

АГРИКЛУРЕН УНИВЕРСИТЕТ  
ГР. ПЛОВДИВ  
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## SCIENTIFIC OPINION

**Concerning:** the competition for the position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific speciality Economics and Management (Agriculture), announced in State Gazette No. 97 of 21.11.2023.

**Candidate for participation in the competition:** Chief Assistant Professor PhD Rositsa Petrova Belukhova - Uzunova, Agricultural University of Plovdiv

**Scientific opinion prepared by:** Associate Professor PhD Nadezhda Georgieva Blagoeva, field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific speciality Finance, money circulation, credit and insurance, appointed according to Order No. RD 16-42 / 19.01.2024 of the Rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv as a member of the scientific jury.

### 1. Brief presentation of the candidate.

Chief Assistant Professor PhD Rositsa Petrova Beluhova-Uzunova is the only candidate for participation in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, announced for the needs of the Department of Economics at the Agricultural University of Plovdiv. All the documents for participation in the competition are accurately prepared according to all the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation.

Rositsa Belukhova-Uzunova completed her higher education at Paisii Hilendarski University in 2010, where she successively obtained Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Macroeconomics and Accounting and Analysis, respectively. In 2011, she was enrolled as a PhD student at the Department of Economics at the Agricultural University of Plovdiv. After successfully defending her PhD in 2014 and passing a competition, she was appointed an assistant professor in the department. From 2017 to now, she has held the position of Chief Assistant Professor. She has excellent written and spoken English and German language skills. She possesses excellent computer skills and works with Microsoft Office™ tools and Adobe Acrobat applications, which helps her research.

### 2. General description of the scientific production.

In the competition for the position of "Associate Professor" chief assistant professor Rositsa Petrova Beluhova-Uzunova participates with a total of 34 works, grouped as follows:

- ❖ Scientific publications in the field of specialisation - 34 in total, including:
  - Publications related to the doctoral dissertation - 5 issues, which are not subject to review;

- Publications with impact factor - 2
- Publications in peer-reviewed and refereed scientific journals - 16 issues;
- Publications in conference proceedings - 10;
- Habilitation work - monograph - 1 issue.

The monographic work on "Potential and Preconditions for the Development of the Bioeconomy in Bulgaria" is co-authored with two other authors. Still, the presented distribution and participation of the authors undoubtedly prove the personal participation of the candidate with more than the required 100 pages, validating the mentioned work as a monographic.

For the assessment, 29 works are subject to analysis.

The personal contribution of the chief assistant professor Rositsa Beluhova-Uzunova in the mentioned 29 works is illustrated by the fact that she is the sole author in none, the first author in 19 or 66%, the second author in 6 or 20%, and the third and subsequent author in the remaining 4 or 14%.

The fact that in the overwhelming majority of the publications, Uzunova is the first author attests to her leading role in conducting scientific research, as well as her excellent teamwork skills. Except for the monographic work, all of the candidate's publications are in English. This, in turn, contributes to better readability, annotation and dissemination of the author's research achievements.

### **3. Teaching Activities.**

Chief Assist. Prof. Uzunova is an established lecturer in the Department of Economics. She started her teaching activity by giving classes as a doctoral student. Her teaching experience as an already appointed assistant professor at Agricultural University amounts to 9 years and 2 months. During this time, the candidate lectured and exercise with students from various bachelor's and master's degree programs in a range of disciplines such as Microeconomics, Resource Economics, Economics of Tourism, Principles of Economics, Bioeconomics, Economic Theories, Investment Policy, Economics of SMEs, etc. All these demonstrate the candidate's exceptional competence and preparation.

#### *The academic workload of the candidate.*

According to the submitted reference in the last five academic years from 2018/2019 to 2022/2023, Chief Assist. Prof. Uzunova's workload amounts to 4 401,2 hours or an average of 880 hours per year. These include direct and extra-curricular activities in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes.

Her teaching activity is complemented by the supervision of many graduates who have defended their degrees over the years.

### **4. Research activities.**

#### *Areas of publication.*

The scientific works presented by Chief Assist. Prof. Uzunova, including the abstracts, mainly covers five thematic areas that best characterise her scientific inquiries. These are:

- Bioeconomics
- Competitiveness of Bulgarian Agriculture
- Impact of the CAP on Bulgarian agriculture
- Restructuring of the agricultural sector
- Precision agriculture and innovation

The topics mentioned above align perfectly with the scientific specialisation of the announced competition. Based on her overall research activity, the author formulates each thematic area's contributions separately, dividing them into practical-applied and theoretical-methodological. I fully accept the statement of contributions prepared by the candidate, as it is based on her overall publication activity. The latter accumulated 222.77 points, surpassing the required according to the law.

*Citing and referencing the scientific production.*

Chief Assist. Prof. Uzunova's scientific production is well-known among specialists in the field. It has become known to the research community, as evidenced by the noted citations of the candidate. The reference mentions 11 citations, most of which are in reputable journals in Q1 and Q2. According to the law, these citations contribute 165 points, significantly exceeding the required points.

*Participation in scientific projects.*

Chief Assist. Prof. Uzunova has actively participated in 3 projects, two of which are national and one international. These are, respectively, „Healthy Foods for Strong Bioeconomy and Quality of Life" 2019 - 2023, funded by the Ministry of Education and Science, "Innovative Models for Increasing the Competitiveness of Agricultural Farms in Bulgaria," funded by the National Science Fund, and "New curricula in Precision Agriculture using GIS technologies and sensing data (CUPAGIS)," Erasmus+.

The table with fulfilled scientific criteria prepared by the candidate for the academic position of „Associate professor" shows that the overall scientific activity brings her 537.77 points, well above the required by the regulations 400 points.

## **5. Remarks and recommendations.**

I have no remarks regarding the documents and scientific output submitted for the competition. I believe they fully meet the requirements for the „Associate Professor" academic position. I could only recommend that Chief Assist. Prof. Uzunova implements independent publications and supports her future teaching activity with teaching manuals, workbooks and textbooks.

## **6. Conclusion.**

Based on analysing the candidate's pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I consider Chief Assist. Prof. Rositsa Petrova Beluhova-Uzunova meets the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its implementation.

Chief Assist. Prof. Rositsa Beluhova's intensive teaching activities and her work with students and graduates establish her as one of the proven lecturers among the Department of Economics staff of the Agricultural University. She combines all of this with active publishing activity, which ranks her among the researchers and specialists in Agricultural Economics. The presented scientific activity fully meets the requirements for obtaining the academic position of „Associate Professor“.

All this gives me a reason to evaluate her overall activity **POSITIVELY**.

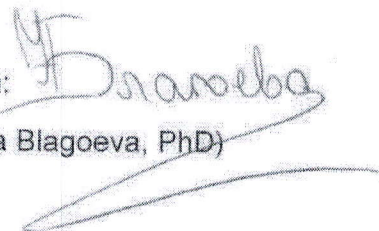
I allow myself to propose to the Honorable Scientific Jury to vote positively and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv to appoint **Chief Assist. Prof. Rositsa Petrova Beluhova - Uzunova** as "Associate Professor" in the scientific field of **Economics and Management (Agriculture)**.

1.02.2024

Plovdiv

Prepared the scientific opinion:

(Assoc. Prof. Nadezhda Blagoeva, PhD)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nadezhda Blagoeva', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.