

## REVIEW

by **Dr. Rumyana Petrova Kolarova - Professor at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski "**

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
for the academic position of **'Associate Professor'**  
**at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"**

Higher education field *Social, economic and legal sciences*,  
Professional field *PN 3.3 Political sciences (Elections and electoral systems)*

In the competition for 'associate professor', announced in the State Gazette, issue 40 from 14.05.2021 and in the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Political Science and National Security at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, there is one participant - Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadjieva from the Department of *Political Science and National Security*, Faculty of *Economics and Social Sciences*, Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

### **1. General presentation of the received materials**

At the first, inattentive meeting of the scientific jury, the reviewers were elected.

The following materials were received for review:

1. application for admission to participate in the competition;
2. CV in European format;
3. diploma for higher education with acquired educational-qualification degree "master" - notarized copy;
4. diploma for educational and scientific degree "doctor" - notarized copy;
5. list of the scientific works;
6. reference for compliance with the minimum national and faculty requirements;
7. annotations of the materials under art. 65. from PRASPU, including self-assessment of the scientific contributions;
8. declaration for originality and authenticity of the attached documents;
9. certificate of work experience;
10. documents for teaching load;
11. documents for research work;
12. documents according to the additional requirements of the respective faculty;
13. other documents.

The documents and materials submitted by Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Dobрева Pastarma-Dzhieva meet all the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Rules of PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

**Subject:**

By order № P33-3167 of 13.07.2021 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) I was appointed a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of 'associate professor' in PU in the higher education field of Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field PN 3.3 Political sciences (Elections and electoral systems), announced for the needs of the Department of Political Science and National Security at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences.

The only candidate who submitted documents for participation in the announced competition is Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadjieva from the Department of Political Science and National Security, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

The set of materials presented by Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzheva, is in accordance with the Regulations for development of the academic staff of the University of Plovdiv, and includes the following documents: 1. application for admission to the competition; 2. autobiography in European format; 3. diploma for higher education with acquired educational-qualification degree "master" - notarized copy; 4. diploma for educational and scientific degree "doctor" - notarized copy; 5. list of the scientific works; 6. reference for compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements; 7. annotations of the materials under art. 65. of PRASPU, including self-assessment of contributions; 8. declaration for originality and authenticity of the attached documents; 9. certificate of work experience; 10. documents for teaching load; 11. documents for research work; 12. documents in accordance with the additional requirements of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, adopted by the Faculty Council № 143 of 29.05.2020; 13. other documents - list of participations in international partnerships, public lectures, maintained internet sites and experience as a reviewer of an indexed scientific publication.

The candidate Dr. Daniela Pastarmadzheva has submitted a total of 26 scientific publications - 3 studies, 1 monograph, 1 textbook, 10 articles and 11 reports at scientific conferences, all in the field of PN 3.3 Political Science. 9 scientific papers submitted on the dissertation defence and for competition for Ch. Assistant Professor, and 12 scientific papers outside the scientific field of the competition. Ten of the publications are in Bulgarian and the remaining 16 of the publications are in English. Certificated for participation in scientific projects, scientific forums, scientific organizations, etc. are also presented.

## **2. Brief biographical data (of the applicant)**

Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva graduated Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of National and World Economy and defended her PhD thesis in “Political Science on Political Subcultures in Bulgaria in the Process of Transition to Democracy (Comparative Study of Party and Generational Subcultures)”. She has eight years of teaching experience - from 2013 to 2016 as a part-time assistant professor and assistant professor at the University of National and World Economy, and since March 2016 as Ch. Assistant Professor at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". She has lectured twice at foreign universities as part of the Erasmus + program. Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva participates in research and practical projects, organizing research activities together with students. She is a member of the Bulgarian Association for Political Science.

