



REVIEW

regarding the competition for "associate professor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agriculture)", announced in SG № 97 от 21.11. 2023 with candidate chief assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Petrova Beluhova-Uzunova

Reviewer: *Prof. Dr. Zornitsa Dimova Stoyanova, UNWE, area of higher education Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction Economics, scientific specialty Economics and management (Agrarian and ecological management), appointed as a member of the scientific jury by order № 16-42 / 19.01.2024 of the Rector of the Agricultural University, Plovdiv*

1. General data on the candidate's career and thematic development

The only candidate for the post of associate professor under the competition announced in SG no. 97/ 21.11.2023 on the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture) is chief. assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Uzunova.

Rositsa Uzunova graduated from secondary education in 2004 at the Professional School of Economics and Tourism "Aleko Konstantinov", Velingrad. In 2010, she completed her higher education at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, obtaining a bachelor's degree in Macroeconomics and a master's degree in Accounting and Analysis. On the basis of a defended PhD thesis in 2014, she obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

Since 2014 Rositsa Uzunova started working at AU Plovdiv as an assistant, and in 2017 she occupies the position chief assistant professor.

2. General description of the presented materials

In the competition for "associate professor" dr. Rositsa Uzunova participated with a 29 scientific works, grouped as follows:

- Monographs – chief assist. prof. dr. Uzunova participated in the competition with a collective monograph entitled "Potential and prerequisites for the development of the bioeconomy in Bulgaria", published by the academic publishing house of the Agrarian University - Plovdiv in 2023.

- Scientific publications in journals referenced or indexed in the world databases Scopus and Web of Science - 18 issues;

- Scientific publications referenced in other databases – 10 publications.

Of the 29 publications submitted for review, all were co-authored. All publications except the monograph are in English, and 62% of them are published articles in publications indexed in Scopus and Web of science. It can be concluded that in the structure of the types of publications, the main part is works published in the world-

famous databases (Scopus and Web of science), in English and in co-authorship.

From the list submitted by the candidate with the publications or review for compliance with the minimum national requirements for area 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional direction 3.8. Economics, it becomes clear that according to the National minimum requirements included in the LDASRB (Art. 2b) and the Regulations for its application (Art. 1a, par. 1), the results of the candidate dr. Uzunova is a total 587.77 points (at national minimum 400 points), of which for: Group A – 50 (50), Group B – none, Group C – 100 (100), Group D – 222,76 (200), Group E – 165 (50).

Candidate chief assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Uzunova has a high total score, which is about 47% above the required national minimum.

Group of indicators	Content	Associate Professor	Points of chief assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Uzunova
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	-	-
C	Indicator 3	100	100
D	Sum of indicators from 4 till 10	200	222,76
E	Sum of indicators from 11 till 13	50	165
F	Sum of indicators from 14 till the end	-	50
Total		400	587,77

3. Main directions in the candidate's research work. Demonstrated skills or attitude for leading scientific research (project management, attracted external funding, etc.).

The main direction in the publications of chief assist. prof. Uzunova could be grouped into the following 4 areas:

- Bioeconomy – 6 publications with number from the list 2, 10, 20, 22, 23, 27;
- Competitive agriculture in the context of the CAP - 10 publications with numbers 1,8, 9,12,13, 14, 17, 25, 26,28;
- Restructuring of the agrarian sector - 9 publications with numbers 3,5,6,7,15,16,18,19,21;
- Innovation and development of precision agriculture - 3 publications with numbers 4,11,24.

Of the publications submitted for review, the collective monographic work entitled Potential and prerequisites for the development of the bioeconomy in Bulgaria, in which dr. Uzunova is the first author and participates in it with over 100 standard pages, should be highly appreciated. It was published in 2023 by the Academic publishing house of the Agrarian University. The monograph contains: introduction, 4 chapters, conclusions and recommendations. The purpose of the research is, "based on the analysis of the development potential and the territorial distribution of the initiatives in the field of bioeconomy, supported at the local level, to outline the priority areas in the implementation of projects from a given direction and to make recommendations for achieving sustainable results". Dr. Uzunova is the author of the first and third chapters. In the first chapter, the essence and importance of the bioeconomy for achieving sustainable development are objectively presented. Dr. Uzunova reflects on the different views existing in the contemporary literature on the global challenges driving the development of the bioeconomy concept, looking at climate change and fossil fuel use, threats to biodiversity, population growth and food security. An extensive and precise review of both bioeconomy definitions and bioeconomy visions is done. Special attention is paid to the development of the bioeconomy in the EU and to the criticisms related to it. Logically, this chapter includes views on the connections between bioeconomy, sustainable development, green and circular economy. Dr. Uzunova is also the author of the third chapter, where the prerequisites for the development of the priority sectors of the bioeconomy are presented. A comprehensive analysis of the development of the bioeconomy sectors in Bulgaria and the EU has been made. The role and importance of the agricultural sector as a base for the development of the bioeconomy in Bulgaria is logically outlined. The monograph contains both valuable scientific contributions and those of a practical-applied nature.

Chief assist. prof. Uzunova presents a list of her participation in three projects. The distribution of the projects by type is as follows:

- Participation in an international scientific or educational project - 1 project;
- Participation in a national scientific or educational project – 2 projects.

The materials submitted for review show the scientific pursuits of the candidate for the position of associate professor and it is clear that they are aimed at the bioeconomy, the development of a competitive agricultural sector in the context of the CAP, innovation and precision agriculture.

