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OPINION

Concerning the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty "Crop Production", announced in State Gazette No. 65 of 17 July 2026, with Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva Georgieva from the Agricultural University – Plovdiv as a candidate

Prepared by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emil Stoychev Vasilev – Field of Higher Education 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Professional Field 6.1. Crop Production, Scientific Specialties "Forage Production and Grassland Management" and "Breeding and Seed Production of Cultivated Plants", appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury by Order No. RD 16-902 of 17 September 2026 of the Rector of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv

1. Brief presentation of the candidate.

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva Georgieva obtained her Bachelor's degree in Agronomy (Field Crop Production) from the Agricultural University - Plovdiv in 2011, followed by a Master's degree in Plant Protection from the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna, Austria, in 2013.

Her initial professional experience involved practical work at an agricultural cooperative and at the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES), Vienna. Between 2014 and 2017, she worked as a Technical Agronomist at SGS Bulgaria, Varna. This practical experience contributed to the development of her professional competencies and provided a valuable foundation for her subsequent career in research and university teaching.

On 21 January 2020, Dr. Georgieva was appointed to the academic position of Assistant Professor, and since 1 July 2022, she has held the position of Chief Assistant Professor in the Department of Crop Production at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. In 2019, she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation and was awarded the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD).

An important aspect of her professional development is her participation in numerous international seminars and specialized training programmes focused on sustainable development, contemporary educational approaches and the improvement of pedagogical competencies. Notable examples include training activities at Aeres University of Applied Sciences, Wageningen; the University College for Agrarian and Environmental Pedagogy, Vienna; Humboldt University of Berlin; and Institut Agritrain PECO. In 2023, she also obtained a professional qualification as a teacher of vocational subjects from Trakia University, Stara Zagora.

Her international engagement is particularly noteworthy. Since 2021, she has been a member of ENOAT, and since 2022, she has held the position of Secretary General on the ENTER Board. She has a B2 level of English, a C1 level of German and an A1 level of Spanish.

Her professional biography demonstrates a sound educational background, diverse professional experience and a consistent commitment to enhancing her scientific, linguistic and pedagogical skills.

2. General overview of the scientific output

In the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva participates with a total of 25 scientific works, distributed as follows:

Scientific publications in the relevant scientific specialty – 25 works, including:

- *Publications related to the doctoral dissertation – 4, which are not subject to evaluation;*
- *Publications in journals with an Impact Factor – 12;*
- *Publications in peer-reviewed and refereed scientific journals – 8;*
- *One published book based on a successfully defended doctoral dissertation leading to the award of the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD).*

A total of 21 works are therefore subject to evaluation in this competition. An analysis of the authorship distribution demonstrates the substantial personal contribution of the candidate. She is the sole author of 8 publications, first author of 8, second author of 3, and third or subsequent author of the remaining 2. Thus, she is sole or first author of 76.2% of the scientific output submitted for the competition. Her contribution to publications in journals with an Impact Factor is particularly significant, as she is sole or first author of 11 out of the 12 publications.

The submitted report on compliance with the minimum national requirements demonstrates that the candidate meets and substantially exceeds the required scores under the respective groups of indicators. Under Indicator B2, she has achieved 206 points against a minimum requirement of 100; under Indicator G3 - 40 points; under Indicator G4 - 270 points against the required 200; and under Indicator D5 - 90 points. The total score is 616 points, compared with the required minimum of 400 points for the academic position of Associate Professor. The candidate not only fulfils but considerably exceeds the minimum national requirements for this academic position.

The participation of Dr. Georgieva in research teams involving both Bulgarian and international scientists is also a positive aspect. This reflects her established professional contacts and her ability to work effectively in collaborative research environments.

3. Teaching activities

Teaching workload of the candidate

During the period 2021-2026, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva Georgieva carried out a substantial volume of teaching activities. Her reported teaching workload amounts to 2366.6 hours, including lectures, practical classes, Erasmus+ activities and extracurricular academic work. The activities are distributed as follows:

- Lectures: 54 hours;
- Practical classes: 1324.5 hours;
- Erasmus+ activities: 514.4 hours;
- Extracurricular teaching activities: 473.7 hours.

The candidate also has experience in supervising students. Six students have successfully defended their graduation theses under her supervision – four Bachelor's degree students and two Master's degree students. At the time of submission of the report, she was supervising four additional students, three at Bachelor's and one at Master's level.

Development of academic curricula

Her teaching activities are further complemented by the development of two academic curricula: *"Biological and Conventional Production of Industrial Crops"*, comprising 30 hours of lectures and 30 hours of practical classes, and *"Climate-Smart Agriculture"*, comprising 20 hours of lectures and 20 hours of practical classes.

Her active involvement in student education is clearly demonstrated by these activities.

