

## OPINION

by **Dr. Biser Hristov Petkov** - Associate Professor at the University of National and World Economy - Sofia

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
for the academic position of ‘**Associate Professor**’  
of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"  
in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences,  
professional field 3.8. Economics (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 and in the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Economic Sciences at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, as a candidate participates **Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Petrova Madzhurova** from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

### **1. General presentation of the procedure and the applicant**

By order № PD-21-43 of 11.01.2022 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) I was appointed a member of the scientific jury of the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in PU in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics (Political Economy, Public Sector Economics and Social Economy), announced for the needs of the Department of Economic Sciences at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences.

The only candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Petrova Madzhurova from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

Presented by Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Petrova Madzhurova set of materials on paper is in accordance with the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of PU, and includes the following documents:

- Request to the rector of the University of Plovdiv for admission to the competition;
- Curriculum vitae;
- Diploma of higher education with a master's degree;
- Diploma for PhD;
- List of scientific papers;
- Scientific papers (copies of publications);
- Information on compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements;
- Annotation of the materials under art. 65 of PRASPU;
- Self-assessment of contributions;
- Declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents;
- Certificate of work experience;
- Documents for educational work;
- Documents for research work;
- Other documents (certificates and diplomas).

The candidate Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Petrova Madzhurova has applied a total of 17 scientific papers, including 4 monographs (one independent, two co-authored and a chapter from a collective monograph), 1 book (based on a defended dissertation), 1 textbook (co-authored) and 11 scientific publications (co-authored) in Bulgarian and English. Separation protocols are attached for the monographic works and for 9 of the scientific publications in co-authorship.

According to the attached official note, Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Mazhurova has over 9 years of total work experience and the predominant part of the work experience is pedagogical. The professional experience of the candidate is multifaceted and is formed both at the municipal level (work in the administration and on projects of the municipality of Plovdiv) and at the national level (chief expert in the Ministry of Economy and Energy and head of the political office of the Deputy Prime Minister in social policy) and is a very good basis for the subsequent realization of Dr. Madzhurova as a university lecturer and researcher. After 2015, Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Madzhurova develops mainly research and teaching activities - initially as a part-time, and from May 1, 2017 as a full-time lecturer in the Department of Economic Sciences at the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski". In 2017 she defended hers PhD thesis on "Social transfers between fiscal pressure and social tolerance".

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

During the last four academic years Dr. Madzhurova has been actively involved in the development and teaching of several subjects (Social Policy, Social Policy and Social Programs, Public Services Management, Macroeconomics, Economics), which are in the field of the competition. With the accumulated classroom employment in the teaching of the listed disciplines from 1366 hours, active work with students and conducted two short-term academic mobilities on "Erasmus +" as a guest lecturer at the Universities of Valladolid (Spain) and Turin (Italy), Chief Assistant. Dr. Blaga Madzhurova is established as an authoritative and promising young teacher. The teaching and pedagogical activity of Dr. Madzhurova is complemented by her participation as a co-author of the textbook on the subject "Social Policy", published in 2020. The candidate complements and enriches his teaching work with active research - participates in nine research projects and publishes scientific results in authoritative scientific journals.

The scientific output with which the candidate participates in the competition can be related to several thematic areas: social policy and economic growth, social cohesion, new realities of the labor market (globalization, innovation, digital economy). These thematic areas fall entirely within the scientific specialty of the announced competition.

The 16 scientific publications submitted for participation in the competition (excluding the textbook "Social Policy") of the candidate can be grouped by type and importance as follows:

Monographs - 3 issues (one individual and two collective) and one chapter of a collective monograph (co-authored);  
Book - 1 issue (based on a dissertation);  
Articles and reports published in non - peer - reviewed journals or in edited collective volumes - 7 issues;  
Studies and articles published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in international databases with scientific information - 4 copies.

Eight of the articles were published in English, which undoubtedly gives greater visibility to the research results. Four of the candidate's publications are in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information (Scopus and Web of Science). Seven of the publications of Chief Assistant Dr. Madzhurova have been cited by other authors who have

published in authoritative scientific journals. The scientometric indicators listed so far testify that Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Madzhurova is well known and recognized in the scientific community dealing with issues of social policy, social cohesion and the labor market.

It should be noted that the predominant part of the publications of Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Madzhurova are co-authors. Most of them present the results of joint research carried out by a research team with a relatively permanent staff, formed by young lecturers from the Department of Economic Sciences at the University of Plovdiv.

A number of scientific contributions can be highlighted in the scientific works of Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Madzhurova. The most significant, in my opinion, are the scientific contributions of the candidate in the presented monograph with the nature of a habilitation thesis "Social evils - links with macroeconomic determinants and policies to overcome them." Examples of social policy through the prism of growth and in the context of macroeconomic imbalances, as well as the substantiation of the thesis of combining policies to promote economic growth with policies that allow the poor to participate, can be mentioned as specific scientific contributions to this research.

It is evident from the submitted report on the implementation of the requirements of the Law on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms that the candidate fulfills, and in some respects significantly exceeds, the minimum required number of points in all groups of indicators. With a minimum required 400 points of the mandatory groups of indicators, the candidate forms 528.9 points. Even more significant is the excess of points (353.25) of the candidate on additional indicators compared to the minimum required 100 points. Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Madzhurova covers all additional requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", introduced by the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

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

My remarks to Assistant Blaga Madzhurova PhD are not critical, but rather recommendations for her future development as a university lecturer and researcher. My main recommendation is to maintain its high publishing activity in the future by increasing the share of independent publications. In order to better ensure the learning process in the taught disciplines, it could focus on the development and publication of teaching aids / exercise manuals.

## CONCLUSION

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

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of the PhD thesis. In the works of the candidate there are original scientific and applied contributions, which have received international recognition as a representative part of them are published in journals and scientific journals published by international academic publishers. The theoretical developments of the candidate have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the educational work. The scientific and teaching qualification of Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Madzhurova is undoubted.

Achieved by Ch. Assistant Dr. Blaga Madzhurova results in teaching and research 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 ZRASRB.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition, analysis of their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to **give my positive assessment** and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Council of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences for election of Chief Assistant Dr. Blaga Petrova Madzhurova to the academic position of 'Associate Professor' at the University of Plovdiv "P. Hilendarski" in professional field 3.8. Economics (Political Economy, Public Sector Economics and Social Economy).

07.03.2022

Prepared the opinion: .....

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Biser Petkov**