

REVIEW

by: Assoc. Prof. **Eduard Vassilev Marinov**, Ph.D., D.Sc., professional field 3.8. “Economics”, Department “*International Economics*”, *Economic Research Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*; Department of Economics, New Bulgarian University; University of Insurance and Finance

regarding: dissertation for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in Field of Higher Education 3. “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”, Professional Field 3.8. “Economics”, doctoral program “World Economy and International Economic Relations” by *Simeon Stoilov Stoilov* on the topic “*The International Transfer of New Technologies and Its Role in the Transition to Innovative and Sustainable Development of the Bulgarian Economy*”

1. General description of the procedure

By Order No. 874 of 19.12.2025 of the Director of the Economic Research Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to ensure the procedure for the defense of a dissertation on the topic “The international transfer of new technologies and its role in the transition to innovative and sustainable development of the Bulgarian economy” for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in the field of higher education 3 “Social, economic and legal sciences”, Professional field 3.8 “Economics”, doctoral program “World Economy and International Economic Relations”. The author of the dissertation is Simeon Stoilov Stoilov, a part-time doctoral student at the Department “International Economics”, supervised by Prof. Dr. Tatyana Hubenova-Delisivkova. During the first meeting of the Scientific Jury, held on January 12, 2026, I was appointed as a reviewer for the procedure.

The materials submitted by the candidate include a CV, a dissertation, an abstract, a report on compliance with the minimum national criteria for obtaining a PhD degree, a statement of contributions, a list of 5 publications related to the dissertation, as well as the publications themselves and a declaration of originality and absence of plagiarism. The materials submitted meet the mandatory requirements of the Higher Education Act for obtaining a doctoral degree in professional field 3.8 “Economics”.

2. Brief biographical information about the doctoral student

Simeon Stoilov has developed his professional and academic profile at the intersection of international economics, strategic management, and international transfer of innovation and technology. His interest in the topic of his dissertation is the result of many years of practical experience in the field of quality management, organizational efficiency, and working with complex production and management systems, which allows him to analyze technology transfer as a long-term, institutionally conditioned process. His professional experience in the public sector and diplomatic service has also made a significant contribution to his development as a researcher, deepening his understanding of the role of the state, institutional coordination, and strategic planning. His international professional experience and work with foreign partners contribute to a clear orientation towards comparative and interdisciplinary analysis. The candidate's overall educational and professional profile is directly related to the chosen topic and supports the achievement of the scientific and applied scientific results of the dissertation.

3. Relevance of the topic and appropriateness of the objectives and tasks set

The topic of the dissertation is extremely relevant and of high scientific and practical significance, due to accelerated technological development, growing geopolitical instability, and the European Union's strategic goals for sustainable and innovative economic growth. The international transfer of innovation and technology is a key factor in overcoming the structural weaknesses of the Bulgarian economy and increasing its competitiveness.

The formulated goals and objectives are logically justified, interrelated, and aimed at solving a clearly defined economic problem of a research nature.

4. Knowledge of the problem

The dissertation demonstrates in-depth knowledge of the research problem, both in theoretical and empirical and institutional terms. The consistent development of the presentation – from the introduction, through the three chapters to the conclusion – clearly demonstrates a good understanding of the issue, both in theoretical and practical terms, thus leading to a number of positive results related to various aspects of the chosen issue, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The doctoral student demonstrates a very good command of classical and contemporary theories of innovation, international technology transfer, absorption capacity, and the role of institutions. The analysis covers a wide range of scientific sources – Bulgarian and foreign, strategic documents of the EU and international organizations. Particularly valuable is the critical reading of existing models and the identification of unresolved or partially researched problems in the Bulgarian economic context.

5. Research methodology

The research methodology is adequate to the objectives, subject matter, and research questions of the dissertation and is reasonably consistent with the specific nature of the economic problem under study. The doctoral student applies a comprehensive qualitative analytical approach, including situational, comparative, and institutional analysis, supplemented by an analysis of specific case studies.

