

OPINION

of a dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree of Doctor at the
D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov

Prepared opinion: *Prof. Teodora Iordanova Roupska, PhD,*

Professional Field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty „Accounting, control and analysis of economic activity” (management accounting), University of National and World Economy, Certificate of Academic Position № 88/2024

Author of the dissertation: Hristo Simeonov Vasilev

Dissertation title: *Formulating horizontal and vertical integration strategies in business*

Scientific adviser: *Assoc. Prof. Mihail Chipriyanov, PhD*

I. General characteristics of the dissertation.

The *subject* of the dissertation under review are the main methodological approaches for the development of these strategic decisions in companies from the metalworking industry. The *object* of research in the dissertation are the strategies for vertical and horizontal integration of business. In my opinion the subject and object are correctly defined.

The dissertation is written in 272 pages.

Structurally, the dissertation contains a list of figures and tables, a list of abbreviations and acronyms used, an introduction, an argument in three chapters, a conclusion, a works cited list and appendixes.

For the writing of the dissertation the doctoral student *Hristo Vasilev* has used 120 literature sources in Bulgarian and English. The selection of the analyzed literature is appropriate.

II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation.

The topic of the dissertation under review is particularly relevant in view of the dynamic business environment and global competition in which enterprises operate. This requires companies to be agile and creative in order to maintain and increase their competitiveness. Different integration strategies, including vertical and horizontal integration, are essential to business performance. Integration strategies enable companies to have overall control over operations and at the same time to smoothly and efficiently carry out the business operations of their partners.

By using strategic solutions, companies can limit delivery delays, secure supply chain “bottlenecks” and gain a clear and centralized view of revenue-enhancing processes, resulting in better customer service.

To write the dissertation, the author has studied the publications of Bulgarian and foreign researchers in the field of strategic business integration. Despite the existence of numerous studies in this scientific field, the new, constantly changing economic realities require a new, improved approach to the management of business integration processes and the applied strategic solutions.

The volume of the dissertation is sufficient to study the problem. It is written in a scientific style. The individual problems are dealt with in a logical sequence.

Descriptive, inductive and deductive methods have been successfully applied in the dissertation. Secondary analysis of information from other empirical studies on the topic has been conducted. For his empirical research, *Hristo Vasilev* has applied the in-depth interview method and the survey method, and the data have been processed using the IBM SPSS Statistics software package.

The abstract correctly presents the achievements of the dissertation. I find no gaps in its content.

The doctoral student has submitted a total of 6 publications relating to the topic of the dissertation, which exceed the minimum national requirements, according to the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for the award of the educational and scientific degree of Doctor.

With the required minimum of 30 points, Hristo Vasilev achieved 53,33 points. Three of the publications are published as articles and the remaining three – as papers. One of the articles is co-authored, and the remaining publications have one author – *Hristo Vasilev*. The publications represent important points of the dissertation.

III. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation.

The doctoral student *Hristo Vasilev* formulated three research objectives and respectively – three contributions. In my opinion, the first contribution described by the PhD student contains two separate contributions – 1. the leading arguments “for” and “against” the integration strategy and 2. It is proved that the hierarchical approach to corporate planning is the most suitable for use in companies of the metalworking industry in our country considering their specificity.

I accept the other contributions described by the doctoral student without comments.

IV. Questions regarding the dissertation.

I have no questions about the dissertation presented. I can only recommend *Hristo Vasilev* to implement in practice the achievements of the dissertation.

V. Summary assessment of the dissertation and conclusion.

In conclusion, the presented dissertation of *Hristo Vasilev* represents a comprehensive, complete scientific research with clearly formulated aim and objectives. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions have been achieved in the research.

As a result of all the above, I vote “FOR” the award of the educational and scientific degree of Doctor in the scientific specialty “Planning” to *Hristo Simeonov Vasilev*.

I propose to the esteemed members of the Scientific Committee to award the educational and scientific degree of Doctor in the scientific specialty “Planning” to *Hristo Simeonov Vasilev*.

Prepared the opinion:

(Prof. T. Roupska, PhD)

17.02.2025
Sofia