



REVIEW

by Prof. Nikolay Marinov Nikolov,

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of the materials submitted to the competition
for the academic position of **Associate Professor**
in Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", in field of higher education 9. **Security and Defence**,
professional field **9.1. National Security, scientific specialty "Balkan Security, Foreign Policy
and Diplomacy"**

In the competition for "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue **32** of **09.04.2024** and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of **Political Science and National Security** at the **Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences**, the following candidates participate: **Ph. Plamen Atanasov Atanasov from "Oliva" JSC - Knezha, Chief Mechanic**, and **Asst. Dr. Goran Vladimirov Stoykovski from the Department of Political Science and National Security, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Paisii Hilendarski University**.

1. General presentation of the materials received

Subject: Order No. ПД-21-1184 of 07.06.2024 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of the competition for the academic position "**Associate Professor**" at PU, field of higher education 9.0. Security and Defence, professional field 9.1. National Security, scientific specialty "**Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy**", announced for the needs of the Department of **Political Science and National Security** at the **Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences**. The aim of the competition is to provide a lecturer with the necessary expertise and experience in the field of national security and related sectors for the scientific specialization "**Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy**".

The **following candidates** have applied for the competition:

1. Plamen Atanasov Atanasov PhD, from Oliva AD - Knezha, Chief Mechanic
2. chief asst. Goran Vladimirov Stoykovski PhD, lecturer at the Department of Political Science and National Security, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Paisii Hilendarski University

The submission by PhD Plamen Atanasov Atanasov's set of materials on paper and electronic media is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of PU and includes the following 19 documents. Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"; Diploma of PhD of Sciences issued by the Department of National and International Security at the NBU; List of scientific works; Reference for compliance with the minimum national requirements; Reference for compliance with the additional requirements of the FESS; Annotation of the materials with which the

candidate participates in the competition, including Self-assessment of the contributions, in Bulgarian and in English; declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents and of the originality of the Scientific contributions; Certificate of work experience from the Institute of Viticulture and Enology; list of published teaching materials; documents for scientific research work; scientific publications (copies), printed and electronic, including publications in international journals.

Reference for the candidate's lecture and extra-curricular activities: lecture course "Institutional Transmedia Image and Brand" - (FJMC) 15 h, exercise "Persuasive Communication" (FJMC) -30 h, lectures "Publicity of the 21st Century - the Doctor as a Communicator" (Medical University - Pleven) - 6 h, lectures "Doctor and Society Facing the Challenges of the 21st Century. Security Thinking in the Context of Public Health" (Medical University - Pleven) - 4 h., which are not relevant to the field of higher education "Security and Defence", professional field "National Security" and the specialty of the announced competition.

There is no reference for work with students and PhD students. Attached is a Reference for participation in scientific research projects, Reference for participation in international and national scientific forums and Membership in an authoritative creative and/or professional organization in the relevant scientific field.

The candidate Plamen Atanasov PhD has enclosed a total of 30 scientific works, 1 habilitation work - a published monograph in the relevant scientific field, 1 published monograph that has not been submitted as a major habilitation work under a previous or current procedure and has not been submitted in defense of the degree of Doctor of Science, 1 book with 3 independent chapters, 1 textbook and a list of 26 research papers. Of the publications submitted by Plamen Atanasov, **I accept for review three scientific works** (The monograph "*Issues of Public Diplomacy and Security. A Look at Bulgarian-Macedonian Relations in 1991-2024*", and the articles "*The Security of the State and the Security of Society in the Conditions of Advanced Globality*", "*Practical and Applied Approaches to the Use of Big Data for Intelligence Purposes*") in the specialty of the announced competition. 27 scientific papers-publications with a focus outside the specialty of the competition are not reviewed.

Presented PhD Goran Vladimirov Stoykovski's set of materials on paper and electronic media is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of PU and includes 18 documents. The candidate must have the following qualifications. Sofia University "St Kliment Ohridski"; diploma of educational and scientific degree "Doctor"; list of scientific works; reference for compliance with the minimum national requirements; reference for compliance with the additional requirements of the FESS; annotation of the materials with which the candidate participates in the competition, incl. Self-assessment of the contributions, in Bulgarian and in English; Declaration of originality and reliability of the attached documents and of the originality of the scientific contributions; Certificate of work experience from Paisii Hilendarski University and University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and Methodius"; documents for academic work, incl. References for academic courses at PU "Paisii Hilendarski" and "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" University. Reference for participation in a scientific research project and a Note for participation in scientific research projects, Reference for participation in international and national scientific forums, Reference for membership in a professional organization (Bulgarian Association for Political Science), scientific publications (copies), printed and electronic, including publications in international journals.

