

## OPINION

By: *Prof. Elka Slavcheva Vasileva, Ph.D.*

*University of National and World Economy – Sofia*

*Scientific specialty: Economics and Management (Eco-economics),  
Professional field 3.8. “Economics”*

About: dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**" in scientific specialty 3.8 "Economics" at the Institute for Economic Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IER at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

**Author of the dissertation:** *Anton Ognyanov Peychev*

**Thesis Title:** *THE ROLE OF POLICIES FOR THE TRANSITION TO THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH (on the example of waste economy)*

**Reason** for submitting the opinion: participation in the scientific jury for the defense of the dissertation work according to Order No. 328/08.05.2026 of the Director of the Institute for Economic Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Prof. Dr. Irena Zareva - Zafirova.

### **1. Information about the doctoral candidate**

The doctoral candidate completed a doctoral program in the Macroeconomics Section of the Institute for Economic Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in the scientific field of 3.8 “Economics.” The training was carried out in *part-time* form during the period 2022 - 2026.

### **2. General description of the dissertation**

The presented dissertation work consists of an Introduction, four chapters and a Conclusion, a List of used literary sources (Bibliography) and a List of used abbreviations with a total volume of 194 pages (main text - 159 pages) including 17 tables, 9 figures and 12 appendices. In the development of the dissertation, 139 literary sources (references) were used and cited, of which 7 in Bulgarian and 132 in foreign languages.

The Introduction justifies the significance and relevance of the chosen topic in light of theoretical concepts of the circular economy, European policies and legislation on the transition to a circular economy, as well as the relationship with economic growth indicators. The doctoral student focuses on the waste economy as an analytical tool for assessing the transition to a circular economy.

The object and subject of the research, as well as the main goal and objectives of the dissertation work, are described. On this basis, the main research thesis and eight hypotheses, which differ in their nature and degree of concretization, are raised.

The thesis is formulated as follows: "the relationship between the circular economy, waste management and economic growth is not automatic and unidirectional, but is structurally determined by the level of economic development, the institutional environment and the material structure of the economy; „the transition to a circular economy cannot be seen as a stand-alone growth driver, but as a process whose results are strongly dependent on the complex interaction between regulations, economic structure, institutional capacity and statistical measurability“.

The main sources of information and the limitations of the study are described.

### **3. Assessment of the scientific and applied scientific results and contributions obtained**

The work thoroughly, correctly and critically analyzes the scientific and specialized literature on the positioning of the circular economy in the system of economic theories, as well as policies within the European Union for the circular economy. On this basis, the goals are well justified and the tasks of the dissertation are actually fulfilled.

A detailed methodological framework for the study has been developed, based on an interdisciplinary approach combining economic, environmental and political analyses. The methods used are appropriately selected, described precisely and accurately, demonstrating a very good understanding of the essence of the work performed. I would like to emphasize the good description of the information from various information sources used for the study: indicators and statistics from the European Statistical Agency - Eurostat; information from reports and analyses of the European Environment Agency and the European Court of Auditors; EU strategic documents and the main EU legislative acts in the field of waste management (directives and regulations), as well as key secondary acts for their implementation (implementing acts and delegated acts).

The developed doctoral thesis shows that the author has systematized and critically interpreted existing scientific theses and has confirmed or partially confirmed eight hypotheses through the necessary argumentation. The presented results of the scientific research are presented in an understandable, logical and precise manner.

I accept the attached Statement of Scientific Applied Contributions, formulated in accordance with the requirements of Art. 49, paragraph 3 of the Regulations for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in the Institutes for Economic Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

#### **4. Evaluation of the publications related to the dissertation**

The doctoral student has presented four independent scientific publications, which corresponds to 40 points according to the minimum requirements under the Regulations for the acquisition of scientific degrees and holding academic positions in the Institutes for Economic Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The attached report by Anton Peychev shows that the requirements of Art. 49 para. 4 of the Regulations are exceeded by 10 points.

#### **5. Assessment of the abstract**

In terms of content and structure, the Abstract (33 pages) corresponds to the dissertation work and faithfully presents in a synthesized form the scope, content and results of the scientific research. At the end of the Abstract, in Part IV, a "Reference for scientific and applied contributions" is given, and in Part V, a "List of publications related to the dissertation work" is given.

#### **6. Critical comments, recommendations, and questions**

Despite exceeding the requirements for independent scientific publications, I would recommend that the doctoral student show a desire to present their scientific achievements at international forums and scientific platforms. This will create opportunities for a broader discussion on the topic by the European and global scientific community.

#### **7. Conclusion**

The dissertation is the work of the author and represents a complex and in-depth study of current and significant theoretical and practical problems. It demonstrates that the doctoral student possesses theoretical knowledge and the ability to conduct independent research in a specific field.

The achieved original contributions of a scientific-methodological and

scientific-applied nature are also categorically proven by the developed and tested methodology based on an interdisciplinary approach, combining economic, environmental and political analyses, on the role of policies for the transition to the circular economy for economic growth.

The dissertation thesis meets the scientometric criteria adopted by the academic community, according to the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application, including originality of the presented work and reliability of the scientific data according to Art. 4 (9) item 1 of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as the requirements of Art. 49 para. 3 and 4, of the Regulations for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in the Institutes for Economic Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

All this gives me reason to positively evaluate the dissertation work of Anton Ognyanov Peychev and to propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to make a decision to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the professional field 3.8 Economics at the Institute for Economic Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

12.06.2026 / Sofia

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