

STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL OPINION

Delivered by:

**Teofana Valentinova Dimitrova, PhD –
associate professor at Plovdiv University**

"Paisii Hilendarski"

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition to occupy the academic position of "Associate professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"

by: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional direction 3.7. Administration and Management (Fundamentals of Management, Competitiveness of Business Organization)

In the competition for "associate professor" announced in the State Journal, no. 92 of 18.11.2022 and on the Internet page of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the department "Management and Quantitative Methods in the Economy" at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Asst. Prof. PhD Gergana Dimitrova Dimitrova participates as a candidate from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order No. PD-21-54 dated 16.01.2023 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of "Ass. Professor" in the PU in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction (PN) 3.7. Administration and Management (Fundamentals of Management, Competitiveness of the Business Organization), announced for the needs of the Department "Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics" (UKMI) at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences (FISN).

Only one candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Asst. Prof. PhD Gergana Dimitrova Dimitrova - PU "P. Hilendarski".

The set of materials presented by Dr. Dimitrova has been precisely prepared and is in full compliance with the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of the PU.

A total of 30 publications and a list of participation in 8 research/educational projects are attached. The distribution of scientific works is as follows: 1 monograph, 1 book based on a defended dissertation, 1 study, 14 articles (including 7 in Scopus/WoS) and 12 scientific reports (including

1 in Scopus/WoS). 1 textbook on "Competitiveness of the business organization" was added to the publication activity.

Gergana Dimitrova holds a bachelor's degree in "Business Management" (PU) and a master's degree in "Accounting and Control" (Agrarian University - Plovdiv). In 2019, she defended her dissertation and obtained the educational and scientific degree "PhD" in professional direction 3.8. Economics, Doctoral Program "Economics and Management (Industry)".

Since 2017, the candidate has been engaged in research and teaching activities in the Department of "Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics" at FISN. From the certificate of work experience provided (Appendix 13), it is clear that Dr. Dimitrova has a pedagogical experience in the position of "chief assistant" as of 01.12.2022 - 02 years, 02 months. and 24 days and obtained the Educational and Scientific Degree (ESD) "doctor" 03 years, 06 months ago. and 04 days, with which it meets the national and institutional requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (Article 24, paragraph 1: items 1 and 2a), the Regulations for the Implementation of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (PPZRAS-RB) (Art. 53, para. 1: items 1 and 2a) and the relevant Regulations of PU "Paisiy Hilendarski" (PRAS-PU) (Art. 65, para. 1: items 2 and 3a) for occupying the academic position "Ass. Professor".

Having familiarized myself with the presented documentation, I confirm that:

- the scientific output of the candidate corresponds to the minimum national requirements (defined in PPZRASRB) and to the additional faculty requirements for occupying the academic position "associate professor" (appendices 7, 8.1 and 8.2 also certify the positive assessment of this compliance, given by the head of UKMI and the Dean of FISN);
- the candidate's publications, professional qualifications and educational and teaching experience correspond to the scientific specialty of the announced competition.

I have known Gergana Dimitrova from her publications and personally - as one of the most dedicated colleagues at the Faculty. I cannot but share my best impressions of her outstanding research capacity and ability to work successfully in a team. I believe that she is an extremely capable, responsible, precise and empathetic person.

2. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

Gergana Dimitrova has extensive teaching activities. For the period 2019 – 2022, she conducted exercises/lectures on: Fundamentals of management, Placement, and Placement and Placement policy, Sports management and marketing, Marketing, Management in telecommunications, Competitiveness of the business organization of the specialties in the educational qualification degree (EQD) "bachelor" in four of the PU faculties. It is clear from Appendix 14 that for the academic year 2022/2023 it has classroom occupancy of 130 hours of lectures and 225 hours of exercises (in the scientific specialty of the current competition), which fulfills the requirement of the PRASPU (Art. 64, para 2) to occupy the academic position of "Associate Professor". The thematic content of the disciplines is supplemented and updated annually in accordance with modern achievements in theory and practice. The developed lecture course on Competitiveness of

the business organization is provided with an independent textbook. In parallel with her classroom work, Dimitrova participates in the preparation of reports - self-assessment according to procedures for program accreditation in FISN, conducting annual surveys among staff users, working together with students and PhD students from PU, etc.

