

REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Kliment Naidenov

Dean of the Faculty of Geology and Geography, Sofia University
"St. Kliment Ohridski "

Regarding

Milen Georgiev Velikov's dissertation

for

Obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

in

Vocational field

4.4 Earth Sciences (Geography of Population and Settlements)

on the topic:

"Dynamics and interrelations of the labor market in Bulgaria for the period 1989-2021 - quantitative and qualitative changes"

I. PhD Milen Velikov's data:

Milen Georgiev Velikov, a freelance PhD, was born on August 1, 1982 in Sofia. He finished his secondary education at a high school in Cherven Bryag.

During 2006-2010 Milen Velikov studied Economics and Labor Organization at the University of National and World Economy.

During 2010-2011 he finished his Master's degree programme "Economics of Human Resources" at the University of National and World Economy.

During 2010-2012 he successfully completed his second Master's degree programme "Organizational behavior and organizational consulting" at "Saint Klement Ohridski" Sofia University.

In 2012 he studied "Social and Organizational Psychology" at the Master's Degree Programme in the New Bulgarian University

In 2011-2012 he specialised in the Erasmus Programme at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland.

He also holds a "Marketing and Business Planning" professional qualification at the University of National and World Economy, Postgraduate Qualification Institute.

In 2021 he got credited as a PhD freelance in the Socio-Economic Geography Department at "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University.

In his employment career he covered "Human Resources Specialist" at Actavis, "Human Resources Manager" at Ecopharm, "Human Resources Director" at Telelink Business Services, "Human Resources and Communication Manager" at Zentiva, "People and Processes Manager" at Dentios.

He speaks fluent English, has numerous honors and awards in the HR area, and is actively volunteering.

II. Details of the procedure

According to "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University requirements - all necessary documents are attached.

Irregularities and plagiarism have not been identified.

Milen Velikov is credited as a PhD Freelancer in:

4.4 Earth Sciences vocational field,

"Geography of Population and Settlements" PhD program, established by "RD 20-1223 / 25.06.2021" Order of the Dean of "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University,

Research Supervisor Assoc. Professor Dr. Georgi Bardarov.

The PhD student has fully covered his individual plan, successfully passed all the minimums and exams, and meets all "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University requirements and criteria for development and defense of a dissertation.

With order RD 20-444 / 17.02.2022. Milen Georgiev Velikov was expelled early with the right to defense due to a positive decision of the primary unit for the readiness to defend the dissertation, as of January 26, 2021. At a meeting, the Department Council of the Department of Socio-Economic Geography in an expanded composition discussed and directed to the defense of the dissertation of Milen Velikov. The decision was confirmed by the FS of the GGF of Sofia University.

Milen Georgiev Velikov was deducted ahead of schedule with the right to defense due to the Primary Unit positive decision and the readiness to defend the dissertation, as of January 26, 2021.

Order RD 38-120 / 22.02.2022 approved a Scientific Jury composed of:

1. Prof. Dr. Kliment Minev Naidenov - Sofia University
2. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Toni Draganov Traikov - Sofia University
3. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadezhda Borisova Ilieva - NIGGG, BAS
4. Prof. Dr. Milen Rumenov Penerliev - SHU
5. Prof. Dr. Rumen Hristov Yankov - VTU

Members in reserve:

1. Prof. Dr. Neli Stefanova Hristova - Sofia University
2. Prof. Dr. Chavdar Milchev Mladenov - NIGGG, BAS

III. General characteristics of the dissertation

The total volume of the dissertation is 285 standard pages.

The dissertation is structured in four chapters plus introduction and conclusion, as each chapter contains a different number of subheadings depending on its specifics and content. A list of abbreviations, a list of figures, a list of tables,

a reference to the contributions to the dissertation and a bibliography are attached separately. The appendices to the main text are presented in a separate book body.

The text contains 24 tables, 19 figures, applications with questionnaires and graphics, scientific contributions. 195 scientific sources of information were used, of which 185 in Cyrillic, 10 in Latin and 82 Internet sources and normative documents are described separately.

