; 7/ To form a concept for organizing a control system over the implementation of anti-crisis measures and to propose mechanisms for their adaptation to the conditions of the crisis economy; 8/ To develop approaches and justify methods for regulating and stimulating the economic activity of enterprises in crisis conditions, taking into account the influence of innovative technologies and the optimization of the organizational and economic mechanism for risk management in the sector.

The introduction of the work presents also the testing of the results of the dissertation research.

4. Knowledge of the problem

The candidate Dr. Grazyna Kacicka is very well acquainted with the issues of the dissertation research. Of particular scientific interest to me is the study of the conceptual apparatus of anti-crisis management of entrepreneurial structures based on a detailed study of the methodological aspects of crisis research. Also, the analysis of the methods and tools for the implementation of an effective mechanism for risk management in the entrepreneurial sector makes a strong impression.

The work has a clearly defined subject and object of the study, three research hypotheses, scope and limitations of the study. The object of the study is the anti-crisis management system in the entrepreneurial sector. The subject of the study is the conceptual, theoretical-methodological and methodological-practical foundations for the formation of an anti-crisis management system in the entrepreneurial sector in the conditions of a market economy.

One main (general) hypothesis and two so-called special second hypotheses are formulated. In my opinion, it is more correct to call the special hypotheses working research hypotheses.

The main (general) hypothesis states that the justification of the parameters of the anti-crisis management system in the entrepreneurial sector should be carried out on the basis of the development and implementation of a conceptual model integrating innovative approaches, proactive strategies and systematic analysis of risk factors. Such a model will allow minimizing the impact of crisis phenomena, increasing the resilience of entrepreneurial structures and ensuring their adaptation to the conditions of an unstable market economy.

The two special research hypotheses of the work are as follows: 1/ Increasing the effectiveness of monitoring and control of crisis factors should be based on the use of innovative methods and approaches, including digitalization and automation of management processes, which will ensure an operational response of entrepreneurial structures to changes in the external environment and business space; 2/ Ensuring the sustainable functioning of entrepreneurial structures in the conditions of an

unstable economy should be achieved through the implementation of proactive risk management strategies based on forecasting crisis phenomena and adapting business processes, which will allow reducing their vulnerability to changes in the external environment and business space.

5. Research methodology

To achieve the goals and tasks of the dissertation, Dr. Grazyna Kacicka used a variety of scientific research methods, such as: a very solid theoretical and methodological analysis, a comparative analysis of international experience in implementing anti-crisis strategies, a method of analysis and synthesis, a method of induction and deduction, factor analysis, an idealization method for simplifying complex systems and processes, an abstraction method for excluding from consideration non-essential characteristics of the object when conducting the study, a method of expert assessment for identifying key factors for the sustainability of enterprises.

The abstract states that the work also uses economic and mathematical modelling to assess the influence of crisis factors, but such modelling is not applied in the work.

6. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation

The dissertation work has a significant volume of 453 pages in total. The exposition consists of an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion and a bibliography. The bibliography of the work includes numerous literary sources – a total of 371 sources. The work contains a number of tables and diagrams. The first chapter of the work is devoted to the theoretical foundations of the processes of crisis formation and anti-crisis management in the economic environment. In the course of the crisisological research, a study of the crisis was conducted in the context of its influence on the functioning of the economic system and its subjects in the entrepreneurial sector. A comprehensive literature review of numerous scientific studies on the nature and causes of economic crises, the resolution of problems related to the emergence of crisis phenomena in the economy and the elimination of the negative consequences of destabilization processes was conducted. The socio-economic nature and features of anti-crisis management were studied, which are defined as the basis for the development and implementation of effective measures to prevent, predict and overcome crisis phenomena in the economy.

The second chapter of the work is devoted to the problems of regulating the economic activity of enterprises in times of crisis and the development of the anti-crisis management system in the entrepreneurial sector. Here, the main parameters of the functioning of the entrepreneurial sector, its significance and role for economic growth in the conditions of a market economy are studied. The main place is given to the so-called paradigmatic approach to the study of the formation and development of the theoretical aspects and applied foundations of the processes of organization and implementation of modern anti-crisis management in the entrepreneurial sector. A model of analysis of the factors for the emergence of crisis phenomena in this sector is proposed.

The third chapter of the dissertation is devoted to the methodological aspects of the formation of the anti-crisis management system in the entrepreneurial sector. Here, emphasis is placed on risk management as a key element of the anti-crisis strategy and on the methodological basis for the formation of an anti-crisis management system in the entrepreneurial sector based on certain approaches to risk management. A model for systematization of the principles and methodological approaches for minimizing the risk of reducing the economic stability of the entrepreneurial sector in the conditions of modern crises and an organizational mechanism for managing the risks of companies in this sector has been developed. The organizational and economic risk management mechanism (OERMM) has been defined as a system of methods, tools and procedures aimed at minimizing risks and ensuring the sustainability of entrepreneurial activity both in normal conditions and in crises.