The candidate Goran Stoykovski PhD has announced 15 publications, actually submitted and included for review a total of 13 scientific works, of which 2 monographs, 2 studies 9 articles and

scientific reports. 12 scientific works are accepted for review and are counted in the final evaluation. The paper "*The Crisis of Democratic Parliamentarism as a Consequence of the Crisis of Neoliberalism*, 2022, Proceedings of the Annual National Conference of the Bulgarian Political Science Association and New Bulgarian University "Parliamentary Governance and Crises", Sofia, 4 June 2022, on a topic outside the specialty of the competition, is not accepted for review.

2. Brief biographical details (of the applicant(s))

D.N. Plamen Atanasov Atanasov has a career in information technology, management and systems security. His professional career started in 1996 as a chief engineer at Suncho Ltd. in Svishtov. Over the years, he held positions as a service engineer at ProSoft and chief expert at the State Internal Financial Control Agency. In the period from 2006 to 2009 Atanasov worked as an IT expert at Municipal Bank AD in Sofia, after which he was a system administrator and information security officer at the District Court, Sofia, Bulgaria. He was also a security administrator at the Court of Justice in Nikopol. From 2009 to 2014 he was a PR expert at EOOD "Dr. Filipova AIPDP", then - Chief Mechanic at "Oliva" AD - Knezha, where he works until now.

His education includes a Master's degree in Biotechnology from the Technical University in Sofia, as well as specializations in the field of journalism. She has a degree in journalism from „St. Charles University. Ohridski“, in evolutionary psychology and psychiatry at the Medical University of Plovdiv and in research methodology at the Georgi Stoykov Rakovski University of Science and Technology. There are also developments in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.3. Political Sciences of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" including research in the field of communication and management of reputational and managerial crises. D. Atanasov defended a dissertation on Security and communication, with specific attention to crisis public relations. He received his Ph.D. in 2023 from the Department of National and International Security of the NBU. The dissertation is titled "Security and Communication" and falls under the scientific field 9.1. National Security and focuses on "Security Strategies and Policies" and Security Systems Management.

The candidate Plamen Atanasov Atanasov, PhD, has research experience in the field of information technology and security management, which puts him in a good position. Unfortunately, and as an assessment, his professional experience and expertise is not closely related to the professional field of National Security and the scientific specialty under which the competition is announced, "Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy".

Chief asst. Dr. Goran Stoykovski is an expert in the field of political science, with a focus on foreign policy, diplomacy and their role in national security. He is currently a lecturer at „Paisii Hilendarski University“, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, in the Department of Political Science and National Security and teaches undergraduate students in Political Science and National Security. With more than ten years of teaching experience and as a senior assistant professor at the University of Veliko Tarnovo Stoykovsky PhD has a background in teaching. He has taught students in several graduate programs and has specialized in course development, in various areas of political science and national security. Principal Asst. Dr. Goran Stoykovski demonstrates a commitment to

teaching through the variety of courses and forms of instruction he teaches. His participation in lectures and exercises on important topics such as International Security Theory, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, and History of International Relations demonstrates the depth of his knowledge and ability as a teacher and researcher.

Dr. Goran Stoykovski is actively involved in research on international and regional security, international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy. His career is also related to practical work in the field of public administration, and between 2014 and 2017 he was an advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria and a member of the Political Cabinet. From 2003 to 2022, he also worked as an expert analyst, consultant and researcher in various scientific organizations on foreign policy and security issues. He is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Politics and Policy of the European Union. Goran Stoykovski PhD has experience in managing projects with a multi-ethnic and multicultural profile born and socialized in the city of Kumanovo, Republic of Macedonia, he has worked in various ethnic and religious environments of the countries of the former Yugoslavia, which allows him to bring a professional perspective on issues related to ethnopolitics and international relations. He has studied the dynamics of inter-ethnic relations in the Western Balkans. His dissertation, defended in 2005-2008, examines the perspectives of inter-ethnic relations and state building in the Republic of Macedonia, showing an in-depth insight and analysis of security problems in the region.

