

# OPINION

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Subject: "Associate Professor" Competition In The Field Of Higher Education 3. Social, Economic And Legal Sciences, Professional Field 3.8 Economics (Political Economy - Microeconomics And Labor Market)

## **1. Information About The Competition.**

The competition was announced for the needs of the Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", according to a decision of the Faculty Council of FESN, Meeting Minutes № 143 of 29.05.2020, № 143 from 29.05.2020, Law For Development Of The Academic Staff In The Republic Of Bulgaria and Regulations For The Organization And Conduct Of Competitions For Acquiring Scientific Degrees And For Holding Academic Positions At The Paisii Hilendarski University Of Plovdiv, and has been published in the State Newspaper, issue 57 from 26.06.2020.

I participate in the composition of the scientific jury of the competition as an external member according to Order № P33-4132 from 25.08.2020 of the Rector of Plovdiv University.

One candidate participates in the competition. The assessment of the candidate for the academic position "Associate Professor" is prepared according to National Minimum Requirements Of To Law For Development Of The Academic Staff In The Republic Of Bulgaria (Art. 26) and of the Regulations For Its Application (Art. 1).

## **2. Information About The Candidate In The Competition.**

Stefan Atanasov Raychev has a bachelor's degree in Political Science and a master's degree (2009) in Human Resources Management from the University of Plovdiv "P. Hilendarski ". Since 2016 he has a PhD of Economics. From October 2016 to October 2017 he was an Assistant, and from October 2017 until now Mr. Raychev is a Ch. Assistant Professor in Economics. Prepares and conducts lectures and exercises in Labor Economics, Public Economics and Economics. The accumulated experience of the candidate as a lecturer and assistant during these years is a proof of high professionalism, serious expertise and good achievements in both teaching and research. At the same time, Stefan Raychev participates in a number of research projects, as an expert member of the research team, which develops his competencies.

## **3. Fulfillment Of The Mandatory National Minimum Quantitative Requirements For The Academic Position Of "Associate Professor".**

The candidate Stefan Raychev meets the mandatory conditions set in Art. 53 and Art. 54 of Law For Development Of The Academic Staff In The Republic Of Bulgaria and Art. 65 (1) of the Regulations For Development Of The Academic Staff In PU "P. Hilendarski", because:

- He has obtained an educational and scientific degree of PhD.
- He is the author of a significant number of scientific publications on the topic of the competition, inch and two co-authored monographs reviewed by two scientific reviewers and has the required number of citations.
- Has held the academic position of Ch. Assistant Professor since 2017.
- There is no proven plagiarism in scientific papers.

Ch. Assistant Professor, PhD Stefan Raychev presents a list of scientific papers that prove the formation of 463.9 points, according to the approved National Minimum Requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" of Law For Development Of The Academic Staff In The Republic Of Bulgaria (Art. 26) And The Regulations For Its Application (Art.1) and 208.3 points according to "Additional Requirements For The Academic Position "Associate Professor" To Art. 58 Of The Regulations For Development Of The Academic Staff In PU" P. Hilendarski ", or a total of the points from the obligatory and additional requirements - 672.2 points.

#### **4. Evaluation Of The Teaching Activity.**

After winning a competition in 2017 in the Department of Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Ch. Assistant Professor PhD Raychev teaches in various courses at the Bachelor's Degree and works actively with students in various programs and projects.

The reference for the teaching work shows that for the period 2016/2020 Ch. Assistant Professor PhD Stefan Raychev has a classroom employment of 1060 hours, which includes lectures and exercises in the following disciplines - Microeconomics (40 hours), Economics (255 hours), Labor Economics (304 hours), Human Resources Management (247 hours) and Public Economics (214 hours). The other employment of the candidate for the period 2014/2020 is 295 hours, which includes pedagogical practice (consultations and examination of course projects - 90 hours, semester exams - 205 hours), or the total employment (classroom and other) is 1355 hours.