4. Research activities

Areas of scientific publication

The research interests of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva focus on current issues in crop production and technologies for sustainable agricultural production. Her scientific

publications cover several main research areas: agronomic studies of field and essential oil crops, including maize, triticale, oil-bearing rose, lavender, coriander and sage; assessment of crop productivity, product quality and the adaptive potential of varieties and hybrids under different soil and climatic conditions; investigation of the effects of organic and mineral fertilisation, foliar nutrition and biostimulant application on crop growth, development and productivity; development and evaluation of biological and environmentally friendly plant protection approaches, with particular emphasis on controlling economically important pests in essential oil crops; investigation of the yield, content and chemical composition of essential oils; and studies of natural arbuscular mycorrhizal associations and the factors influencing mycorrhizal colonisation in agricultural crops.

The results of the candidate's research activities have been presented at international and national scientific forums. The materials submitted for the competition include one oral presentation and six poster presentations.

As first author, Dr. Georgieva presented the oral paper entitled "Use of Some Products for Foliar Application for Improving the Productivity, Quality and Essential Oil Content of Coriander Seeds (*Coriandrum sativum* L.) under South-Eastern Bulgaria Conditions" at the 32nd Annual Meeting of the AAIC, held in Bologna, Italy, in September 2021. The results were published in Industrial Crops and Products, indexed in Scopus and Web of Science (Q1).

Particularly noteworthy is her participation as sole author in four poster presentations at international scientific conferences. These include studies on the productive potential and essential oil quality of *Salvia sclarea* following foliar treatment, as well as research into the influence of agronomic practices on natural arbuscular mycorrhizal associations in maize. The results were published in Scientific Papers. Series A. Agronomy.

In 2025, the candidate also participated with two poster presentations at the international conference "Trends in European Agriculture Development", organised by the University of Life Sciences "King Michael I" in Timişoara, Romania. The topics addressed organic fertilisation in oil-bearing rose production and the response of maize hybrids to biostimulant application. The publications appeared in Research Journal of Agricultural Science.

At national scientific events, Dr. Georgieva participated in two co-authored poster presentations delivered at scientific forums organized by the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. These addressed pest management in organic rose production and the comparative evaluation of a native *Beauveria bassiana* strain and a commercial biological product for the control of *Macrosiphum rosae*. The respective results were published in Agricultural Sciences/Agrarni Nauki and Scientific Works, indexed in CABI (Web of Science).

The presentation of research findings at international scientific forums and their publication in specialized scientific journals demonstrate the candidate's commitment to disseminating research results and participating in professional scientific exchange.

Citation and indexing of scientific output

Six citations of the candidate's scientific publications have been presented in the competition documentation. These citations appear in international journals with an Impact Factor, half of them in Q1 journals. These data indicate that some of her research findings have attracted the attention and interest of the international scientific community.

Participation in research projects

A significant component of Dr. Georgieva's research activities is her participation in scientific and educational projects. Since 2020, she has been a project leader or participant in five projects: 1) Erasmus+ project "Good Teaching Practices for Effective Education in Embedded Food Systems" (GOODFOOD), No. 2020-1-PL01-KA203-082209, implemented with the participation of an international consortium of universities and educational institutions (2020-

2022); 2) "Perspectives for Combating Diseases and Pests in Organic Rose Production", funded by the National Science Fund, with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna, Austria, as a partner institution (2021-2024); 3) "Agronomic Performance of High-Yielding Maize Hybrids", Project No. 10-25, funded under the National Programme "Young Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers", in which the candidate acted as project leader during both implementation stages (2022-2025); 4) "Investigation of the Effect of Different Forms of Potassium and Magnesium Fertilisers on the Yield and Quality of Table Grapes and Lavender", funded by K+S Minerals and Agriculture GmbH (2024); 5) "Evaluation of Quantitative and Qualitative Parameters of Amaranth (Amaranthus hypochondriacus L.) Depending on Fertilisation Regime, Row Spacing and Weed Control", funded by the Agricultural University - Plovdiv, with an implementation period of 2025-2028.

Her participation in these projects, including in a leadership capacity, demonstrates her ability to plan and implement research tasks and to work effectively within collaborative research teams.

5. Remarks and recommendations

I have no remarks concerning the candidate. I would recommend that she continue working with the same enthusiasm and further develop interdisciplinary research related to sustainable crop production, the adaptation of crops to changing climatic conditions and the implementation of environmentally friendly practices within crop production technologies. These research areas will continue to have both scientific significance and considerable practical value.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the candidate's teaching, scientific and applied research activities, I consider that Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its Implementation and the Regulations of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

The candidate fulfils and significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements, having achieved a total of 616 points, compared with the required 400 points. The scientific output of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva is characterized by considerable thematic diversity, with publications in reputable scientific journals and a substantial personal contribution to their authorship. She has accumulated relevant teaching experience, supervises graduation students, has developed academic curricula and is actively involved in national and international research projects, including in the capacity of project leader.

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva possesses the necessary teaching capacity, scientific qualifications and professional experience to occupy the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty "Crop Production". These achievements provide sufficient grounds for me to express an **OVERALL POSITIVE ASSESSMENT** of the candidate's professional and academic activities.

I would therefore like to recommend that the distinguished Scientific Jury also cast a positive vote and that the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Agronomy at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv elect Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Rumyana Georgieva Georgieva to the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty "Crop Production".

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