

Opinion statement

presented by **Associate professor, Blaga Blagoeva, Ph.D.**, UNWE, Department of political sciences; Research subject: 3.3 Political sciences

Re: materials for participation in competition for the occupation of the academic position “associate professor” in the field of higher education 3. “Social and law studies and economics” and professional field 3.3 “Political sciences” (Elections and electoral systems) at the Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”.

In the competition for “associated professor”, announced in the National newspaper, issue 40 from 14.05.2021 and on the Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” website for the needs of the Department of political sciences and national security from the Faculty “Social studies and economics”, has participated the candidate **Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva, Ph.D.** from the Department of political sciences and national security from the Faculty “Social studies and economics”.

1. General presentation of the procedure and of the candidate

With order № P33-3167 from 13.07.2021 issued by the rector of the Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” (PU) I’ve been chosen for a member of the board of scientific evaluation for the occupation of the academic position “**associate professor**” in PU in the field of higher education 3. “Social and law studies and economics” and professional field 3.3 “Political sciences” (Elections and electoral systems), **announced for the needs of** the Department of political sciences and national security from the Faculty “Social studies and economics”.

For participation in the announced competition only one candidate has submitted documents: **Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva, Ph.D.** from the Department of political sciences and national security from the Faculty “Social studies and economics” from PU “Paisii Hilendarski”.

The set of materials presented by Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva, Ph.D. on paper copies for participation in the competition is in full accordance with the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in Plovdiv University and it includes all necessary documents.

The candidate Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva has submitted a total of 50 scientific publications, 3 research studies, a monograph, an educational textbook and a list of 45 scientific research studies. There have been approved for reviewing 46 scientific publications which are separate from the dissertation and are accounted in the final evaluation, an educational textbook and ten research studies. Four scientific papers on the dissertation and twelve research projects outside the problems, related to the competition in question, are not to be reviewed. The distribution of the scientific publications is, as follows: 23 in the country and 6 abroad.

Alongside the so far mentioned, I'd like to point out that I know personally Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva and I have a strong impression from her academic and teaching activity. The applicant used to be my Ph.D. student in the Department of political sciences in UNWE for three years, as well as my assistant for two semesters. Daniela showed high results in her scientific, research, and teaching activity. She is hardworking, extremely well organized, and ambitious. The students' impressions of her work are entirely positive.

2. Short biography of the candidate

Daniela Pastarmadzhieva is a Ph.D. in political science, major in law, and has graduated from two educational courses with acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies, corresponding to level 8 of "PhD" of the National qualifications framework (NQF) of the Republic of Bulgaria. The main competencies of the candidate correspond completely to the competition's profile.

The teaching activity of Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva is related to the professional field "Political sciences", which also makes her a suitable candidate for the competition.

Alongside the so far mentioned the candidate has a good experience from participation in research projects – international, national, and university ones, with which she fulfills the requirements of the Law and the Rules.

Daniela's language culture and digital skills correspond to the modern requirements for a successful profile of a researcher and teacher.

3. General characteristics of the candidate's activity

3.1 Evaluation of the candidate's educational and pedagogical activity and preparation

The candidate has good teaching experience – lectures and seminars, corresponding to the professional field of the competition. The attached reference is definitive

proof for that. Entirely positive as well is Pastarmadzhieva's experience, gained from different work with the student audience – joint projects and forums, accompanied by publications. I can testify to the high evaluation the students have given about Daniela Pastrmadzhieva's work. I can say with certainty that she is among the well-recognized and respected teachers at PU.

3.2 Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and scientifically applicable activity

The candidate is participating in the competition with a completely satisfactory number of scientific publications. As seen from the reference, attached by Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobreva Pastarmadzhieva, and from her self-evaluation, there are publications related to the problem field of political sciences; publications corresponding closely to the competition. The publications attached are in Bulgarian and English language and include a monograph, a book of educational aid, research studies, articles and reports. All publications are on a good scientific level and demonstrate the professional competence, theoretical preparation, and scientific responsibility of the candidate.