The fourth chapter of the work is devoted to assessing the effectiveness and organization of the system for controlling the implementation of anti-crisis management in the entrepreneurial sector. An algorithm for assessing the effectiveness of anti-crisis management of an entrepreneurial company as a step-by-step and sequential process is presented. The proposed concept focuses on regular monitoring of key indicators, which allows the company to adapt its actions based on current data and minimize the negative consequences of the crisis.

The fifth chapter of the work is devoted to modern trends and new approaches to the organization of the anti-crisis management system in the entrepreneurial sector. Here, innovative technologies and management approaches in anti-crisis management are systematized and an algorithm for selecting technological tools and management approaches in anti-crisis management depending on the type of crises is derived.

The main results and conclusions of the study are presented in the conclusion of the work.

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

The scientific contributions of Dr. Grazyna Kacicka's dissertation are defined in the abstract of the work (pp. 7-12). The author has defined 8 scientific contributions, which are more in the nature of results of scientific research. They reflect the categorical qualities and merits of her work.

In my opinion, the main scientific and scientific-applied contributions of Dr. Grazyna Kacicka's dissertation can be summarized as follows:

1. Enrichment of existing knowledge about anti-crisis management of entrepreneurial structures, with the development of a comprehensive concept for this management based on reasoned theoretical, methodological and methodological approaches for responding to crises.
2. Enrichment of existing knowledge about anti-crisis management in the conditions of modern business transformation through the development of a comprehensive system of models for anti-crisis management of entrepreneurial structures.

3. A concept for studying crises through the prism of innovative development and crisis methods has been developed, with a definition of the organizational-economic risk management mechanism (OERMM), as well as an algorithm for assessing the effectiveness of anti-crisis management of an entrepreneurial company and an algorithm for selecting technological tools and management approaches for anti-crisis management according to the type of crises.
4. A critical approach has been applied to the existing research and approaches to anti-crisis management of entrepreneurial structures in conditions of economic instability.
5. Recommendations have been proposed to help enterprises create an effective and sustainable risk management system capable of reducing the impact of crisis phenomena in the economy and maintaining stable business development.

8. Evaluation of the publications on the dissertation

The candidate Dr. Grazyna Kacicka has submitted a total of 26 scientific publications to the competition. They are closely related to the issues of her research. Specifically, the publications she has submitted to the competition include: 1 published chapter of a monograph, 21 articles published in scientific journals, reviewed and indexed in secondary databases and in edited collective volumes, and 4 conference reports. Since it is not clear from the list of publications submitted by the candidate which publications are published in refereed journals, indexed in SCOPUS or in Web of Science, I assume that they are published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes.

9. Assessment of compliance with national minimum requirements

The Certificate of fulfillment of minimum national requirements for the acquisition of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional field 3.8 Economics, shows that the publications submitted by the candidate exceed the minimum required number of points.

10. Abstract

The abstract corresponds to the structure and content of the dissertation. The abstract is 56 pages long.

11. Critical remarks, questions and recommendations

As a critical note to the dissertation work of Dr. Grazyna Kacicka, I note that the work does not apply empirical analysis based on collected input empirical data to support the presented statements and the author's theses. Although the abstract states that the work applies economic and mathematical modeling to assess the impact of crisis factors on entrepreneurial structures, in practice such modeling is not applied in the work. My recommendation to the candidate is to continue his scientific research in this current and interdisciplinary scientific field, but to support the derived theses and statements with applied rich empirical analysis and econometric modeling based on a rich set of empirical data for companies in the entrepreneurial sector.

In addition, the candidate's application for admission to public defense states that an author's reference for the contributions to the dissertation work is presented, but I do not find one. As mentioned, the

scientific and applied scientific contributions of the dissertation work are practically formulated in the abstract (pp. 7-12).

Next, the list of the candidate's publications should have indicated if some publications were published in refereed journals indexed in SCOPUS or Web of Science. Given that this has not been done, I assume that all of the candidate's publications have been published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes. Therefore, I recommend that the candidate direct his publication activity specifically to publications in refereed journals indexed in the global databases SCOPUS and Web of Science.

I have the following question for the candidate: Are the conceptual foundations of the anti-crisis management system formulated in the work only valid for the entrepreneurial sector or would they be applicable and useful for other sectors of the economy?

CONCLUSION

The dissertation on the topic “Theoretical and methodological foundations for developing a system of anti-crisis management in the business sector under market economy condition”, authored by Dr. Grazyna Kacicka, is an in-depth study that has definite merits and scientific and applied scientific contributions. The presented materials are in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB and the Regulations for the Admission and Training of Doctoral Students at VUZF. Based on this, I give a positive assessment of the scientific research presented in the above-mentioned peer-reviewed dissertation and abstract, and I propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to award Grazyna Kacicka the scientific degree of “Doctor of Science” in the Area of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal sciences, Professional field 3.8 Economics, Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF University), Sofia.

12.05.2025

Sofia

Prepared the standpoint:

(Prof. Silvia Trifonova-Pramatarova, PhD)