

## **Opinion**

by

Professor, Dr. Daniela Bobeva,

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on the materials submitted for participation in the competition

for the academic position of "Associate Professor"

at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv,

in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics (scientific specialty "Political Economy - Public Sector Economics and Social Policy").

In the competition for "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue 94 of 12.11.2021 for the needs of the Department of Economic Sciences at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences (FINS), Dr. Blaga Madzhurova, Ch. Assistant Professor "Plovdiv University" "Paisii Hilendarski" is the only candidate.

### **1. General presentation of the candidate**

By order № RD-2164 / 11.01.2022 of the Rector of the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" I was appointed a member of the Scientific Jury in the above competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" and must prepare an opinion on the above. procedure and candidate.

The presented materials of the candidate Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Blaga Madzhurova in the competition are quite accurate and in accordance with the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of the University of Plovdiv, which allows me to prepare this opinion.

The candidate has a scientific and educational degree "Doctor" in political economy, which is also the subject of this competition. The scientific degree was obtained at the University of Plovdiv - Department of Economic Sciences at FINS.

The candidate has significant professional experience in various positions related to the topic of the competition: in the municipality of Plovdiv, in the Ministry of Economy and Energy, adv

sor to the Council of Ministers, and others. The work of these positions enables the candidate to apply and develop his academic career.

Since 2017, Blaga Madzhurova has been a senior assistant at the Department of Economic Sciences at FINS.

As the head of the department, of which the candidate is a member, I emphasize that the candidate has a high academic capacity, exceptional organizational qualities, professional loyalty and honesty and teamwork skills.

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

### ***2.1. Evaluation of the educational and pedagogical activity.***

Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Blaga Madzhurova exceeds the minimum requirements for teaching. It has a total of 1366 hours of classroom employment for the period 2017 - 2021. The teaching activity is related to the topic of the competition.

She lectures at the bachelor's degree in Social Policy, Social Policy and Social Programs, Public Service Management, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Economics.

The candidate has actively participated in the Erasmus program as a guest lecturer in the program at the University of Valladolid (Spain) and Turin (Italy).

### ***2.2. Fulfillment of the minimum national requirements under Art. 2 b of ZRASRB and the Regulations for its application (art. 1 a, para 1).***

According to the reference for fulfillment of the minimum national requirements under art. 26 of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", the candidate Dr. Madzhurova has 528.9 points with a required minimum threshold of 400 points. According to the additional indicators adopted by the Faculty Council (FS) of FINS, Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Blaga Madzhurova formed another 353.25 points, with a minimum threshold of 100 points

Candidate Blaga Madzhurova fully meets both the National Minimum Requirements, according to ZRASRB (Art. 2-b) and the Regulations for its implementation (Art. 1a, para. 1), and the Additional requirements for the academic position "Associate Professor", determined by the FS of the FINS.

### ***2.3. Evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied activity of the candidate.***

The candidate has presented a total of 22 scientific papers, including: 1 independent monograph; participation with sections / chapters in 3 collective monographs; 16 studies, scientific articles and

conference reports; 1 book (based on a defended dissertation), 1 textbook and a list certifying participation in 9 research papers (predominant part - projects funded by the Research Fund of the University of Plovdiv).

In this opinion, 16 scientific papers, 1 textbook and 9 research projects are accepted for evaluation. 4 scientific papers on the dissertation are not included (3 scientific articles plus 1 book based on the defended dissertation), as well as 2 scientific papers from the competition for chief assistant.

12 publications have been published in the country, and 4 scientific articles and reports - in foreign publications. Of the 11 scientific studies, articles and reports published, 8 are in English, which makes them accessible to a wider readership.

The new curricula and textbooks on Economics and Public Sector Economics, as well as the co-authorship with Prof. Y. Hristoskov of the textbook Social Policy (2020) should be highlighted in the publishing activity.

The mentioned 7 citations in scientific publications in the country and abroad, as well as in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review, reveal the candidate as a recognizable scientist.

I give a high assessment of the presented main habilitation thesis "Social evils - links with macroeconomic determinants and policies to overcome them", University Publishing House "Paisii Hilendarski", Plovdiv, 2021, 130 pages, ISBN 978-619-202-674-5, which is an independent scientific research and reaches results of theoretical and practical application.

The habilitation thesis shows excellent knowledge of the subject, skillful use of modern methodology and courage in questioning traditional scientific views.

In the collective work dedicated to social cohesion - Stoyanova, D., Raichev, St., Madzhurova, Bl. Social cohesion (National, regional and structural dimensions in the context of Bulgaria-EU-Western Balkans). UI Paisii Hilendarski, Plovdiv, 2019, p. 385, ISBN 978-619-202-442-0 also shows an innovative approach and new scientific results.

Although I do not agree with some of the theses, such as that "the working poor are on the one hand a cause and effect of economic growth", the study is a good basis for discussions and citations.

The candidate's academic activities are focused on the social field and recent research expands the candidate's creative portrait. The list of publications also includes those in the field of education, social entrepreneurship and other social topics. In the wide range of scientific interests of the candidate, policies are sought and identified to solve the relevant problems. Definitely the candidate has an ambition for a practical-applied effect of his academic activity.

Methodologically, her publications are sound and follow the principles of in-depth research.

#### ***2.4. Assessment of the personal contribution of the candidate***

The presented habilitation work and the author's publications are a personal contribution, which gives me reason to confirm that the candidate meets the norms of scientific ethics in connection with the procedure regulated in ZRASRB and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of PU. I do not find plagiarism in the candidate's work.

I confirm the scientific contributions that Dr. Madzhurova claims through her publications. I find it extremely fruitful from a theoretical point of view to combine macroeconomic depth with the focus on social policy in the scientific interests of Chief Madzhurova.

### **3. Critical remarks and recommendations**

Many of the candidate's publications, including those in international databases, are co-authored and, despite the separation protocols presented, it is difficult to assess personal contribution outside of collaboration in a research team.

To date, professional careers, publications, and scientific recognition have been largely concentrated at the University of Plovdiv. I recommend expanding academic and publishing activities beyond the university.

Thematically, I believe that the scientific specialization and focus in political economy corresponds to the scientific maturity of the candidate and gives a good perspective for development.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The documents and materials presented by Blaga Madzhurova meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRAS-RB), the Regulations for implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

The candidate in the competition has presented a significant number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of ONS "Doctor". In the works of the candidate there are original scientific and applied contributions, which have received national and international recognition as a representative part of them are published in books, journals and scientific collections published by academic publishers. Theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the educational work, and another part to the economic policy. Blaga Madzhurova's scientific and teaching qualification is significant and of high quality.

The results achieved by Blaga Madzhurova in the teaching and research activities fully comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University of Plovdiv for the implementation of the Law (ZRASRB).

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition, analysis of their importance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I confidently give a positive assessment and recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council. "Economic and Social Sciences" for the election of Blaga Madzhurova to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University of Plovdiv "P. Hilendarski" in the field of science 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional field 3.8. Economics (scientific specialty "Political Economy - Public Sector Economics and Social Policy")

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**The author of the Opinion:** .....

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