Goran Stoykovski's career and contributions in theory combined with his practical experience place him in the position of an authoritative scholar and teacher in the field of political science and national security. Stojkovski PhD has demonstrated a commitment to teaching and research with the goal of preparing specialists in the field of national security and foreign policy. He is a suitable candidate for the academic post of Associate Professor, field of higher education 9 - Security and Defence, professional field 9.1 - National Security, scientific specialization Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy.

3. General description of the applicants' activities

Assessment of teaching and learning activities and preparation of candidates

To evaluate the teaching and pedagogical activities and preparation of the candidate's Plamen Atanasov Atanasov PhD such as the development and participation with the lecture courses, as well as the work with students, graduates and PhD students, we do not have sufficient evidence. Such information is contained in the additional faculty requirements he submitted for participation in the teaching process of the Faculty of Journalism of Sofia University, Medical University - Pleven, the developed curricula at the Military Academy "G. S. Rakovski" in "Information Security and Cyber Protection", "Fundamentals of Information and Analytical Activity", "Technology of Information and Analytical Activity".

The second candidate, Goran Stojkovski PhD, has teaching abilities in the field of political science and national security. He applies a student-centered approach that encourages active participation and the development of critical thinking. Courses developed by him emphasize current topics in security and diplomacy. In addition to his teaching work, Dr. Stoykovski, as a mentor, plays an

important role in the professional growth of students, which contributes to building a new generation of experts in the field.

Evaluation of the scientific and applied activities of the candidates

Relevant to the issues and the specialty of the competition of the 30 scientific publications submitted are 3 scientific works of Atanasov PhD, in support of the above statement, they are considered in their main thematic areas.

Plamen Atanasov's habilitation thesis entitled "**Issues of Public Diplomacy and Security. A Look at Bulgarian-Macedonian Relations in 1991-2024**", presents a study of important aspects of public diplomacy and security, with an emphasis on the dynamics of the relationship between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia (since 2018 Republic of North Macedonia). The work covers topics related to international relations, communication and public diplomacy, making it timely in the context of contemporary geopolitical and social changes. The study focuses on issues related to the two countries, considering developments and changes in the Balkan region in recent years. Atanasov PhD successfully integrates insights from the fields of diplomacy, communication, and social systems theory, allowing for an understanding of the complexity of interactions between states. The use of a phenomenological approach provides the study with a qualitative basis for analyzing the perceptions and meaning of socio-political relations. The work also offers theoretical and practical issues that can serve as a basis for future research.

Publications related to the issues of "big data", communication in hybrid warfare, artificial intelligence, security and media literacy in the context of modern globalization" provide an analysis of the dynamics of social communication and its impact on the security of society and the state.

1. The article "**Practical and Applied Approaches to Using Big Data for Intelligence Purposes**" discusses the processing of big data for intelligence organizations and highlights the specific features of the processing and the software tools required for this. The suggested practices for improving information operations are useful for optimizing intelligence operations.
2. The article "**The Place and Role of Communication in Hybrid Wars**" highlights the key role of communication in the context of hybrid conflicts and analyses the current mechanisms of communication, concluding that effective communication is a leading element in this type of warfare.
3. In "**Artificial Intelligence in the Context of Online Communication: A Challenge to the 'Safety Principle'**", Atanasov PhD explores how artificial intelligence is changing communication structures and causing new risks, challenging the so-called "Safety Principle".
4. The study "**Loci of Public Attention - Chaos or Stochastics in Industrial Revolution 4.0: Leadership and Communication**" demonstrates how information flow and public attention are linked to security dynamics. With advances in technology, the struggle for public attention becomes an important factor in the formulation of social relations and security.
5. "**State and Societal Security in an Advanced Global Environment**" explores the interrelationship between state and societal security in the context of intensive communication and globalization. An information society poses new security challenges related to the identity of society and the territorial constraints of the state.