In the introduction, the doctoral student comprehensively and accurately clarified the relevance of the topic, in terms of the main problem of Bulgaria - the demographic crisis and its impact on the labor market through the acute shortage of labor, from high to low skilled. The object, the purpose, the subject and the tasks of the research are formulated very precisely and soundly, the methodological apparatus on which it is based is clarified in detail, as well as the natural obstacles and limitations that the doctoral student encountered in developing the dissertation. the incomplete set of data on some important for the research indicators related to employment, unemployment and wages, as well as the refusal to cooperate with some institutions. The introduction also provides a critical literature review on the topic, analyzing leading authors from various scientific fields. In the introduction, the author has systematized both global and local events that directly affect the labor market in Bulgaria in the last thirty years.

The introduction also clarifies some basic formulations and definitions that serve as the basis of the hypotheses and concepts that the doctoral student advocates in the dissertation. In the introductory part the author has substantiated the periodization, which he used throughout the dissertation.

The first chapter lays the theoretical foundations of the research, as the doctoral student clarifies the main characteristics of the labor market. The basis of this chapter is the consideration of human capital as the most important element of the labor market. Many definitions of human capital are considered, a valuable contributing element is the analysis of human capital from an economic, social

and demographic point of view. The analytical element is strengthened by the considered motivational theories and basic definitions of the labor market. The PhD student bases his entire research, at the end of the first chapter examines chronologically the emergence and periodization of the labor market in Bulgaria after the Liberation, taking as markers those historical moments (1944 and 1989) that marked a radical change in economic and political development of the country. The clarification of the quantitative measures used in the labor market analyzes and used in the dissertation is very important for the contributing nature of the dissertation, as they are divided into two subcategories - demographic and socio-economic.

The theoretical statements set out in the first chapter provide a very solid basis that determines the practical and applied aspect of the study. Even here the author's view and the experience of the author on the issues under consideration are evident.

The second chapter is devoted to the Bulgarian labour market main stages and dynamics in the period 1989-2001. This is a particularly delicate stage in our modern history, as it is associated with the painful and almost criminal transition of the country from socialism and a centrally planned economy to democracy and free market.

It was marked by the closure of hundreds of businesses and economy losing sectors, which, however, provided a livelihood for hundreds of thousands of Bulgarian families. The author boldly and critically has analysed this period without sparing anything from the real sad picture of the labor market. Methodically and consistently, he analyzed all demographic processes in the country between the two censuses - 1992 and 2001, when an extremely severe demographic crisis emerged, which reached its peak in 1997 with a natural negative record increased by -7 ‰, and Bulgaria took the first sorrowfully place in the world. The political situation in the country is also considered and related

to the labor market, but the biggest attention is paid to the emigration processes because in these years Bulgaria was abandoned by a great number of qualified and educated people, and this had an extremely negative impact on the labor market. This also planted many economic and social bombs for the next twenty years.

This period of the modern history of Bulgaria is often underestimated from nowadays point of view, but it is which determines the nature of the processes in the economic and social sphere, and frames the current situation in the country. The author makes a very precise section of the stratification of the Bulgarian society in those years and their impact on the main players in the labor market in the country.

The third chapter has a relatively small volume, as it considers the intermediate decade between the beginning of the study and its most important final period in 2011-2021. In this chapter the most important from subject and purpose point of view is how our country, joining the EU in 2007, affects the labor market in Bulgaria.

Moreover, these are years that mark great economic growth in Europe and Bulgaria, above all with the end of the global economic crisis of 2008. From a political point of view, an in-depth analysis of Simeon Saxe-Coburg's government was conducted, in regard of the economy and the labor market, as in Bulgaria there were 2 extreme opinions how this government had affected economic development. The analysis of the decade is very important because it was burdened with many expectations in Bulgaria from an economical point of view after the difficult 90-s and the things that did not happen then and did not meet the expectations of the Bulgarians. This decade at the beginning of the new millennium has had a very serious impact on all spheres of economic and social life in our country.