I am confident that Asst. Prof. PhD Dr. Gergana Dimitrova fully satisfies the formal requirements in the part of educational activity for holding the academic position "associate professor". To this I would like to add the positive feedback students shared with me.

The analysis of the scientific publications gives reason to draw the conclusion that the scientific-research activity of Dr. Dimitrova is distinguished by a marked practically-applied value. Her good literary awareness, analytical thinking and precise synthesis are impressive.

The scientific production announced for participation in the current competition can be divided into the following three areas of the competition's subject matter:

- Competitiveness at the mezzo and micro level (publications 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 28, 29);
- Cluster approach and opportunities to increase competitiveness (publications 1, 5, 6, 14, 15, 17) and
- Science – education – business cooperation (publications 9, 13, 19, 22, 24, 26, 27, 30).

The monographic work "Cluster approach for competitive positioning of the Bulgarian wine industry" has a volume of 203 pages and is structured in four chapters. It is dedicated to the opportunities for the wine industry for competitive positioning by building regional wine clusters. It clarifies concepts such as competitiveness, competitive environment, competitive positioning, clusters and cluster approach, etc., proposes a methodology for researching the competitiveness of Bulgarian wine enterprises, presents results of conducted in-depth interviews, focus groups and questionnaires research in connection with the determination of competitive status, competitive position, competitive advantages and competitive potential in the implementation of joint/related activities, the presence of wine clusters in Bulgaria is identified.

No plagiarism has been found in the scientific works submitted for the competition. For collective publications, separation protocols are provided, identifying the contributions of individual authors.

I accept the thus made division of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions from the candidate for the competition (Appendix 11).

The total number of reported citations of scientific works is 23.

Table 1 shows that Dr. Dimitrova's scientific output exceeds almost twice the minimum required total number of points.

Dr. Dimitrova has participated in 4 national, 2 domestic and 2 international projects, which is proof of the application of her research skills in practice.

The general conclusion is that the candidate's scientific output meets the quality and exceeds the national criteria and the faculty requirements for the academic position "Associate Professor".

Table 1

Occupancy of an academic position "associate professor" Minimum	Minimum required points by groups of indicators according to PPZRASRB	Reported points by groups of indicators
Group A	50	50
Group B	100	100
Group C	200	200
Group D	50	312.5
Total	400	737.5

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3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no significant critical comments on the candidate's scientific works and teaching activities that should be highlighted in this opinion.

My recommendation to Dr. Dimitrova is to take leadership of a research project whose subject matter corresponds to her enduring academic interests, especially since she undoubtedly possesses the necessary skills and competencies to handle such an undertaking.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Asst. Prof. PhD Gergana Dimitrova Dimitrova meets all the requirements of the National Institute of Public Health and Welfare, the Ministry of Health and Welfare of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the EQD "doctor" and occupying the academic position "principal assistant". Her works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition, a representative part of which has been published in journals and scientific collections issued by international academic publishing houses. Her theoretic developments have practical applicability, and some of them are directly oriented towards academic work. Dr. Dimitrov's scientific and teaching qualifications are indisputable.

The achievements of Asst. Prof. PhD Dr. Gergana Dimitrova's results in the educational and research activities fully correspond to the additional requirements of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the PU for the application of ZRASRB.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and to recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty council of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences for the election of the head. Asst. Prof. PhD Gergana Dimitrova Dimitrova to the academic position of 'Ass. Professor' at PU "P. Hilendarski" by professional direction 3.7. Administration and management (Fundamentals of management, Competitiveness of the business organization).

February, 2023

Signature:.....

Associate Professor Teofana Dimitrova, PhD