

**Template for the Structure of an Opinion on a Competition
For Obtaining the Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor" and the Scientific Degree
"Doctor of Sciences" at NBU**

O P I N I O N

By

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivan Rumenov Byanov
Veliko Tarnovo University "St. Cyril and Methodius"
Professional Field: 3.8 Economics

Regarding the Candidate

Mina Markova Karpuzova
For Obtaining the Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor"
Professional Field: 3.8 Economics

1. The significance of the researched problem in scientific and applied-scientific terms

The significance of the researched problem in the dissertation of doctoral candidate Mina Markova Karpuzova is undeniable. The dissertation comprises 215 pages, of which 184 pages are the main text, divided into three chapters, and 31 pages consist of the bibliography and appendices. It includes 30 figures, 4 tables, and 5 appendices. The bibliography encompasses 149 titles, 87 in Cyrillic and 62 in Latin script.

In the 21st century, the need to harmonize business and nature is more pressing than ever. The dissertation addresses a relevant issue—the application and lack of a unified structured approach by businesses and governments toward the concept of the circular economy as a broadly recognized framework. The scientific overview is adequately presented, focusing on both proponents and critics of the circular economy as an alternative to the widely recognized linear development model. The applied scientific section of the dissertation investigates real companies in Bulgaria that have adopted the circular economy concept. Furthermore, special attention is paid to the legislative framework governing the development of such companies within the European Union, specifically in Bulgaria.

2. Justification of the goals and objectives in the dissertation

The goal of the dissertation is clearly defined and substantiated: the need for systematic scientific research into the emerging changes in the European market. The transition to a circular economy is marked by the rapid development and dissemination of technologies and innovations, facilitating the adoption of alternative business models. This is well-reflected in the dissertation through the examination of various concepts and the high value placed on innovations and artificial intelligence. The research objectives are well-articulated, sequentially arranged, and logically interlinked.

The main thesis of the dissertation is also clearly formulated and substantiated: the implementation of alternative circular models positively impacts companies operating in the Bulgarian market. Accordingly, European legislative practices are analyzed, and a structured study is conducted to support the thesis. Four limitations of the dissertation are defined in relation to its goals and objectives, including the temporal scope, geographic focus, and the nature of the research.

3. Alignment between the chosen methodology and the goals and objectives

The chosen methodology in the dissertation aligns with the set goal of tracing the evolution of the concept and measurement tools of the circular economy, summarizing European and national policies and the circular business models applied by companies. This enables an assessment of their economic efficiency within the EU, focusing on their application in Bulgaria.

The empirical research methodology combines a general analysis of theoretical and practical changes regarding the implementation of alternative business models in EU companies' strategies. It includes literature reviews, case studies, theoretical analysis, and the interpretation of empirical data, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Three specific research methods are applied:

- ✓ Desk research of publicly available data on the activities of firms in Bulgaria within the circular economy sector.
- ✓ Structured in-depth interviews with leading companies in Bulgaria in this field.
- ✓ Online surveys assessing consumer attitudes toward alternative business models in Bulgaria.

This combination effectively addresses the dissertation's objectives, identifying and analyzing companies using circular business models and assessing their economic activity and consumer perceptions through empirical evidence.

4. Scientific and applied-scientific contributions of the dissertation

The dissertation highlights seven scientific and applied contributions. Noteworthy among these are the author's definitions of "circular economy" and "alternative business models," which are well-substantiated. Additionally, significant contributions include the systematization and in-depth examination of legislative acts governing the development of the circular economy within the EU and Bulgaria.

The applied contributions also address the economic efficiency, challenges, and recommendations for entrepreneurs adopting circular models, alongside ecological and social benefits. These contributions validate the high quality of the dissertation and the efforts of both the doctoral candidate and the academic advisor.

5. Assessment of publications related to the dissertation

Three publications associated with the dissertation, dated 2022–2023, are presented. These publications are current and available online, enhancing the candidate's academic visibility for future research and projects on this relevant topic.

6. Opinions, recommendations, and remarks

The dissertation has a clear structure, objectives, research scope, and tasks. Each chapter is approximately equal in volume, contributing to the work's balance. Appendices are well-organized and visually accessible.

It is recommended that the listed scientometric indicators (publications) include embedded links in their titles for better accessibility. The sole remark concerns the presence of minor spelling and stylistic errors. Future extensive projects should consider professional editing services.

7. Conclusion

Based on the submitted dissertation and author's abstract, considering the contributions and addressing the critical notes, I conclude that the candidate **CAN** be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Professional Field 3.8 "Economics," Doctoral Program "World Economy and International Economic Relations."

Date: 09.12.2024 г.

Signature