



## REVIEW

regarding the competition for "PROFESSOR" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agriculture)", announced in SG № 62/ 21.07.2023 with candidate assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov Atanasov

**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 № RD-16-899/25.09.2023 of the Rector of the Agricultural University, Plovdiv

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

Assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov graduated from secondary education in 1994 at the Agricultural mechanization and automation technical school, Haskovo. In 2000, he graduated from the Agricultural University, Plovdiv, with a master's degree in Agricultural Economics. On the basis of a defended PhD thesis, in 2013 assoc. prof. dr. Atanasov obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management".

Assoc. prof. dr. Atanasov has over ten years of professional experience in agricultural business. From 1994 to 2000, he carried out activities such as: mechanized processing of agricultural land, animal care, supply of raw materials, sale of finished products in a family farm. From 2001 to 2005, Atanasov held the position of head of Dairy Cattle Breeding and Selection at the Alan Gillis Dairy Farm, where he carried out activities such as development and optimization of food rations, herd selection, administrative activities, planning and organization of feed supplies, fuels, medicines and mechanized services, etc. Assoc. prof. dr. Atanasov's employment in agriculture presents the accumulated solid practical knowledge base for the agricultural sector, which was subsequently used in his work as scientist, researcher and teacher.

### 2. General description of the presented materials

In the competition for "PROFESSOR" assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov Atanasov participated with a 25 scientific works, grouped as follows:

- Monographs – Assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov participated in the competition with an independent monograph entitled "Role of innovations for the economic development of agriculture", published by the academic publishing house of the Agrarian University - Plovdiv.

- Scientific publications in journals referenced or indexed in the world databases Scopus and Web of Science - 19 issues;

- Scientific publications referenced in other databases – 5 publications.

Of the 25 publications submitted for review, 23 are co-authored and the remaining 2 are independent. Most of the publications are in English, and a large part of them (19 issues) are published articles in publications indexed in Scopus and Web of science. On this basis, it can be concluded that in the structure of the types of publications dominate: 1) the papers published in the world-famous databases (Scopus and Web of science), 2)



in English,3) 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 according to the LDASRB (Art. 2b) and the Regulations for its application (Art. 1a, par. 1), the results of the candidate assoc.prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov have a total 1412,76 points (at national minimum 550 points), of which for: Group A – 50 (50), Group B – none, Group C – 100 (100), Group D – 222,76 (200), Group E – 675 (100), Group F – 365 (100).

Candidate assoc.prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov has a high total score, which is about two and a half times above the required national minimum.

Group of indicators	Content	Professor	Points of Associate Prof. Dimo Atanasov
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	100	675
F	Sum of indicators from 14 till the end	100	365
Total		550	1412,76

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

In terms of thematic and content, assoc. professor dr. Atanasov's scientific work can be grouped into the following 4 areas:

- Sustainable agrarian development and protection of natural resources - 13 publications with number from the list 1,5,8,9,12,15,17,18,19,21,22,24,25;
- National and European policies and development of the agricultural sector - 6 publications with numbers 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16;
- Innovations and development of an innovative agricultural sector - 9 publications with numbers 6,9,12,13,15,17,18,21,25;
- Regional transformations and social economic development - 4 publications with numbers 1, 6, 20, 23.

Of the publications submitted for review, the monograph of assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov entitled The Role of Innovations for the Economic Development of Agriculture should be highly evaluated. It was published in 2023 by the Academic Publishing House of the Agrarian University. The monograph contains: introduction, 4 chapters, conclusions and recommendations. The introduction is purposeful, containing the need for research in the field of innovation for agricultural development. In this regard, assoc.