6. In "**Comparison of three cases of large-scale leakage of digitized data**," Plamen Atanasov PhD explores the problems with digitization and data theft, emphasizing that digitization creates new risks and opportunities for information theft.
7. In "**New and traditional media in the conflict between credibility and timeliness of messages**," Plamen Atanasov PhD examines the **symbiosis between new and traditional media**, focusing on the conflict between timeliness and credibility of messages, relevant for the protection of democratic values and public security.
8. In the elaboration "**Propaganda as a technology in recent years**" Atanasov PhD defines **propaganda** not only as a tool of psychological warfare, but also as a part of everyday life, visible in times of crisis, which shows the need for in-depth research in this field in the XXI century.
9. In the study "**Hearing and Fear vs. Media Literacy**", Atanasov PhD discusses how **rumor and fear** interact with media literacy, creating a need for active communication and awareness. He outlines how the combination of fear, rumor, and an appropriate communication environment is a necessary condition for the birth of **conspiracy theories**.
10. In the work "**Global Unification of Cultural Patterns - a Prerequisite for the Implementation of Information Warfare**", Atanasov PhD explores how **globalization** can facilitate **information warfare** by creating homogenized cultural patterns that can be used for manipulation.

The scientific developments of Plamen Atanasov PhD are topical and address important aspects of modern communication and information security. They highlight the need for critical thinking and media literacy in the age of information and technological innovation. They link theory with practice and address issues new and important in the context of globalization and technological advances. The issues it raises about truth, manipulation, and risk are relevant in the context of globalization and digitalization. As critical comments and suggestions, they could be supplemented with practical examples to enhance their real-world applicability.

Outside the thematic focus of the competition, and not accepted for review, are: the monograph "Reputational crises online", the independent three chapters in the collective monograph "Managing reputational crises" and a total of 10 articles and reports, again related to the topic of reputational crises, crisis communication and the impact of the Internet and new technologies on organizational reputation. There is also duplication in the papers themed around the concepts of computer viruses and rumors.

The overall assessment of the scientific work of Plamen Atanasov can be evaluated as good, providing an analysis of reputational crises in the context of the rapidly changing communication environment and proposing approaches to reputation management, especially relevant for organizations, but in general the research and publications are not in direct relation to the subject matter and the theoretical and practical framework of the professional field "National Security" and especially the scientific specialty "Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy".

The scientific production presented by Goran Stoykovski PhD is focused on research in the field of international relations and international and regional security. It focuses on the development

of conceptual and methodological frameworks important for the analysis and assessment of dynamics in political systems and strategies and concepts related to national and international security.

1. **Integration with academic disciplines:** his scientific production is in sync with the taught disciplines, which implies a thorough knowledge of the theoretical foundations and applied aspects of international security and diplomacy theory. Research thus not only enriches academic discourse but also provides a valuable resource for the practical application of knowledge in real-world settings.
2. **Conceptual and methodological framework:** the proposed framework for the description and analysis of dynamic patterns in international relations carries the potential of in-depth research. It can serve as a tool to identify trends and challenges in contemporary geopolitics.
3. **Objective assessment and forecasting:** the scientific output offers tools for assessing political phenomena in dynamics, which is key for anticipating possible scenarios and reactions of political actors. The critical analysis of existing hegemonic ideologies and the development of counter-strategies highlights his active role as a researcher in the field of public policy and national security.
4. **Practical applicability:** the developed models and approaches have the potential for real use in practice, providing a basis for building effective strategies aimed at ensuring the stability and security of the region.

The scientific output presented by Dr Goran Stoykovski has the potential to influence and be used in real policy. It offers important guidelines and tools that can be applied to assess and manage current challenges in international relations and international and regional security.

Contributions (scientific, scientific applied, applied) and citations

The contributions of the habilitation thesis of Plamen Atanasov PhD "Issues of Public Diplomacy and Security. A Look at the Bulgarian-Macedonian Relations in 1991-2024" can be divided into three categories: scientific, scientific-applied and applied. The work provides an analysis of the dynamics of bilateral relations in the context of digitalization and globalization, expanding the understanding of the complexity and interconnections in the region. The work develops methods and classifications of communication approaches in public diplomacy.

The study "Public Diplomacy and Security Issues. A Look at Bulgarian-Macedonian Relations 1991-2024" clarifies how public and digital diplomacy can be applied in real political contexts, providing examples and strategies for effective communication. The work covers the interactions between different academic fields, such as political science, communication studies and cultural studies, in the context of international relations.

The author offers practical guidelines and approaches that can be applied to improve relationships and overcome conflict. The study provides guidance for public policy formulation related to diplomacy and security in the region, drawing on empirical analyses and theoretical foundations. The study is useful for the development of scientific knowledge in the field of public diplomacy and security, as well as for the practical applications of the concepts in the context of the Bulgarian-Macedonian relations and the Balkans in general.

