

OPINION

From: Prof. Dr. Olga Borisova, Varna Free University “Chernorizets Hrabar”

Regarding: Competitive selection procedure for the Position of Professor in Administrative Law and Administrative Procedure in Scientific Field 3.6 Law at Paisii Hilendarski University, Plovdiv

Basis for submitting the opinion: participation in the scientific jury for the conduct of a competitive selection procedure for the position of Professor in Administrative Law and Administrative Procedure in Scientific Field 3.6 Law at Paisii Hilendarski University, Plovdiv, in accordance with Order No. RD – 22-70/17.01.2025 of the Rector of Paisii Hilendarski University

1. General presentation of the procedure and the applicant

The procedure has been announced at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. The candidate – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bogdan Dragnev Yordanov has submitted a full set of documents in accordance with the regulatory framework. The competition documents comply with the requirements of national legislation and the regulatory acts of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. The assessment of the proposed materials for the competition shows that the conditions for applying for the academic position of "professor" are met.

The candidate Bogdan Yordanov is a habilitated lecturer in Administrative Law and Administrative Procedure with over 30 years of experience in four Bulgarian universities.

2. General Characterization of the Submitted Work

The candidate has submitted for primary review the monograph "Regional Development". The work has the required minimum volume (the volume of the book is 208 pages), it was published under scientific supervision. It has a rich scientific apparatus in Bulgarian and foreign languages. The citations are correct, in the context of the study and the specific problems considered.

As the author himself emphasizes, regional development is defined as one of the problem areas, giving rise to quite frequent discussions between specialists from different sectors: economists, lawyers, historians, statisticians. The Republic of Bulgaria is divided territorially into statistical regions, forming 3 levels in accordance with the requirements of the common Classification of Territorial Units for Statistical Purposes (NUTS - Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques), applied in the European Union. The first two levels: NUTS-1 - statistical zones, and NUTS-2 - statistical regions, do not represent administrative-territorial units, while the third level NUTS-3 - districts, are administrative-territorial units and cover the territory of the 28 districts of the same name, into which the country is divided administrative-territorially. The monograph presents the first comprehensive, for our legal literature, analysis of the normative and administrative

framework of this topic. This makes the scientific study both difficult, due to the lack of sufficient analyses in the field, and interesting and challenging from the point of view of scientific research. The author has definitely coped with this innovative task.

The book also presents a detailed historical overview of the legal framework. It aims, by tracing the development of the legislative framework over the years and outlining the powers and responsibilities of the competent authorities, to attempt to highlight the gaps in the current legislative framework.

3. Relevance of the topic

The relevance of the problem developed in the monograph in scientific and scientific-applied terms is predetermined by the intensive development of public relations in the field of state administration, both at the two-tier and three-tier levels in the countries of the European Union. Although not many studies have been conducted and not many results have been provided in the direction of the topic under consideration, the author has managed to unite them, using over 50 sources - monographs, articles, regulatory acts, practice, etc. Interest in this topic has increased very sharply with Bulgaria's entry into the EU, since European regional policy is characterized by its exceptional solidarity. More than 1/3 of the EU budget is spent on reducing differences in the development of individual regions and inequality in the material capabilities of citizens.

The following specific tasks are developed in the monograph:

- the essence of concepts such as "district" and "region"; "regional development", "regional approach" and "regionalization" is defined so that they can be used accurately according to the specific context;
- the process of formation of individual regions and the criteria they must meet in order to be distinguished as structural units are monitored;
- by tracking the development of the legislative framework over the years and outlining the powers and responsibilities of the competent authorities, an attempt was made to highlight the gaps in the legislative framework;
- the factors of regional development management – competent authorities and strategic planning documents – have been analyzed in detail;

The author emphasizes the problem that even today, the legal framework of regional development lacks provisions that describe an adequate mechanism that would guarantee full compliance and reflection of the decisions of the higher central administration with the individual decisions taken by the Regional and District Development Councils. The creation of such a mechanism is an absolute prerequisite for fulfilling the regulated requirement of Art. 20 of the Constitution, namely "the obligation of the state to create conditions for balanced development of the individual regions of the country and to support territorial bodies and activities through financial, credit and investment policy".

4. Knowledge of the issues

Bogdan Yordanov presents two monographs and three independent publications from scientific forums. A large part of his scientific and practical activity is in the field of local self-government, regional development, centralization and decentralization of state and administrative management. This is evident both from the scientific works submitted for evaluation and in the complete bibliography of Bogdan Yordanov. As the author of more than one work in the field of decentralization, Bogdan Yordanov is confident that one of the main goals of regional development legislation is to achieve full coherence, coordination and effective interaction between all subjects of state government through legislative intervention in order to conduct a fruitful regional policy and achieve the desired development of the regions.

The goal of his scientific work is to consider the regional approach as a tool not only for solving local, regional problems, but also as a tool for solving national, even global problems. All factors that influence the development of the territory are tracked - economic, historical, cultural and natural.

If a comparison is made with the previous laws regulating this matter, a “legislative instability” is established. The historical retrospection, which is followed by the research, leads to the conclusion that there is no qualitatively built and traditional regulatory framework regulating this problem. Legislative instability is also observed in the creation and regulation of appropriate procedures and mechanisms that would serve to ensure transparency and minimize the possibilities for conflict of interest. This is an area that is extremely dependent on EU policy. This is an area that requires special expertise in the development of an adequate regulatory framework. Due to this dynamism, the laws in the field of regional development are changed so often, and fundamentally, with the adoption of completely new provisions and the repeal of existing ones. Literally, for each programming period, the legislation has to be adjusted to reality.

The author emphasizes that there is still a problem with the lack of provisions indicating the nature of the individual acts under the Regional Development Act, as well as the possibility of their appeal and the procedure by which it can be carried out.

5. Research methodology

The monograph uses two research methods - the leading one is the method of doctrinal research - this is the study of normative rules, management principles, concepts or doctrines of regional development. The classical interpretative method such as teleological, analogical, textual and historical was used in the study of the normative base in the area under consideration.

The study is presented in both a descriptive and analytical perspective. The methodology chosen by the author is based on a collective approach, which aims to examine the chosen topic from all possible angles of knowledge. The number of literary sources is large. This approach is also part of the contribution of the monograph, which presents a truly serious volume of information in the field of regional development.

6. Evaluation of candidate publications

Along with the main monographic work, the candidate submits for review another monograph, which is based on a dissertation, and three separate publications, presented as reports at established scientific forums. The publications meet the legal requirements, as they have been published in refereed collections and carry the necessary points for holding the academic position of "professor". They are related to the topic of regional development and local self-government and do not need to be analyzed in detail.

These works emphasize the need to organize and stimulate local economic development by engaging all parties: central and local authorities, local and foreign investors and the citizens of the respective municipality. The modern trends towards increased decentralization and the development of public relations have been brought forward as a central problem for the municipality, the normatively and scientifically substantiated implementation of its economic policy by increasing the economic efficiency of the municipal property it owns.

Conclusion

Based on the findings presented above, I positively assess the scientific research work of the candidate Bogdan Dragnev Yordanov. I believe that he meets the requirements of the current legislation for holding the academic position of "professor" and I propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to make a positive decision according to the procedure announced by the Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski".

Prepared opinion:

(Prof. Dr. Olga Borisova)

12.03.2025