The methods used allow for the coverage of both macroeconomic and geopolitical factors, as well as the institutional and sectoral characteristics of the international transfer of innovation and technology. The conscious rejection of quantitative modeling is justified by the limitations of the available statistical base and the focus on the strategic management of processes. The combination of methods ensures analytical depth, logical consistency, and reliability of the conclusions and recommendations – made.

6. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation

The dissertation consists of 234 pages. The literature used covers a total of 307 sources in Cyrillic, Latin, and Internet sites, and 12 Internet sources of statistical data. The dissertation is structured logically and consistently in three main chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion, clearly tracing the development of the research logic – from theoretical propositions to applied analytical results.

The introduction presents a very precise and correctly formulated aim, object and subject of the study, main goals and tasks, research thesis and, what is particularly important, implicitly sets the limitations of the study.

The first chapter presents an in-depth theoretical and methodological analysis of the

international transfer of innovation and technology, outlining the evolution of the main concepts and models and placing them in the context of contemporary global transformations.

The second chapter is devoted to the analysis of the Bulgarian economy within the European and global innovation environment. Here, the doctoral student successfully combines comparative analysis, institutional assessment, and sectoral review, clearly identifying structural deficits and potential growth points. Particular attention is paid to the regulatory framework, the innovation ecosystem, and Bulgaria's participation in global value chains.

The third chapter has a clearly original and applied character. The developed analytical model, the Ripple Effect Model (REM), represents a conceptual contribution that allows for a multi-layered assessment of the effects of international technology transfer. The proposed national roadmap for the period 2025-2040 builds on the theoretical analysis and transforms it into a strategic planning tool. Overall, the work is distinguished by its high scientific level, sound reasoning, and analytical depth.

The conclusion correctly and comprehensively summarizes the main findings of the study, clearly demonstrating the connection and the way in which they contribute to the achievement of the research goals and objectives set by the doctoral student.

The use of a rich set of literary sources – mainly scientific works, but also numerous empirical studies – contributes to the high reliability of the material on which the contributions of the dissertation are based, as well as to the usefulness of the dissertation – both for the academic community and in purely practical terms.

7. Contributions and significance of the study for science and practice

The dissertation is distinguished by its excellent form, clear academic style, and precise scientific language, which leave an impression of a high level of professionalism and in-depth knowledge in the field of research. All structural elements of the research are presented accurately and consistently, with the exposition following a clear logic, argumentation, and internal connection between the individual parts. This creates the conditions for a convincing presentation of the results and a clear highlighting of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions.

The dissertation contains clearly distinguishable and well-argued contributions at both the theoretical and applied levels. At the theoretical level, the research contributes to the expansion, systematization, and refinement of existing concepts of international transfer of innovation and technology, placing them in the broader context of sustainable development, structural transformation, and contemporary geopolitical processes. The author argues that international technology transfer should not be viewed solely as a spontaneous market mechanism, but as a strategically manageable process requiring an active role for the state, institutional coordination, and a long-term vision within the framework of national economic policy.

A significant scientific contribution is the development of the original Ripple Effect Model (REM), which builds on existing approaches to assessing the effects of international technology transfer. The model introduces a broader analytical perspective by including indirect, long-term, and multiplier effects on the economic, institutional, and sectoral environment. In this way, REM expands the scope of traditional methodologies and creates a basis for future empirical research and quantitative measurements of the effects of technology transfer.

From a methodological point of view, the dissertation offers a refined and adapted approach to the analysis and evaluation of international technology transfer in the context of a small open economy such as Bulgaria's. This represents a contribution to both economic theory and the practice of formulating and evaluating public policies.

The practical significance of the research is demonstrated by the specific recommendations

formulated for the institutional and strategic management of international innovation and technology transfer. The proposed national roadmap for the period 2025–2040 can be used as a basis for developing sectoral strategies, public-private partnership policies, and more effective integration of Bulgaria into global innovation and technology chains. In this sense, the presented results can be characterized as an enrichment of existing knowledge and a successful application of scientific achievements, fully corresponding to the formulated contributions.

The scientific results and conclusions presented correspond to the formulated contributions. My overall assessment is that the results presented from the research conducted in Simeon Stoilov's dissertation can be characterized as an enrichment of existing knowledge and application of scientific achievements and that I accept in full the contributions formulated by the candidate.