The rest of the candidate's scholarly output is presented in papers of various formats, organized into several main thematic areas: the Critical examination of basic theories and conceptions and the presentation of a perspective according to which security is diversified as ideal, sought and achieved (IV, pt. 2: 22, 25); An attempt to derive authorial definitions of hackers, trolls, and fake news (IV pt. 2: 1, 8); An attempt to present a model based on Niklas Luhmann's Communication Theory and contemporary, socially-oriented theories of security, in which recurring dependencies are derived that point to a relationship between security, public diplomacy, and public communication (IV pt. 2: 3, 7, 8, 13, 20, 22, 25, 26).

They are also controversial in terms of repeatability, dependencies, cause-effect relationships and the role of communication in contemporary security management models. Algorithms for influencing public communication and hence public diplomacy, hackers, trolls and fake news, and some applications of artificial intelligence have been brought up (IV pt. 2: 3, 8, 9, 19, 20, 25). The tools of communication in cyberspace are missing as tools of public diplomacy, information and hybrid warfare (IV pt. 2: 3, 7, 8).

The publications of the candidate accepted for review have been cited in national and scientific publications, refereed and indexed in world-known databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes. As such, we point out: Comparison with other regional conflicts and relations to identify successful models of public diplomacy; Study of the impact of artificial intelligence and social media on information and public diplomacy; Application of the developed algorithms and models to optimize the communication of state institutions; The need to create programs and courses to promote the concepts of public diplomacy and security.

The contributions of the scientific works of Goran Stoykovski PhD are as follows:

The monograph "The Great Change of the Macedonian Republic" presents a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the events that changed the nature of the state of Macedonia after its independence. It addresses a topical problem in Bulgarian political science literature that has not been sufficiently explored by political and security science. The monograph addresses an important and understudied aspect of political science and security theory, making it a significant contribution in this regard (I.A.1).

The monograph "The Great Change of the Macedonian Republic" presents an original authentic scientific study of the systematic and structural change of Macedonia. It is significant for both national and international regional security and represents a new and authentic study in the context of scientific thinking, opening up new aspects and issues in the context of the development of the Republic of Macedonia (I.A.1).

The study presents a thorough and analytical overview that is strategically important for ethno-religious and political relations and national security. The analysis presented in the monograph brings clarity to the "Macedonian problematic" in Bulgaria by not only examining existing issues related to the conflict, but also offering a new interpretation and depth of assessment of the issues that will help to better understand the complexity of the issues related to Macedonia (I.A.1).

The monograph "The Rise of the White Crescent - Prospects for a New Turkish Century in the Balkans" carries out a systematic and comprehensive analysis of Turkish strategic thinking and foreign policy objectives of the Republic of Turkey after the end of the Cold War. The perspective

and in-depth analysis of contemporary relations between Turkey and the Balkans presented here belong to the group of formulating or substantiating a new scientific field or problem (I.A.2). The author presents a study, of strategic issues of national, international and regional security in the Western Balkans. It proposes a new approach whose relevance is topical for the security field in the region, making it an important contribution to the scientific community (I.A.3). The analysis puts forward new concepts and ideas for understanding and interpretation in the context of contemporary Bulgarian and international politics. Also, the monograph offers new perspectives on understanding Turkey's role in the region, which can be considered a new scholarly area in the study of geopolitics (I.A.2).

The article "Open Balkans before the (semi)closed doors of the EU" highlights problems of European integration after the 2008 financial crisis, which could lead to losses for Western countries and threaten regional and global security. The focus is on the formulation and justification of new theoretical frameworks and hypotheses on foreign policy strategies in the context of the interaction between different global actors (I.B.1).

Candidate Stoykovsky also offers a series of articles that examine various aspects of geopolitics and contemporary geopolitical strategies, each providing the author's perspective, analysis, and vision:

