

O P I N I O N

By Prof. Dr. Lalko Stoychev Dulevski

On the dissertation of Dimitar Vassilev Shterev for the acquisition of a Doctoral Degree, a doctoral candidate doing an independent form of study in the scientific specialty: Organization and Management Outside the Field of Material Production at the Department of Social Activities, Faculty of Medicine, Trakia University of Stara Zagora, on the topic: Organizational and Functional Models in the Social Security and Social Assistance Systems.

1. General description and relevance of the dissertation

Topics that have been of enormous research interest in the the recent years are those of social security and social assistance. This interest is triggered by many factors that reflect on the dynamics of their development - demography, economy, free movement of labor, standard of living, etc. For these reasons, ways and approaches are being sought for improvements and solutions for upgrading the social security system and assistance not only in the EU Member States but also globally. This determines the relevance of the topic that has been selected.

The dissertation contains 189 pages.

In the **chapter One** "The essence, features and current state of the welfare state" the author points out the characteristics of many processes in a welfare state - demography, social policies, standard of living, which predetermine the accents of the theoretical grounds for the research. Moreover, they predetermine their development for decades to come. Aimed at enriching the scientific background of the dissertation, in **chapter Two**, "A Historical Review and Comparative Analysis of the Different Types of Social Security Models", the author provides an extremely profound and comprehensive review of the existing social security models in a number of countries around the world. **Chapter Three** is devoted to "The essence, principles, characteristics and features of social security and social assistance in Bulgaria." In addition to the chronology of historical approaches and decisions, the author has included the management and organization features, the interrelations and structure of the social security system and the assistance system. The results of the in-depth analysis of these systems, the current institutional decisions and the management mechanisms are well systemized by the author. The high expertise and the professional level of knowledge of the author regarding the operation of the social protection systems, as well as his well reasoned critical views on the functioning of the individual structural units. **Chapter Four**, "Structure and Characteristics of the Research" outlines the stages, objectives and assumptions of the study, as well as the differences and interrelations between the two systems as well as the numerous retirement benefits that are

in fact a kind of assistance. The cash flows spent by the social security system over the years for nonspecific payments that are in conflict with the social security principles and goals. Based on this, the candidate has analyzed the outcomes ensuring proper functioning of the system and has justified the necessary changes. In chapter Five, "A New Organizational and Functional Model in the Social Security and Social Assistance Systems", the author, based on his research and professional experience, suggests ways to upgrade and rationalize the management and institutional structure of the social security and social assistance service. The doctoral candidate has provided good reasons on the necessity for administration of the activities in the systems in accordance with the basic principles of their functioning, as well as improvement of the legislation, exemption of the state social security from all non-specific functions, establishment of an investment reserve for safety in the event of a negative profitability of the social security system, enhancement of the motivation for joining and improvement of the social systems.

2. Evaluation of scientific and applied contributions

I give a positive mark to the contributions of the dissertation. They are an expression of a sound in-depth expert analysis. Particularly valuable scientifically are the extensive multi-aspect assessments of the social security systems in numerous countries around the world. Specific suggestions and models have been given through which it can be definitely stated that they have a significant contribution to finding practical solutions and would improve the social security and social assistance systems in Bulgaria.

3. **The abstract** has been developed relevantly and in accordance with the requirements. The publications of the candidate, though not numerous, enrich the scientific literature in this field.

4. Critical notes and recommendations

Bearing in mind the relevance of the dissertation, I believe that the work in this field should be continued as the dissertation tries to balance the individual parts of the study more precisely, to put more emphasis on practical implementation and to give concrete changes to the legislative changes.

4. Critical notes and recommendations

Bearing in mind the relevance of the dissertation, I believe that the work in this field should be continued so that the doctoral candidate reaches a more precise balance between the individual parts of the research as well as put more emphasis on the practical implementation and be more concrete about the legislation changes.

Conclusion

The overall results of the dissertation show that Dimitar Shterev has rich professional experience and expertise as well as very good and profound awareness of the issues being studied, a consistent, analytical approach, and also a critical attitude towards the gaps in the systems. Specific suggestions have been brought up that can find practical application thus enriching and improving the procedures.

On these grounds, **I propose** to the Scientific Jury to award a doctoral educational and scientific degree to Dimitar Vasilev Shterev in the higher education field 3. Social, Business and Legal Sciences, professional area of Social Activities.

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Sofia

An opinion given by

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