8. Assessment of the publications related to the dissertation

The competition documents include 5 publications which exceeds the minimal requirements – a joint study in English in a journal indexed and referenced in Scopus, and four independent articles (two in Bulgarian and two in English) in peer-reviewed scientific journals and collections. All publications meet the requirements for applying for a doctoral competition and reflect the main results of the dissertation research, demonstrating consistent scientific activity and validation of the results achieved.

9. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements

Simeon Stoilov has submitted a detailed report on the fulfillment of the minimum required points according to the Regulations for the Implementation of the ZRASRB by groups of indicators, including the dissertation and five publications. The competition documents show that the procedure and results meet all the requirements for obtaining an educational and scientific degree “doctor” in professional field 3.8 “Economics,” in accordance with the current regulations and internal rules of the Institute of Economics at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

10. Personal participation of the doctoral student

The content of the dissertation, the clearly demonstrated author's opinion and the formulated conclusions, as well as the declaration of originality, convince me that the doctoral student personally conducted the research and participated in all stages of the analysis. The sources used are correctly cited in the dissertation and publications. The work demonstrates an ability for independent research, critical analysis, and theoretical understanding, which is why it can be confidently assumed that the work is original and free of plagiarism.

11. Abstract

The abstract is 35 pages long and provides a very good and comprehensive overview of the results of the research presented in the dissertation – a concise presentation, professionally formulated objectives and tasks, justification of the chosen structure, methodology, and research methods. The abstract presents the contributions of the research, which can be accepted as accurately reflecting the results achieved and demonstrating the necessary sober self-assessment of the author. This is a kind of declaration of Simeon Stoilov's promising future development in the field of research.

12. Critical remarks and recommendations

A study like this, dedicated to such a difficult and diverse subject invites reflection, questions, and considerations related to the further development of the author's research activity. In this sense, the critical comments presented below should be understood as recommendations.

First, despite the clear argumentation for the choice of a qualitative methodological approach,

a more detailed discussion of the possibilities for future quantitative application of the developed REM model could be considered. This would increase its practical applicability and measurability.

Second, the comparative analysis with other countries is informative, but in some parts it could be supplemented with clearer criteria for comparability and the selection of specific indicators. This would facilitate the perception of the conclusions by readers with a stronger empirical focus.

Also, given the importance of the topic for public policies, a clearer distinction between short-term, medium-term, and long-term recommendations in the national roadmap could be recommended. This would increase its usefulness to practitioners.

The critical comments made in no way diminish the already highlighted significance of the contributions and advantages of the dissertation and should be considered as recommendations for Simeon Stoilov's future scientific work.

13. Personal impressions

My acquaintance and joint work with Simeon Stoilov convince me that he is a motivated, highly professional person with clear and well-argued opinions on many issues, especially those related to his scientific interests, and has serious potential for future academic and scientific development.

14. Recommendations for future use of the dissertation's contributions and results

The possibilities for future use of the scientific and applied scientific contributions of the dissertation are significant. I recommend that the results be more widely disseminated through participation in international scientific forums and publication in refereed journals. The developed REM model and the national roadmap have the potential to be developed into a separate monograph that can be used both as a teaching aid and as a practical guide for experts and policymakers in the field of innovative and sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation *contains scientific, scientific-applied, and applied results that represent an original contribution to science* and **meet all the requirements** of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. The presented materials and dissertation results **fully comply** with the specific requirements of the Regulations for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at the Economic Research Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

The dissertation shows that Simeon Stoilov **has** in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in Professional Field 3.8. "Economics", **demonstrating** qualities and skills for conducting independent scientific research.

In view of the above and on the basis of the positive results achieved in the dissertation, the nature of the critical comments made, and in accordance with the accepted criteria for obtaining a doctoral degree, **I confidently recommend to the esteemed scientific jury that Simeon Stoilov be awarded the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in Professional Field 3.8 "Economics" in Higher Education Area 3 "Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences," Professional field 3.8 "Economics", doctoral program "World Economy and International Economic Relations".**

19.01.2026

Reviewer:

/Assoc. Prof. Eduard Marinov, Ph.D., D.Sc./