1. **The article "An Exploratory Reading of the Arab Strategic Vision 2030 and Its Impact on the Serbian Geopolitical Worldview"** focuses on the Arab states' plan for influence and participation in global and regional relations, which is a new field of study in the field of geopolitics and international relations (I.B.2).
2. **"The Crisis of Democratic Parliamentarism as a Consequence of the Crisis of Neoliberalism"** examines the consequences of neoliberalism and the interrelationships between neoliberalism and democratic parliamentarism, providing perspectives and evidence in this area (I.B.3).
3. **"The Sunset of Grand Narratives and the Rise of Ambitious Strategies"** analyses traditional ideologies giving way to new strategies that are changing international dynamics. The formulations may lead to the development of new theoretical frameworks in geopolitical studies (I.B.6).
4. **"Neo-imperialist Aspirations and Ideologies of Contemporary Movements as a Threat to Democracy and Collective Security"** examines new forms of imperialism and how they pose a threat to democracy and collective security in the Balkans (I.B.8).
5. **"Soft Power in Foreign Policy Strategies: Christianity, Islam, and Culture"** studies the impact of religion and culture on foreign policy strategies, and the creation of classifications, categories, and approaches to analysis is key to understanding contemporary geopolitical conflicts (I.B.9). In the context of an increasingly multipolar world, studying these interactions is critical to assessing international security.

The article "The future of higher education, digitalization and technological decisions through the eyes of students" provides new information from an empirical study of higher education in Bulgaria. The study includes both qualitative and quantitative data that can be used for knowledge synthesis or as a basis for future research in higher education.

Subsequently, in a series of four articles, Dr. Stoykovski examines issues related to Macedonia and the Balkans in the context of the security and stability of the region. The links and dependencies between Macedonia's stability and the regional stability of the Balkans are identified and directions and assessments relevant for future research are offered.

The articles focus on different aspects of **Cultura Balcanica** - exploring the similarities and differences in Balkan culture. **Analysis of the Referendum and the Postreferendum Situation in Macedonia** - political analysis of the referendum and the subsequent events. **Post-referendum Macedonia** - an examination of the concept of nation-building after the referendum. They have the potential to substantiate a new scholarly field related to the study of security and stability in the Balkans, while providing data and analysis that enrich the understanding of security dynamics in the Balkans and that of the Republic of North Macedonia in the context of historical and political processes.

The accepted for review publications of the candidate Dr Goran Stoykovski are reflected in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review; in international and national publications; in international and national non-refereed journals with scientific review. This shows the significance of the contributions and the reflection of the results of Asst. Dr. Goran Stoykovski PhD in the works of other authors.

Prospects for the development of security and stability research in the Balkans, especially in the context of the Republic of North Macedonia, can be grouped into several key areas: in-depth research on the causes of conflict; the influence of external forces; cultural identity and integration; geopolitical change and new threats; technological progress and security; Eurointegration and regional politics; empirical research and case studies.

4. Evaluation of the personal contribution of the candidates

The overall assessment of the candidature of Dr. Plamen Atanasov for "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 9 - Security and Defence, professional field 9.1 - National Security, scientific specialty "Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy", can be made based on the summarized assessment and analysis of the content and complex approach presented in the information on his professional career, research and publications and teaching experience.

From the reference for minimum national requirements for criteria A - F the total is 300 points. In the case of additional indicators for the evaluation of the candidate in Group 1, the sum of 60 points is used. The declared course of lectures in a foreign language and membership in a scientific or professional national or international organization under Group 2 . 30 points, Group 3 "Published university textbook": Hristov, Chavdar et al. [collective monograph]. Reputational crisis management. Sofia. Sofia, Sofia. Ohridski", 2017, is not considered due to irrelevance to the issues of the competition. Thus, the total is 390 points.

From the reference for minimum national requirements for criteria A - F the total is 490 points for Goran Stoykovski PhD. Additional indicators for the assessment of the candidate in Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 is the total sum of 430. points. Thus the total sum of points is 920. We also consider a qualitative indicator: the participation of Goran Stoykovski PhD in the Political Journal "CONSERVATIVE QUARTERLY", Sofia, as a co-founder and member of the editorial board of the

journal, author in 2015 and his participation in the Institute for Regional and International Studies, Sofia, as a member of the Board of Directors for the period 2016-2020.

The complex evaluation for chief assistant Stoykovski, PhD, is a promising lecturer in the field 9.0. "Security and Defence", professional field 9.1. "National Security", active not only in teaching, but also in research. His publications, participation in conferences, projects and research initiatives in the field of security and foreign policy contribute to the more positive evaluation of his candidature and his ranking first in the list of proposals for the election of "Associate Professor", in the professional field and scientific specialty.

No claims of improper use of others' research results and publications by the candidates in the competition have been made in the submissions to date and are not known to me.

