

EXPERT OPINION

by: Professor Veselin Borislavov Vuchkov, PhD – lecturer at New Bulgarian University, member of the Scientific Jury in accordance with Order No 3-RK-209/13.05.2024 of the Rector of NBU,

Subject: Award of the scientific degree "PhD"

in the professional field 3.6.LAW

PhD program and scientific specialty "Constitutional Law" at NBU,

Candidate: Peter Vladislavov Slavov

I. Brief biographical information about the candidate

The dissertation candidate, Mr. Peter Vl. Slavov, holds a Master of Law degree from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". He also holds bachelor's and master's degrees in the field of higher economic education. The dissertation was developed in the form of independent preparation in the Department of "Law" of New Bulgarian University, under the scientific supervision of Prof. Ekaterina Mihaylova, PhD.

II. General characteristics and structure of the dissertation

The title of the dissertation is: "Guarantees for Constitution compliant legislation". The presented work is structured in five parts, it also contains an introduction and a conclusion, as well as a list of references (bibliography). The total volume of the dissertation is 251 pages.

III. Relevance and significance

The topic of the dissertation is relevant and significant and this is beyond any doubt. The Constitution in force was adopted in 1991, and a thirty-three-year period is sufficient from the point of view of allowing a synthesis of accumulated experience and relevant scientific analysis through the prism of the existing guarantees for the constitutionality of the legislative process. The series of amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria also open up a field for author's scientific expression, this also applies to the amendments to the Constitution as of December 2023. Of course, the volume of legal normative acts adopted during this historical institutional period is enormous – for this reason, the empirical base is rich and fruitful. That is why the selection of a topic for a dissertation is emphasized as early as at the very beginning of the work on the doctoral studies, and the achieved result confirms the scientific significance of the chosen topic.

IV. Main contributions (scientific and applied science) and results: characteristics and evaluation

I will highlight two of the more significant contributions:

First, the work is comprehensive. A prerequisite for achieving this result is good the formulated topic. It is true that scientific publications on the subject of constitutionality of the legislative process are numerous and they are a necessary element of any theoretical constitutional matter. The contributing point here is the concentration of the various challenges and interpretations in a single scientific work. Moreover, as I mentioned, the text is thorough and comprehensive, structuring all important elements in sequence: legislative initiative, rules of organization and procedure of the National Assembly, parliamentary committees, parliamentary procedures, publicity and transparency of procedures (impact assessments, public consultations), bodies and mechanisms for constitutional legislative process. At the very beginning of the dissertation the author has precisely formulated the two groups of main safeguards to ensure a constitutionally compliant legislation: a) preemptive mechanisms; (b) follow-up mechanisms. I also appreciate the represented historical context in two directions: Firstly, reflections through the prism of the constitutions of the third Bulgarian state – the Tarnovo Constitution (1879), the Constitution of 1947, the 1971 Constitution and the 1991 Constitution; Secondly, reasoning through the prism of parliamentarism and constitutionalism on a European and global scale.

Secondly, the dissertation results in the formulation of specific conclusions and (based on them) specific proposals. In some places, the author Peter Slavov reaches the smallest details and examples, to which his previous life as a Member of Parliament contributes and his current role as a lawyer. I appreciate the formulated proposals for improvement of the legislative process with a view to preventing unconstitutionality, especially in the last part of the dissertation research – they will be most useful if taken into account in forthcoming legislative or constitutional revisions, or in specific legislative and institutional efforts (with the political and expert will, of course).

The exposition is richly illustrated by relevant tables and graphs. On the basis of the above, I believe that the author of the dissertation has in-depth theoretical knowledge of the specialty and a definite ability to independent scientific research; The work contains scientific and scientifically applied results that represent an original contribution to science.

V. Evaluation of publications and authorship

The author presents six publications on the topic of the dissertation, and I accept four of them (two of the publications are in a newspaper and a website outside the field of science). The abstract comprehensively and reliably reflects the structure and content of the Dissertation.

VI. Literary awareness and competence

In the body of the dissertation, the sources from the bibliographic list are cited appropriately and correct. 127 bibliographic units in different languages were used, incl. resources from the Internet. Separately, the cited normative and judicial acts, as well as verbatim minutes of meetings of institutions. Additionally, there are 340 separate footnotes. All this testifies to the significant information awareness of the PhD student.

VII. Critical notes and recommendations

I will formulate one note and three recommendations. Note: in structural terms, the work could be improved through more pronounced and shaped chapters and sections. Recommendations: (a) some of the parts (e. g. on the historical development of institutes) stand a little apart from the focus of the exhibition and are not organically "woven" into the studied topic; b) the author should to express and defend his own position more boldly, as he has a theoretical and practical resources for this (e. g. on the topic of the individual constitutional complaint); c) some stylistic review with a view to possible future publication in a separate book would not be unnecessary, including avoiding (in some places) excessive journalistic style.

VIII. Conclusion

Proceeding from the positive assessment of the presented dissertation and taking into account the serious professional and expert experience of the candidate Peter Vl. Slavov, with conviction I express my positive assessment and recommendation to the Scientific Jury to vote for awarding the candidate the educational and scientific degree of "PhD".

June 25, 2024

Jury Member:

Sofia /prof. V. Vuchkov, PhD/