professor dr. Atanasov sets the goal of the research "to present the main concepts of economic growth of agriculture; to analyze the factor dependence of sustainable agriculture; to assess the role of innovation and technological change for its social and economic evolution and to propose modern solutions in synchrony with European green policies. To achieve the goal, seven tasks have been professionally formulated for carrying out the research. In the first chapter, dr. Atanasov objectively presents and reflects the different views existing in modern literature on the role of innovation for economic growth. It logically goes through the theoretical foundations of the essence and features of economic growth, the characteristics and role of innovations for sustainable socio-economic development. Special attention is paid to the evolution of the concept of innovation and the innovation process. Logically, the theory of innovation diffusion is included in this chapter. In the second chapter, policies and strategies for sustainable development are appropriately presented. In this part of the monograph, on the one hand, the essence of the concept of sustainable development is included, and on the other hand, dr. Atanasov goes into specifics regarding the understanding of sustainable development of agriculture. A positive assessment deserves the part dedicated to sustainable development policies, in which European strategic documents such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement, etc. are chronologically analyzed. Attention is paid to the aspects of the green transformation policies of the EU and innovation policies and funds in Bulgaria. The third chapter is devoted to innovations in agriculture. Logically, the first paragraph presents the peculiarities of agriculture and the need for innovation. The relationship between innovation and precision agriculture is discussed in detail by presenting the features, components, technologies and benefits of precision agriculture. In the fourth chapter, entitled Evaluation of the effectiveness of innovations is presented in an interesting way how the innovations implemented in agriculture affect its development in technical, economic, social and ecological aspects. In this part of the book, the methods for evaluating the economic efficiency of the implementation of new technologies are systematically included. Conclusions and recommendations are valuable both for researchers and for practice. In this part, based on the material presented in the monographic work, assoc. professor Atanasov summarizes the main ideas of the development and gives specific proposals for the design of innovative agricultural systems.

In the list of publications submitted for review for compliance with the minimum national requirements for area 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional direction 3.8. Economics, assoc. prof. Atanasov presents eight projects. Dr. Atanasov is the leader of five of the projects. The distribution of projects by type and participation is as follows:

- Teamleader of an international scientific or educational project - 4 projects;
- Teamleader of a national scientific or educational project - 1 project;
- Participation as member in an international scientific or educational project - 2 project;
- Participation as a member of a national scientific or educational project - 1 project.

The publications presented by assoc. prof. Dimo Atanasov clearly show the



scientific interests of the candidate for the academic position of "professor" and they are mainly aimed at the development and management of agrarian business, the development of regions, policies in the agricultural sector and the possibilities of dynamizing processes for the implementation of innovations in agriculture. Assoc. prof. Atanasov shows a good knowledge of the theoretical achievements in the studied areas and has a great scientific potential for interpretations related to the directions in which his scientific interests lie.

It can be concluded that the topic of assoc. prof. Atanasov's research corresponds to the scientific specialty of Economics and Management (Agriculture) and the peer-reviewed scientific production fully meets the requirements for occupying the academic position of "professor". The inquiry made reveals that the scientific publications of associate professor dr. Dimo Atanasov and the presented scientific works exceed the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "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**

From the documents presented by assoc. prof. Atanasov, it could be established that he has a sufficient academic load in the Bachelor's and Master's degrees as a lecturer of a full employment contract at the "Economics" department. The auditorium occupancy of assoc. prof. dr. Atanasov during the last five academic years is 4652.9 hours, by year respectively: 2018/2019 - 1169.6 hours; 2019/2020 year - 871.7 academic hours; 2020/2021 – 760.5 hours, 2021/2022 – 1128.5 and 722.6 hours for the academic year 2022/2023, calculated on the basis of an individual plan. Assoc. prof. Atanasov's teaching experience is 16 years and five months.

Dimo Atanasov has developed and accredited three new specialties, as follows: 1) "Bio-Economics" for Bachelor degree at AU-Plovdiv (started from the academic year 2022/2023; 2) "Bio-Economics" for Master's degree at AU-Plovdiv (started from the academic year 2022-2023; 3) "Electronic commerce" for the Master's degree program at AU-Plovdiv (taught from the academic year 2022-2023). The candidate also leads the master's course "Bio-economy" in AU-Plovdiv.

As a contribution to the educational and teaching work of Associate Professor Atanasov can be mentioned his work with pHd students. He has 3 successfully defended pHd students, and is currently the supervisor of four pHd students.

It can be summarized that assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov has extensive teaching experience and a high degree of preparation for occupying the academic position of "Professor", which gives the reason for a positive assessment of the candidate's educational and teaching work and his contribution to increase the quality of students' education. The candidate's academic competence fully corresponds to the scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (Agriculture).

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



The citation reference for the publications of assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov in publications of periodicals and in conference proceedings, as well as the reference for citations in books, gives me the reason to conclude that the scientific interests of assoc. prof. Atanasov are the object of interest of leading specialists in the field of agrarian business management, rural development, organic agriculture, etc.

The total number of citations is 66, classified as follows:

- 33 citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes;
- 3 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review;
- 30 citations in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals.