## **3. General characteristics of the candidate's activity**

*Assessment of educational and pedagogical activity* – Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva has a significant teaching load in three main disciplines ("Elections and Electoral Systems", "Political Culture" and "Comparative Political Studies"), which she teaches at two specialties ("Political Science" and "Public Administration" ( full-time and part-time training). She also teaches a general course in Political Science at four specialties - Public Administration, Business Management, Tourism Business Management and National Security. The publications and specifically the textbook, which are included in the list of works submitted for the competition, give sufficient grounds to conclude that all research work of Dr. Pastarmadzheva is related to the above mentioned three main problem areas; current the focus of her endeavours is in the field of "Elections and Electoral Systems". The textbook presented for the competition (*Methods for calculating the election result*, 81 pages) gives both a general description of all varieties of the three main electoral systems and specific examples for determining the election result in each of them. For each specific case, an internet connection is provided to the ballots format and the results of the last elections. I highly appreciate the textbook, as I am convinced that it perfectly meets the needs of the learning process and give evidence of the high quality of teaching work of Ch. Assistant Professor Pastarmadzheva, guaranteeing a good balance between knowledge and skills (with three main elements - theoretical level, empirical orientation / empirical scope, as well as

active feedback with students). Daniela Pastarmadjieva has twice lectured on the Erasmus program - at the University of Cappadocia, Turkey and the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL), Portugal.

### ***Evaluation of the scientific and applied scientific activity of the candidate***

The works presented for the competition include one monograph, three studies and a large number of articles. All of them are within the scientific field of the announced competition, and there is no coincidence or overlap with publications used in other procedures (doctoral dissertation and competition for chief assistant). The list of publications for the minimum national requirements includes a monograph, which is based on the defended doctoral dissertation, but it is not in the list of publications in the competition. By volume and scientometric indicators the list of scientific works of Ch. Assistant Professor Daniela Pastarmadjieva meets the requirements of the national minimum requirements according to the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 2b) and the Regulations for its implementation (Art. 1a, para. 1), significantly exceeding them in some indicators. Four of the articles have been published in referenced and indexed editions. Two of the studies and eleven of the articles are co-authored, and in seven of them Dr. Pastarmadzheva is the first named author. She participates in a large number of national and international research and educational projects - three of them within the Research Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science and two under the Operational Program "Science and Education for Smart Growth".

### ***Contributions (scientific, scientific-applied, applied) and citations***

The main scientific contribution of Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva is related to the comparative analysis of electoral systems. In this problem field and respectively in the list of papers in the scientific specialty of the competition are 14 publications - 1 independent monograph, 1 textbook, 5 articles in scientific journals (Appendices 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.8), two of which (Appendices 4.2 and 4.3) in a scientific journal indexed in primary databases (Scopus and Web of Science) and 7 reports (Appendices 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.9, 5.10, 5.13).

Daniela Pastarmadzheva analyses the electoral systems in three main aspects: / 1 / their role and significance in terms of the governance model and the quality of democracy in the respective countries; / 2 / comparative analysis of the different methods for calculating the election results in view of the representation of minority groups, small parties and regional communities; / 3 / analysis of the phenomenon "electoral engineering", its causes and effects.

The organic unity of the works submitted for the competition, the natural evolution in the research approach, the expansion of the research field and the refinement of the scientific tools are impressive.

The main contributions are in all three mentioned problem areas - first, ch. Assistant Professor Daniela Pastarmadjieva analyses and compares the electoral systems and parameters of the political process chronologically in Bulgaria, the Balkans and 183 countries, confirming, rejecting or not finding sufficient grounds to evaluate “a tree of hypotheses” related to the indicators 'efficiency of governance', 'political stability and non-violence', 'rule of law', 'income level', 'media freedom', 'perception of corruption', 'human development index'. (Appendices 1, 4.2., 4.6., 4.8., 5.1., 5.5., 5.10., 5.13.). In the second problem area, she compares methodologies for calculating election results, focusing on proportional and mixed systems, and assesses the electoral results with regard to the degree of representation of minorities, regional entities, and small parties. (Appendices 1, 2, 5.9., 5.10.). In the third problem area the contribution of Dr. Pastarmadjieva is first, the definition of the concept of "electoral engineering" and secondly, the operationalization of this concept in indicators such as the number of seats in one constituency, the method of transforming votes into seats, the electoral threshold, the structure of the bulletin, and the total number of seats in the representative assembly (parliament). These two contributions determine a third one - analysis of the change in the electoral rules and procedures as a process of implementation of "electoral engineering" and assessment of its effects. (Appendices 1, 4.1., 4.3., 5.2., 5.4., 5.9.). In perspective, this approach and the achieved scientific results give Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva the opportunity to continue her research by examining the correlations between the existing electoral systems on the one hand and political stability, governance efficiency, and the quality of democracy on the other.