In the monograph "The majoritarian electoral system and the development of the societies", the answer to the following question is being sought: "Is there a correlation between the type of electoral system and the level of development of the countries in the social, economic and political field?". The author analyses different countries and electoral systems based on precise criteria and defends the position that "the countries with proportional representation electoral systems show better results in more of the analyzed criteria than the countries using the majoritarian system". The analysis is correct and reflects the author's scientific position. It could be questioned whether or not the criteria for evaluation and analysis are enough; more attention could have been paid to the national historical and cultural specifics and whether or not they certify the author's conclusion. This, however, is a matter of a starting point of view. Daniela Pastarmadzhieva formulates her thesis logically, based on announced criteria. The monograph could be classified as a publication with scientific value, based on the wide analysis and the author's systematization of criteria and results.

High evaluation for usefulness in the context of the competition and the academic process deserves the educational tool "Methods of calculation of the electoral results (a book of educational aid for the subject "Elections and electoral systems")".

I assess as suitable for the scientific specialty of the competition the rest of the publications, mentioned by the candidate: 7 reports (доклади) and 5 articles in scientific magazines (2 of which published in magazines, indexed in primary databases – “Scopus” and “Web of Science”). Different aspects of the author’s researches are reflected in the publications, such as ones regarding the: correlation between the type of electoral system and different aspects of the countries’ functioning, such as level/index of democracy, representativeness, stability, succession in governance; the influence of the different methods of calculating the electoral results, and specifically in the proportional representation electoral systems, on the representativeness, participation of smaller political parties, use of votes, etc.; the purposes and methods of the electoral engineering and the factors, accounting for its’ necessity. I assess the mentioned researches and conclusions made as contributive moments in Daniela’s research activity.

All mentioned publications have not been used by the candidate in previous competitions.

3.3 Contributions (scientific, scientifically applicable, and applicable)

I accept as adequate and correct the self-evaluation of the candidate for the contributions in the scientific and research activity – scientific and scientifically applicable ones. They are a result of independent analyses and correct citations. A positive judgment deserves the processing and use of a wide extent of empiric data, attached to the candidate’s publications.

4. Evaluation of the candidate’s personal contribution

My general assessment is that in the publications, indicated for the competition, there is a scientific contribution from the candidate. The contributions formulated in the publications are personal merit of Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobрева Pastarmadzhieva. The analyses and citations are correct. I haven’t noted any case of misuse of authors and sources.

5. Critical notes and recommendations

I have no critical notes of formal nature or ones regarding the contents.

6. Conclusion

The documents and materials presented by **Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobreva Pastarmadzhieva** meet the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ADASRB, and the specific Regulations of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”.

The candidate has presented a significant number of scientific works, published after the materials used for the acquirement of the Ph.D. title. In the candidate’s works there are original scientific contributions that have received international recognition, and a **distinguished** number of them have been published in a variety of magazines and scientific anthologies from international academic publishing houses. The candidate’s theoretical elaborations find practical use, as part of them are directly orientated towards the academic work. **Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobreva Pastarmadzhieva’s** scientific and teaching qualifications are indubitable.

The results achieved by **Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobreva Pastarmadzhieva** in the academic and scientific research activity **completely** meet the specific requirements of the Faculty “Social studies and economics”, accepted in relation to the Regulations of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” for application of the ADASRB. After familiarization with the presented in the competition materials and scientific publications, analysis of their significance and the scientific and scientifically applicable contributions they contain, I find it reasonable to **assess positively** the candidature and to recommend to the scientific board of evaluation to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty “Social studies and economics” for the election of **Chief assistant professor Daniela Dobreva Pastarmadzhieva** for the academic position “associated professor” at the PU “Paisii Hilendarski” in in the field of higher education 3. “Social and law studies and economics” and professional field 3.3 “Political sciences” (Elections and electoral systems).

09.09.2021

Opinion statement prepared by:.....

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