The number of points for citation presented by the candidate - 255 points exceeds more than twice the minimum requirements (100 points for group of indicators D), which are defined in the Regulations for the implementation of LDASRB for the academic position "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 agree with the proposed from Dimo Atanasov list for the contributions, that could be found in his scientific production. He presented in detail the main theoretical-methodological, methodological and practical - applied contributions, which are contained in the publications presented for participation in the competition.

Theoretically - methodological scientific results that have the character of further development, enrichment and systematization of theoretical knowledge related to sustainable agrarian development and the development of regions are:

- The theoretical-methodological foundations of the specifics of agricultural production in economic, social, ecological, institutional and technological aspects have been clarified and enriched.
- The theoretical views on topics related to the impact of the factors of the external and internal environment on the functioning of agricultural holdings in particular and their impact on the development of rural areas have been expanded and further developed.
- The theoretical views on topics related to innovation and innovative practices and the possibility of new technologies to achieve sustainable development have been expanded and further developed.
- The opinions of the authors on the issues of European policies and strategies for achieving a green and circular economy are clarified and further developed.

The methodological contributions of assoc. professor Atanasov are related to empirical research, analysis and evaluation of the state and development of the agricultural sector, national and European policies for the development of the sector, the development of the regions. They can be summarized as follows:

- A methodology has been developed for the research of the factors of the internal environment of agricultural holdings and for the interpretation of its results.
- An original innovative methodology for assessing demand in agriculture and its



application by agricultural producers in order to minimize is proposed.

- A methodological approach has been developed and implemented for the analysis and evaluation of the technical and economic efficiency of various technologies in agriculture, which have been tested in real conditions.

- An innovative methodological model has been applied for the transformation of various agrarian productions to the principles of the circular economy and the sustainable application of biomass in agriculture.

- Methodology for optimal production from the point of view of consumer benefits and the importance of genetic features is proposed.

The scientific and applied contributions of assoc. prof. Atanasov can be outlined on the basis of original practical and applied solutions, which are contained in the candidate's scientific production and their practical application. They can be synthesized as follows:

- Guidelines and recommendations are proposed for achieving better security and sustainability of production systems in agriculture by applying management approaches to prevent or reduce the occurrence of risky events for agricultural holdings and realizing a risk control.

- Approaches to evaluate the effectiveness of innovations and new technologies are proposed, and through the application of various tools, an analysis of the usefulness of an innovation in agriculture and the expediency of its implementation was prepared.

- On the basis of the analysis of national and European policies and instruments for impact on agriculture, practical and applied solutions are proposed to achieve innovative and sustainable development of the agrarian sector.

- Models have been developed and tested for the use of cheap soil additives and utilization of biomass in agriculture, which are applicable in various agrarian productions.

- Strategic decisions related to policies for the development of agriculture and rural areas at the European, national, regional and local level have been prepared in order to optimize the use of resources, dynamize the process of implementing innovations, protect the interests of stakeholders, increase added value from agriculture.

The above-mentioned contributions give the reason for the conclusion that the scientific and practical-applied results prove the high scientific value, relevance and significance of the production of assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov.

## **7. Critical notes and recommendations**

I have not critical notes on the teaching and research activities of associate professor dr. Dimo Atanasov. I would recommend dr. Atanasov to continue enriching with the same responsibility and drive his scientific work, researching topics significant for the science and practice.

## **8. Personal impressions and opinion**

I know assoc. prof. Atanasov, his publication activity and his scientific interests. My impressions of him are that he is organized and consistent in his work, he is responsible and competent and has built lasting scientific interests. Through his research activity, dr. Atanasov reaches results significant for science and practice. I consider that he is established among the collegium as a scientist, researcher and expert. The

administrative positions occupied by him show that the candidate is also recognized as an authoritative administrator.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis of the candidate's teaching, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I consider that associate professor dr. Dimo Atanasov Atanasov meets the requirements of LDASRB, RALDASRB and the Regulations of the Agrarian University for their application. The reference for the scientific work of assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov shows that it significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "professor" in the field of Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture). The scientific production is according to the scientific profile of the competition, is up-to-date and presents him as an established scientist.

All this gives me reason to evaluate positively the overall activity of assoc. prof. Dimo Atanasov. 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 assoc. prof. dr. Dimo Atanasov Atanasov as "PROFESSOR" in the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture).

Data: 26.10.2023  
Plovdiv

  
**REVIEWER:**.....  
(prof. dr. Zornitsa Stoyanova)