5. Critical comments and recommendations

There is insufficient information on the competencies of the Plamen Atanasov PhD in teaching and pedagogical activities, classroom and extracurricular employment, work with students and PhD students, as well as participation in the scientific, administrative and organizational activities of a scientific organization. The mentioned work experience from the Institute of Viticulture and Enology is not directly related to work experience in the professional field "National Security". Unfortunately, and as a summary assessment, his research and scientific developments are not closely related and directed in terms of subject matter and focus to the scientific specialization "Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy", under which the competition was announced.

In view of the above, considering the future development of the candidate, I take the liberty to recommend: Increasing the training and teaching experience and the use of security teaching methods. More extensive participation in academic and research initiatives. Active participation in research and forums, which will enrich the teaching-learning experience and strengthen its role in the academic community.

To be competitive for an academic position in the professional field of National Security, a Ph. Plamen Atanasov should develop not only his scientific research work but also his practical-applied work, developing and publishing research in international journals and participating in scientific conferences and events with a national security focus in its individual directions, along with expanding his teaching participation by developing, delivering and participating in training courses and programs, participating in professional associations and networks in the field of national security, which would also add value to his profile and expand opportunities for teaching realization.

6. Personal impressions

I have good personal impressions of the work of Stoykovsky PhD, as a lecturer, active participant in the teaching process of the undergraduate and graduate programs in the fields of "National Security" and "Political Science". I lack information and do not have such direct impressions about Peter Atanasov PhD.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information provided, and a comprehensive assessment, for the. Plamen Atanasov Atanasov, Doctor of Science, I believe that he represents a potentially good candidate for a teaching

position in the professional field of "National Security" in the field of security systems management, information security, crisis management, communications and communication policy. His experience and research interests put him in a good position to continue to participate in competitions for academic positions, and for the development of research in the field of information security, security strategies and policies.

Principal asst. Goran Stoykovski PhD has extensive experience in teaching, scientific research and practical applied research on security issues, which makes him the best candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor in the field of higher education 9. Security and Defense, professional field 9.1 "National Security", specialty "Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy".

Based on the presented information, and a complex evaluation made by ch. as. Goran Stoykovski PhD demonstrated significant experience and commitment in the field of national security and diplomacy as its important instrument. His active participation in teaching key disciplines, curriculum development and curriculum documentation support the evidence of his fuller competence in his chosen scientific specialty. The overall assessment is that he presents a good foundation for a successful academic and research career in the fields of security, foreign policy and diplomacy.

The documents and materials submitted by Plamen Atanasov PhD do not **fully comply with** the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria), the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria), the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria) and the relevant Regulations of the Paisii Hilendarski University, especially with regard to the specificity of the professional field, the subject and the problems of the announced specialty of the competition. His scientific works have more theoretical applicability in the field of crisis management, communication, information security, network and systems management. The presence of sufficient and necessary teaching qualifications, experience and experience of Plamen Atanasov PhD **can be questioned** and do not cover the requirements of the competition and the specialty, to hold the academic position.

The achievements of Plamen Atanasov PhD results in the teaching and scientific research activities **do not** correspond to the minimum national and additional requirements of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the PU for the application of the Law "National Security", and most of all to the problems and themes of the specialty announced in the competition, the thematic areas and the profile of the bachelor's specialty "National Security" After familiarizing myself with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and practical contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my negative assessment to the candidate Plamen Atanasov Atanasov

The documents and materials, presented by chief ass Goran Stoykovski PhD **fully comply with the** requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in Bulgaria (ASDA), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ASDA and the relevant Regulations of the Paisii Hilendarski University and most of all are relevant and cover the requirements of the specialty announced in the competition. The candidate **has** submitted a **sufficient** number of scientific works. His works contain original scientific and applied contributions which have received international recognition as some of them

have been published in journals and scientific collections published by international academic publishers. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them have been directly oriented and implemented by him in his academic and teaching work. The scientific and teaching qualification, experience and internship of head as. Goran Stoykovski PhD **is undoubted** and of high quality of its content.

After reading the materials and scientific works submitted in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, applied and scientific contributions contained therein, I find it justified to give my **positive** assessment **as follows**

I recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences for the election of the head as. Dr Goran Stoykovski to the academic position of Associate Professor at Paisii Hilendarski University in. **Security and Defense**, professional field **9.1. National Security, scientific specialty "Balkan Security, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy"**.

09.08.2024 г.

Reviewer:

(signature)

Prof. Nikolai Marinov Nikolov