From the standpoint of the transformation of the labor market, the author examines very precisely what exactly did not happen during these years in Bulgaria. This is the period in which the oligarchic government model was born, which had many negative consequences in economic terms, especially in the spatial aspect. It was in the first decade of the XXI century that the serious disparities in the country along the north-south axis became clear, with the clear superiority of the south and the so-called demographic-depressive regions formed, which inevitably affected the economy and the labor market in the northwestern parts of the country, central northern and northeastern Bulgaria, Kraishteto, Strandzha-Sakar.

The fourth chapter, in structure and content, is very similar to the second and third chapters, but only here this is the period between the last two censuses in Bulgaria -in 2011 and 2021. This is the essence of the dissertation, because here in the greatest degree, depth and detail are considered the relationships between all major players on the labor market in our country, as well as the factors and reasons that determine them and their nature. The political situation, which is leading in the economic processes, and respectively in the conditions of the labor market, is analysed again. Gradually you enter in the depth of the spiral, which will be the biggest obstacle of the development of Bulgaria and the labor market in our country in the next decade, namely - the demographic crisis, emigration of young active and skillful population and growing labor shortages hand. From this point of view, the fifth sub-point is key for the chapter and for the whole dissertation, which presents the aspects and evolution of motivation and satisfaction of workers in Bulgaria, as these analyses are based on large-scale author's research areas of the domestic economy and the labor market. This research is the most important contribution part of the dissertation and can serve employers and institutions in the management of human resources in the country at various levels in the next ten years so important for Bulgaria!

What determines the importance of this chapter is the author's extremely rich practical experience and the fact that his research and subsequent analyses have been superimposed over the years and provide a representative sample of trends and processes in the labor market in Bulgaria.

The conclusion is clear, concise and scientifically sound. The main conclusions reached by the Doctoral student in the development of his work have been scientifically substantiated. Very valuable are the conclusions given to the various players in the labor market in our country - employees, institutions, labor and organizational psychologists, other researchers and the labor market in general. The style of work is sustained, scientific, there is a balance between the individual chapters, as well as in solving the tasks that are set at the beginning of the introduction.

The conclusions are structured and hierarchical, thus perfectly illustrating the relationship between the dissertation and the purpose, subject and tasks set in its introduction.

IV. Evaluation of the Abstract

The Abstract presented to the Scientific Jury, which has a volume of 59 pages, meets all the requirements of "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University. The only problem with it is its excessive volume. In terms of content, however, it fully reflects the work done in the Abstract and includes all the main and most important elements following the structure of the dissertation.

V. Evaluation of the dissertation publications

The doctoral student presents three publications on the topic of the dissertation, and all three are independent. The publications are scientifically sound, in authoritative editions, fully correspond to the topic of the dissertation and can be accepted by the scientific jury.

VI. Evaluation of scientific contributions

The PhD student presents four theoretical and practical contributions, which fully correspond to what he did in his dissertation. They also prove the enormous and important work he has done over the years of developing his dissertation. In our opinion, the third and fourth contributions to the dissertation have the greatest applied value, which present respectively an author's model, which arranges hierarchically the factors that form professional values on the labor market in Bulgaria and a working algorithm that can be applied in different sectors and proceedings to stimulate the development and productivity of employees.

Both contributions are entirely practical and applied in nature, are practiced in practice, are based on author's research and give the whole dissertation very high practical value.

VII. Critical remarks

In terms of content, we do not have any critical remarks regarding the scientific work submitted for review. The only serious remark we have is the factual elements in the dissertation to be reduced and to strengthen the analytical elements in the second and third chapter..

VIII. Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe that the dissertation submitted for review examines extremely relevant and important for our society problems related to economic development, demographic processes and their impact on the labor market in the country. The work has a fully completed form and great practical value, and can be used in the development of strategies and models for successful management of human resources, both in the private and public sector of the economy. Taking into account the achieved positive results and scientific contributions and qualities of the dissertation, we propose to the Distinguished Members of the Scientific Jury to award:

Milen Georgiev Velikov
Educational and Scientific Doctor's Degree
In
4.4 Earth Sciences (Geography of Population and Settlements)

Sofia, April 5, 2022

With respect:
Prof. Dr. Kliment Naidenov