I will dwell in more detail on the presented monograph *The Majority Electoral System and the Development of Societies*. This book is based on the previous publications, but provides both general and in-depth study, more complex and precise scientific analysis in the three problem areas mentioned above. Structurally, the monograph begins with a study of the phenomenon of "electoral engineering" (first chapter), traces the Bulgarian debate on the majority system after 1989 (second chapter) and includes an empirical study based on secondary processing of information, which analyses the relationship between the type of electoral system and the quality of the political process (third chapter). This third chapter uses statistical methods to analyse data from nine indices

used to assess political institutions, social and economic development on a global scale. At the heart of this analysis is the development of a database of electoral systems of 183 countries, as well as an analysis of the correlation with data from nine indices maintained by reputable international organizations, think tanks and foundations with a global reach. The study was conducted precisely, with impressive accuracy in formulating a tree of hypotheses for each of the nine main correlations studied. Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva demonstrates remarkable scientific integrity and draws her conclusions by realistically evaluating the ambiguous results. It is expected that the results of this large-scale comparative study will not meet the expectations for a definite result, but the correct analysis is the great merit of this chapter. The overall assessment of the monograph should emphasize the productive use of three complementary approaches, which reveal three aspects of the process of electoral systems change - /1/ targeted policies for reform aimed at increasing the disproportion of electoral systems, /2/ public debate concerning the introduction of a majority electoral system (through an analysis of a specific case - Bulgaria) and /3/ possible long-term effects of the functioning of the electoral systems. The monograph testifies to the high erudition of its author on the subject, her in-depth research interest and the considerable volume and scope of research work. The contributing nature of this work is indisputable.

The number of references to the publications of Dr. Pastarmadzhieva exceed (double more) the minimum requirements for the academic position of "associate professor". There are five citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review (four of them in English), as well as twelve citations in unreferenced journals with scientific review (ten of which are in English and Russian).

Undoubtedly, all quantitative indicators of the national criteria for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" have been met, as well as the additional requirements adopted by the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences. The cited references to the works of Dr. Pastarmadjieva give reason to state with conviction that her publications and contributions have been evaluated and effectively used by colleagues who publish in the same scientific area.

#### **4. Evaluation of the personal contribution of the candidate**

From the presented separation protocols and in the overall reading of the scientific papers submitted for the competition, one can clearly distinguish the contribution of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva from the contribution of her co-authors. Undoubtedly, the

self-assessment of the scientific contributions is correct and her publications are the result of her independent scientific research.

## **5. Critical remarks and recommendations**

Two recommendations can be made for the theoretical model used in a series of publications and specifically for the main publication (the monograph *The Majority Electoral System and the Development of Societies*). Quantitative analysis of the correlations between the type of electoral system and the basic parameters of the studied political systems will only benefit if several generally accepted indices of quality of democracy are used in parallel. An emblematic example of the advantages and disadvantages of such approach is Arend Leiphart's study in the 2012 edition of Arend Lijphart's *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (Chapter 16, pp. 274-95). The second recommendation is related to another aspect of this comparative analysis - certainly the correlation indices will be much more significant if we analyse the relationship between the electoral system and the processes of fragmentation and polarization of party systems in European democracies, including Bulgaria.

The third recommendation refers to the theoretical model used - the correlation coefficients will have much more significant values if the 183 countries considered are grouped both in regional clusters and in view of the consolidation of the democratic regime and the level of income (or GDP).

## **CONCLUSION**

Daniela Pastarmadzhieva has presented a significant number of scientific publications published after the materials used in the defence of ONS 'Doctor' and a competition for Chief Assistant. In the works and publications of Dr. Pastarmadzhieva there are original scientific and applied scientific contributions, which have received recognition, as a significant part of them are published in journals and scientific collections, which are referenced and indexed. Her theoretical works have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the teaching process. The scientific and teaching qualification of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Pastarmadjieva is undoubted.

The results achieved by Dr. Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva in teaching and research fully comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, adopted in connection with the Rules of the University of Plovdiv for the application of ZRASRB.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, I highly appreciate their significance and the scientific and scientific-applied contributions contained in them. This gives me all the necessary reasons to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences for election of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva to the academic position of ‘associate professor’ at the University of Plovdiv “P. Hilendarski” within the professional field PN 3.3 Political sciences (Elections and electoral systems).

12.09. 2021

Reviewer: .....

Prof. Dr. Romyana Kolarova