From the presented documents of the candidate Stefan Raychev it is clear that he approaches the educational work responsibly, constantly improving and updating the educational content in the disciplines led by him. Develops a detailed curriculum and training course in Economics (adopted by the Department Council of „Economic Sciences“ with Meeting Minutes №109 from 07.11.2016) and a curriculum in Public Economics (adopted by the Department Council of "Economic Sciences" with Meeting Minutes № 116 of 12.06.2017). In his activity the candidate covers other disciplines related to Microeconomics - Labor Economics and Human Resources Management, which deserves high praise.

Based on the above, it can be summarized that Ch. Assistant Professor PhD Stefan Raychev is an established lecturer in the field of microeconomics and in particular Labor Economics. The work experience of the candidate speaks of a well-realized preparation for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.8 Economics (Political Economy - Microeconomics and Labor Market).

#### **5. Characteristics Of The Presented Scientific Papers/Publications.**

The candidate participates in the competition with 16 publications in specialized scientific publications and publishing houses. From them:

- 2 co-authored monographs, reviewed by two scientific reviewers (University Publishing House “Paisii Hilendarski”, Plovdiv), in which the author's text is over 100 pages.
- Published chapter of a collective monograph.
- 13 articles and reports published in specialized scientific journals (including Scopus), of which 7 publications in English.
- The majority of the publications are co-authored (4 independent).

The following additional publications are also presented:

- 1 published book based on a defended dissertation for award of educational and scientific degree PhD.
- 1 textbook on Economics (co-authored).

In addition, evidence was presented (Official note from the "Scientific and Project Activity" division at the University of Plovdiv) for participation in 7 research projects.

The presented documents and publications give an idea of the active research and teaching activity in the years after his occupation of the academic position Ch. Assistant Professor in 2017. The active research activity of the candidate allows to make for this period a significant number of publications, strongly focused on the topic of the competition - Microeconomics and Labor Market.

In summary, I can assess that the presented and proven quantitative and qualitative indicators of the scientific output of the candidate cover and even exceed the established National minimum requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor", according To Law For Development Of The Academic Staff In The Republic Of Bulgaria And “Additional Requirements For The Academic Position “Associate Professor” Of The Regulations For Development Of The Academic Staff In PU “P. Hilendarski”.

In the work of the candidate the most significant scientific field is related to the analysis of the impact of integration processes and globalization on the labor market, which brings to the fore the new economic paradigms, the knowledge economy, the green economy, sustainable development and growth, the circular economy, which model the structure of employment and the nature of jobs.

In the second place are the publications dedicated to the evaluation of the efficiency of the public sector through the use of appropriate tools, as well as the effective use of active labor market policies as a tool for activating the young population and their inclusion in the labor market.

Third are publications on the need for economic and social policies to achieve sustainable, inclusive and smart economic growth, based on the social inclusion of all groups and especially those at risk, lifelong learning policies and the role of social entrepreneurship.

In the monograph (main habilitation thesis, co-authored) „Social Cohesion (National, Regional And Structural Dimensions In The Context Of Bulgaria-Euwestem Balkans)“, the candidate (according to the presented separation protocol) makes an in-depth empirical economic analysis of national, regional and structural dimensions of social cohesion in the context of Bulgaria - EU - Western Balkans. An assessment of the achieved level of social cohesion in terms of the labor market, education and social conditions in the countries of the Western Balkans and the EU has been made. The results of cohesion policies are also analyzed.

In the monograph (co-authored) "Impact Of Globalization On The Nature Of Jobs And Employment" the candidate (according to the presented separation protocol) explores and analyzes the relationship - "Employment, Dynamics And Dependencies In The Main Types Of Employment According To Working Hours." The study assesses the effects of technological progress/innovation on the labor market and in particular on the nature/structure of jobs. Emphasis is also placed on policies that stimulate the spread of innovation, as well as on the results of their action.

In the presented scientific papers and publications the candidate considers current and significant issues related to the problems of the labor market, the condition and the reasons for the inactivity of the young Bulgarians, trends in the disparities between labor productivity and wages, the relationship between youth employment and sustainable growth, the role of innovation, the macroeconomic dimensions of the phenomenon of working poor, etc.

The research shows a good knowledge of the theoretical foundations and development of problems, skills for reasoned analysis and derivation of possible solutions.