It can be concluded that the subject of the publications of chief. assist. prof. dr. Uzunova corresponds to the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture) and the peer-reviewed scientific production meets the requirements for occupying the academic position "associate professor". The inquiry made reveals that the scientific production of the candidate and the presented works exceed the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "associate professor" in the

field of Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture).

**4. Evaluation of the pedagogical preparation and activity of the candidate.
Its role in the training of young scientists**

Chief assist. prof. dr. Uzunova is a full-time lecturer at the Department of Economics. As of February 1, 2024, she has nine years two months and twenty-eight days of work experience at the department. Dr. Uzunova has a sufficient academic load in the bachelor's and the master's degree. The auditorium occupancy for the last five years is 4401.2 hours, by year respectively: 2018/2019 – 793.3 hours; 2019/2020 academic year – 900.6 academic hours; 2020/2021 – 783.8 hours, 2021/2022 – 933.3 and 990.2 hours for the academic year 2022/2023.

5. Significance of the obtained results, proven by citations, publications in prestigious journals, awards, membership in international and national scientific bodies, etc.

Chief. assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Uzunova, in the competition for associate professor, presents 11 citations (165 points), which exceed more than three times the minimum requirements (50 points for group of indicators D), which are defined in the Regulations for the Application of LDASRB for Academic position "associate professor" in area 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8 Economics.

The citations are in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes.

From the list for the citing publications of chief assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Uzunova, it can be concluded that the candidate fulfills the requirements set out in the Regulations for the Implementation of LDASRB for the academic position of "associate professor" in area 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8 Economics.

6. Significance of contributions for science and practice. A motivated answer to the question to what extent the candidate has a clearly defined profile of research work

I accept the reference for the contributions in the scientific production of the candidate, chief assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Uzunova. In it, she defines the main thematic directions in her work and presents the theoretical-methodological and practical - applied contributions that are contained in each direction.

Theoretically - methodological scientific results that can be found in the scientific production of dr. Uzunova are as follows:

- ❖ Definitions and concepts of bioeconomy have been expanded and further developed, in the context of changing visions of the concept.

❖ The topics dedicated to the main sectors of the bioeconomy, their contribution to the development of the concept, and the relationship of the bioeconomy with sustainable development, the circular and green economy and the possibilities for a green transition have been clarified and enriched.

❖ Based on an adapted methodology for assessing the potential of some crops for generating biomass, the possibilities of the agricultural sector for biomass production as an alternative to fossil fuels have been studied.

❖ A methodological framework for researching the competitiveness of the agricultural sector was adapted and the main opportunities and barriers for its increase were identified.

❖ The literature review on the definitions of precision agriculture, its characteristics and principles have been enriched and a methodology has been proposed for the analysis and evaluation of the effect of the application of precision technologies in the production of soft fruits.

❖ A methodology for assessing the impact of the CAP on the development of agriculture in the EU member states and for analyzing and evaluating the distribution of direct payments by group of farms was adapted and applied.

The practical-applied contributions in Rositsa Uzunova's publications can be summarized as follows:

❖ Based on the analysis and evaluation, the potential of different groups of crops for the production of biomass for biofuels as alternative sources of energy was determined and, in particular, the possibilities of using the production waste of *Rosa damascena* for the production of biomass were analyzed. A proposal was made for mapping the potential on a regional basis for its optimal use.

❖ Practical - applied proposals have been made to accelerate processes in the field of bioeconomy at the local level and dynamize bioeconomy initiatives in rural areas, supported by the strategies for community-led local development of the LAGs operating in Bulgaria during the 2014-2020 program period.

❖ Practical guidelines for green transformation of business through the integration of policies, clarifying the dependence between the bioeconomy and the concepts of sustainable development, circular, green and inclusive economy and strengthening the role of local communities are defined.

❖ Practical-applied proposals for change in the institutional environment of the viticulture sector were made and proposals were outlined for increasing its competitiveness through the production of wines from local and commercially important varieties, with a protected geographical designation and a protected designation of origin, application of innovative and environmentally friendly solutions.

❖ Proposals have been made for change the application of the CAP at the national level in order to achieve a more balanced support for groups of farms and overcome

the challenges facing the Bulgarian agricultural sector.

❖ The analysis of national and European policies and instruments for impact on agriculture makes it possible to propose practical - applied solutions to achieve innovative and sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

❖ Measures and initiatives have been outlined to reduce differences in the structure of agricultural holdings and achieve a balanced and sustainable development of the regions.

The outlined achievements and scientific results give the reason for the conclusion that the theoretical-methodological and practical-applied contributions prove the high scientific value, relevance and significance of the production of chief assist. prof. dr. Rositsa Uzunova.

7. Critical notes and recommendations

My recommendation to chief assist. prof. Rositsa Uzunova is to develop her research potential and enrich her scientific work through independent publications, as well as to direct her future creative work in an independent monographic book.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the candidate's teaching, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I consider that chief assist. prof. Rositsa Uzunova meets the requirements of LDASRB, RALDASRB and the Regulations of the Agrarian University for their application. The reference for the scientific work of dr. Uzunova shows that she exceeds the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "associate professor" in the field of Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture). The scientific production is according to the scientific profile of the competition.

All this gives me the reason to evaluate positively the overall activity of chief assist. prof. Rositsa Uzunova. I propose the honorable Scientific Jury also to vote positively, and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics at the Agrarian University - Plovdiv to elect Rositsa Uzunova as "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" in the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture).

Data: 1.2.2024
Plovdiv

REVIEWER :
(prof. dr. Zornitsa Stoyanova)