

# OPPINION

By Professor Dr. Emil Spasov Panushev,  
Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar",

World Economy and International Economic Relations,  
for the dissertation

"ON SOME CHANGES IN THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC  
INTEGRATION"

for the degree of Doctor of Science  
in the professional field 3.8 Economics  
with candidate Eduard Vasilev Marinov

Basis: Order of the Rector of New Bulgarian University No. Z-RK-308/22.04.2024 for participation in the scientific jury for conducting the defense for the degree of Doctor of Science in the doctoral program "World Economy. International Economic Relations", PH 3.8. Economics, field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences.

## ***1. Significance of the research problem in scientific and applied terms.***

The dissertation work of Eduard Vasilev Marinov is devoted to important aspects of the functioning of the world economy - the creation of regional integration communities - and their role in international economic relations. The emergence of crisis phenomena on a global and regional scale, such as the financial crisis of 2007-2008, the Kovid-19 pandemic, the debt problems in the European Union, raise the question of the sustainability of international economic relations in the context of increased demand for climate neutrality and the digitalization of world trade. Integration processes to mitigate externalities to national economies are often seen as a possible solution in economic theory. This study proposes the use of a new methodology to assess economic integration and its impact on global trade.

## ***2. Justification of the aims and objectives of the thesis.***

In the justification of the relevance and significance of the investigated processes in the world economy, the reasons for the scientific research are presented, which define the aims and objectives of the dissertation. The ways of their achievement are formulated in scientific hypotheses of the research and their proof.

***3. Correspondence between the chosen methodology and methodology of research and the stated aim and objectives of the dissertation.***

The chosen methodology and methodology of the research is based on the achievements of modern economic theory and is based on known results in business practice. Eduard Vasilev Marinov demonstrates good knowledge of research in the given field in the country and leading researchers of these processes in other countries. On this basis, the approaches of systematization of the achieved and building on the existing knowledge are formulated. The chosen methodology fully corresponds to the stated aim and objectives of the dissertation. As noted on page 19, "by incorporating previous published research, the dissertation synthesizes individual key ideas and conclusions into a coherent statement, offering a comprehensive analysis of the subject and object of study."

***4. Scientific and applied contributions of the dissertation (description and evaluation), including the presence of original contributions to science.***

Following the limits set in the scientific research, the following scientific and scientifically applied contributions can be highlighted in the dissertation work of Eduard Vasilev Marinov:

- A concept of a new type of international trade specialization is proposed to be used for the assessment of patterns in world trade. The development of these problems is a scientific contribution can be defined as the systematization and complementation of scientific knowledge.

- A comprehensive theory of regional economic integration has been developed, consistent with structural transformations in the world economy and overcoming the inapplicability of conventional theoretical approaches. The development of these problems is a scientific contribution can be defined as the systematization and complementation of scientific knowledge.

- A new theoretical framework for the analysis and assessment of integration processes has been created to reflect the structural dynamics of the world economy. The development of these problems has concrete scientific and applied significance.

For the original contribution to science, it is noted on page 19 that "most of the case studies included in the dissertation are original and have been previously published (in the period 2015-2023) as individual articles in various scientific journals and monographs. These articles represent the researcher's original contribution to the field of regional economic

integration and have been selected based on their relevance and importance to the fulfilment of the set research aims and objectives".

***5. Assessment of the publications on the dissertation: number, nature of the publications in which they were published.***

The submitted information indicates 10 articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals and edited collective volumes, 1 study (co-authored) published in a scientific journal, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information, 2 studies published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals and edited collective volumes. These publications demonstrate the high quality of Eduard Vasilev Marinov's research, as evidenced by their acceptance by the national and international scientific community.

***6. Citations by other authors, reviews in the scientific press, etc.***

Eduard Vasilev Marinov's publications are known by researchers in the field of international economic relations in the country and abroad. His research theses are recognizable and cited in articles and reports at scientific forums abroad, which is evident from the scientific reference. The 9 citations or reviews mentioned are in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes of publications.

***7. Opinions, recommendations and comments***

Comments may be made to the reviewed dissertation with a view to future developments of Eduard Vasilev Marinov and to directing to certain views.

First of all, it should be noted that the presented work should be defined as a dissertation and not as a draft dissertation.

Secondly, the author should adhere to the structure defined in the law - the preface is not part of a dissertation, the literature used - a bibliography, in which the sources should be listed first in Cyrillic and then in Latin.

Thirdly, a better balance between the chapters could have been sought.

Fourth, the author's views on the leading role of integration processes in the global economy cannot explain its high degree of fragmentation, and the inability of the World Trade Organization to maintain the common regulation of multilateral trade. The question arises - does regional economic integration (in particular the European Union) support the multilateral system of international trade?

Fifthly, the emphasis on small open economies should be coupled with an assessment of the interests and actions of large economies in the integration process. In practice, they determine the place of small economies in the integration community.

Sixth, the proposal of a new approach could be accompanied by an indicative quantitative assessment of a set of indicators to verify the proposed methodology.

The above views and recommendations do not diminish the quality and quantity of the results and contributions obtained.

### ***8. Conclusion***

The dissertation "FOR SOME CHANGES IN THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION" is a study of important aspects of contemporary international economic relations. The research contains scientific and scientifically applied contributions that meet the requirements of the existing Law on the Development of Academic Staff, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulation on the Development of Academic Staff of New Bulgarian University, therefore I recommend the Honorable Scientific Jury to award Eduard Vasilev Marinov the scientific degree of Doctor of Sciences.

Date 12.10.2024

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