



OPINION

From: prof. **Valentina Ljubenova Nikolova-Alexieva, PhD**
University of Food Technologies - Plovdiv,
Professional direction 3.8 . Economy
Scientific specialty "Economics and Management"
(Business Economics, Corporate Governance)

Subject: competition for **a professorship** in an area on the higher education
3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction
3.8. Economics , scientific specialty "Organization and management
of production (Business marketing and business management)",
announced from Agricultural University - Plovdiv

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate.

The competition for borrowing on the academic position "**professor**" of area on high education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professionally direction 3.8 "Economics (Organization and Management of Production)" is announced for the needs on Agricultural University (AU) - Plovdiv in State Gazette No 99/ 28.11.2023 I participate in the composition of the scientific jury for the competition, according to Order No RD - 16-44/19.01.2024 by the Rector of the Agricultural University.

In the contest participates only one candidate - Assoc prof. Violeta Dinkova Dirimanova from Agrarian University - Plovdiv.

- In 1996 - acquired master's degree in engineering sciences and industrial management in Technical university, Plovdiv branch.
- In 1999 - graduated from Perotis College, American Farming School, Thessaloniki, Greece, major agribusiness.
- In 2007 - defended successfully PhD on subject: "Economic effects from fragmentation on the ground: straight on property, markets on land and contracts in Bulgaria" in Scientific group by Resourceful Economics, Faculty Agriculture and Horticulture in Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany.
- In 2008 - officially approved the doctorate degree by HAC (with number 713-19.06.2008) under the scientific specialty 05.02.18 – Economics and management.
- In 2014 - took the academic position of "associate professor" in the Department of "Management and Marketing" at AU - Plovdiv.

Even here, I must share that I know Assoc. prof. Violeta Dirimanova and observe in a direct and indirect way (mostly through some of her publications and academic appearances) her personal, intellectual and, in particular, her scientific and teaching evolution. I also know in detail some of her most important scientific products. I can confirm with complete conviction that she is a thorough, creative, disciplined scholar and colleague who possesses undeniable analytical abilities, emotional intelligence and effective teamwork skills. He has

proven himself and is known as an extremely correct, competent specialist who is distinguished by scientific dignity and professional ethics.

2. Fulfillment of the requirements for occupying the academic position.

The candidate meets all the mandatory conditions under Art. 24 of ZRASRB and the additional requirements of AU-Plovdiv, according to Art. 15, para. 1 of ZRASRB and Art. 60 of PPZRASRB.

Regarding the requirement for an acquired ONS "Doctor" (art. 60, para. 1, item 1 of PPZRASRB) - in 2009, Assoc. prof. Violeta Dirimanova defended her dissertation at AU-Plovdiv, on the topic: "Economic effects of the fragmentation of land: property rights, land markets and contracts in Bulgaria" at Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany. She acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" by code 05.02.18.

In regard to the minimum academic experience requirement (art. 60, para. 1, item 2 of PPZRASRB) - the total work experience of Associate professor Dr. Violeta Dirimanova as a teacher at AU is over 23 years. Apparently, the applicant fully meets the legal requirement of a minimum academic experience of two years.

Regarding the requirement for a published monographic work (art. 60, para. 1, item 3 of PPZRASRB) - Assoc. prof. Dirimanova presented her habilitation thesis. The topic of the monographic work, the object, the subject and the time period to which it refers do not imply an overlap with the dissertation work for the ESD "Doctor" and with the monograph for the occupation of the academic position "docent" of the candidate, which meets the legal requirement of Art. 24, para. 1, item 3 of ZRASRB.

Regarding the requirement to submit other original scientific research works (Art. 60, para. 1, item 4 of PPZRASRB) - the candidate has submitted 18 articles and reports in primary databases such as Scopus and WOS and 17 publications in non-refereed publications with peer review. Published chapters in 1 collective monograph.

Regarding the requirement to meet the relevant minimum national criteria and the requirements under Art. 1a, paragraph 2; (art. 60, paragraph 1, item 5 of the PPZRASRB) - according to the presented Reference, the candidate has achieved a total of **2,410 points** (from indicators: A- 50 points; B-100 points; G-324.44 points; D- 1,380 points; E-550.67 points), which significantly exceeds the required threshold of 550 points . It is noteworthy that activity was recorded for each of the indicators, and for some of them, an implementation significantly exceeding the minimum threshold was reported - such as G (publications), D (citations) and E (projects, textbooks, etc.). *This proves beyond doubt the potential of the candidate for the academic position and the enormous work he has done.*

In regard to the requirement that there is no proven plagiarism in scientific works (Art. 60, Para. 1, Point 6 of the PPZRASRB) - at the moment, such has not been established. Based on everything stated above, regarding the versatile and in-depth teaching and research work of Associate professor Dr. Dirimanova , I believe that **she fully meets the quantitative and qualitative requirements** for occupying the academic position of "professor" at AU-Plovdiv.

3. Evaluation of teaching and research activities

In 2000, she was appointed as an assistant in the "Management and Marketing" department at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. In 2003, he became a senior assistant, and later, in 2008, a senior assistant in the department. As a teacher, she brings the disciplines "Agrarian Management", "Organization and Management of Agricultural Production", "Fundamentals of Economic Management", "Local Self-Government and Decentralization", "Regional Analysis of the Economy", Regional Planning" and "Operational Management" in undergraduate course of study. Delivers lectures and exercises on the disciplines "Entrepreneurship in agriculture", "Organizational behavior", "Organization" in a master's course of study.