An assessment of the quality of the scientific production can be made to a very large extent by the number of citations of the candidate's publications. The attached reference shows 6 citations, incl. 2 citations of publications in journals that are indexed in Web of Science and Scopus.

## **6. Evaluation Of The Main Scientific And Scientific-Applied Contributions.**

The evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied activity of the candidate is a result of the proposed list of the scientific works of Ch. Assistant Professor PhD Stefan Raychev for participation in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor - 13 articles and reports published in specialized scientific journals, including 4 independent and 7 publications in English, 2 monographs (co-authored) , published chapter of a collective monograph.

The results overlap significantly with the author's contributions and can be summarized as being mainly in labor market research, public sector efficiency, economic and social policies and the teaching of this issue.

The monograph „Social Cohesion (National, Regional And Structural Dimensions In The Context Of Bulgaria-Euwestem Balkans)“, published in 2019 provides a broad theoretical overview and methodological analysis of a particularly topical issue in recent years - social cohesion, the result from the ongoing integration and globalization processes, accompanied by economic, social and demographic changes. As a result of the in-depth empirical economic analysis of the national, regional and structural dimensions of social cohesion (EU - Bulgaria - Regions In Bulgaria) the candidate makes significant conclusions and recommendations about the role of public policies, which at this stage fail to contribute to convergence of Bulgaria and the EU and this is a signal for their rethinking.

In the monograph "Impact Of Globalization On The Nature Of Jobs And Employment" the candidate (according to the presented separation protocol) examines and analyzes the relationship - "Employment, Dynamics And Dependencies In The Main Types Of Employment According To Working Hours" and make the following conclusions:

- Globalization has the strongest impact on the labor market through the development of technology, new management methods, the need for new skills, knowledge and skills, changes in

economic relations, liberalization and internationalization of commodity, capital and labor flows, which brings to the fore the need for new economic paradigms (knowledge economy, green economy, sustainable development and growth, circular economy) that model the structure of employment and the nature of jobs.

- Empirical results and regulated strategies and policies at local, regional, national and supranational levels direct the role of the state towards regulating and managing global influences and consequences, through technologies and innovations, adapting to new realities and managing economic and social consequences.

The presented works of the candidate in the competition, as well as the results of his overall research and teaching activities allow the following positive results to be derived, incl. contributions summarized in the following guidelines:

- *Scientific contributions*, related to enrichment and further development of theoretical categories and methodological issues that allow deepening, expanding and enriching theoretical knowledge about the functioning of the labor market in the context of globalization and integration processes, which are accompanied by economic, social and demographic changes and the need for new economic and social policies. The study of current and significant issues related to labor market problems, the condition and reasons for the inactivity of young Bulgarians, trends in the disparities between labor productivity and wages, the relationship between youth employment and sustainable growth, the role of innovation, the macroeconomic dimensions of the phenomenon of working poor, etc.

- *Scientific and applied contributions* related to empirical research and summarized results of social policies that stimulate employment, social entrepreneurship, the role of innovation, knowledge, lifelong learning and their impact on young people, the relationship between youth employment and sustainable growth and the role and importance of sustainable growth policy in reducing youth unemployment and promoting youth employment.

### **7. Main Critical Remarks And Recommendations.**

The main recommendations and remarks to the teaching and research activity of the candidate are related in the first place to the need for more active individual research work, in which to clearly distinguish his own contribution, and in the case of co-authorship to be clearly defined who is the author of which part (chapter, paragraph). It is also necessary to increase its individual participation in international scientific forums and, accordingly, and more standalone publications in foreign scientific specialized publications, in order to make its achievements in the chosen scientific field more visible.

In the future to be actively involved in the preparation of full-time and part-time doctoral students.

### **8. Conclusion.**

The presented evidence and the evaluations of the scientific, teaching and research activity of the candidate prove that he meets the requirements of Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the criteria of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the academic position "Associate Professor".

All this gives me reason to propose to the esteemed scientific jury to give **a positive assessment and proposed to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" to elect and approve Ch. Assistant Professor PhD Stefan Atanasov Raychev for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics (Political Economy - Microeconomics and Labor Market).**

10/18/2020

Signature: .....

(Assoc. Prof. PhD Aneta Marichova)