From 2014 to the present, he is an associate professor in the "Management and Marketing" department of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. In her teaching career, Associate professor Violeta Dirimanova established herself as an excellent teacher, teaching students and doctoral students. *She supervised 6 doctoral students* who obtained a scientific and educational doctorate degree in the scientific specialty "Organization and Production Management". She reviewed one procedure for a professor, doctor of sciences and associate professor and 7 dissertation studies of Bulgarian and foreign doctoral students. Assoc. prof. Violeta Dirimanova was *the head of 2 international projects* and participated in *11 more international and national projects*.

Teaching and learning and scientific activity on Associate Professor Dr. Violeta Dirimanova like lecturer, author of numerous scientific publications, leader and participant in international and national projects and scientific manager of doctoral students, completely matches on the requirements for borrowing on the academic "Professor" position at AU-Plovdiv.

4. Brief description of the presented scientific works/publications

Associate Professor Dr. Violeta Dirimanova participated in the competition for the academic position of "Professor" with **40 scientific works**. They are grouped as follows:

- *Habilitation work /monograph/ - 1 issue, which is 2.5% of the total scientific works of the candidate submitted for review;*
- *Scientific publications in publications that are referenced and indexed in a world-famous database of scientific information - 18 issues, which is 45% of the candidate's scientific works submitted for review;*
- *Scientific publication in non-refereed journals with scientific review or in edited collective volumes - 17 issues, which is 42.5% of the candidate's total scientific works submitted for review;*
- *Published chapter of a collective monograph - 1 issue, which is 2.5% of the candidate's scientific works submitted for review;*
- *Published study aids, manuals and textbooks – 3 copies, which is 7.5% of the candidate's scientific works submitted for review.*

The candidate's scientific publications can be grouped in the following areas:

- Development of a model of the "Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System" (AKIS) and creation of the AKIS network for Bulgaria.

- Development of consulting services in Bulgarian agriculture and the role towards small farmers;
- The role of property rights for the successful development of organizations in agriculture;
- The analysis of transaction costs and land relationships;
- The role of the concept of "multifunctional agriculture" in Bulgarian agriculture;
- Development and management of organic production in Bulgarian farms;
- Management and development of human resources in agriculture;
- The advent of digitization leads to changes in the nature of competition.

Prof. Dr. Dirimanova has published **18 journal articles with an impact factor** in Bulgarian and foreign publications. He also provided information on **92 citations**.

The analysis of the publications presented in the present procedure shows that they are distinguished both by relevance and originality, and by a clear methodological framework and professional interpretation of the obtained results. They do not repeat posts related to previous contests. As a whole, these scientific works reveal a deep scientific interest of Assoc. prof. Dr. Violeta Dirimanova in the thematic area of the competition: business marketing and management of biological production.

5. A synthesized evaluation of the main scientific and scientific-applied contributions

The publications contain a number of scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions with varying degrees of significance for agrarian-economic science:

- **In direction: Development on model for " The System for knowledge and innovation in the field on agriculture " (AKIS) and creation on the network of AKIS for Bulgaria :**
 - *Created and analyzed model of AKIS in Bulgaria with participation in the analysis on Romania .*
 - *Certain participants from the public one sector , private commercial organizations , branches associations , agricultural cooperatives and academic community .*
 - *Analysis on functioning of AKIS and impact his on the agricultural ones manufacturers .*
 - *Developed AKIS model for Bulgaria and others members of the EU, demonstrating connections in networks on advisory services in agriculture .*
- **In direction: Development on advisory services in Bulgarian agriculture and the role to the little ones agricultural manufacturers :**
 - *Underlined importance on consulting planning and application services _for measures of PRDP.*
 - *Analysis on the role on agronomic and economic consultations for the strategic planning on the agricultural ones manufacturers .*
 - *Developed monograph presenting _ the story on the advisory activity and its influence in the system of AKIS.*
- **In direction: The role on the rights on property for the successful one development on organizations in agriculture :**
 - *Established changes in Bulgarian farming and analysis on the influence on the earthly ones relations .*

- *Analysis on the influence on fragmentation on the ownership on the benefits from agricultural land .*
- *Research on relationships between owners and manufacturers , including analysis on the earthly ones contracts and agreements .*
- *Scientific and theoretical review on the neo-institutional economics and analysis on costs and relationships in agriculture in Bulgaria and Moldova .*
- **In the field: Analysis on transactional costs and land relationships :**
 - *Established tall transactional transaction costs decreasing efficiency on market in Bulgaria .*
 - *Examination of activity at the deals for hiring or leasing on agricultural land .*
 - *Certain influencing factors on the choice between the purchase and sale and the lease, as the institutional one environment and transactional expenses.*
 - *Discreet Structural Analysis (DSA) of the agricultural ones contracts and theirs influence on transactional expenses .*
- **In direction: The role on the concept of " multifunctional agriculture " in Bulgarian agriculture :**
 - *Established the influence on the size on the agricultural economy on the introduction on multifunctional agriculture .*
 - *It has been proven that the big ones agricultural manufacturers they have better ones opportunities for management and enforcement on multifunctional agriculture .*
 - *Examined influencing factors _ on the choice between the different ones kinds dependent agriculture _ from the financial ones opportunities and conditions on the farm .*
- **In direction: Development and management on the biological production in Bulgarian agricultural holdings :**
 - *Established the reasons for growth on the biological production in Bulgaria and the benefits from this one type production .*
 - *Analysis on the programs for assistance on bioproducers and status on the biological beekeeping in the country .*
 - *Research on the internal and the external market on bee products from the biological beekeeping .*
 - *Analysis on the policies for stimulation on quality and competitiveness on the biological production .*
 - *Development on strategies and recommendations*

In summary, I consider the scientific achievements of Associate Professor Violeta Dirimanova as her personal work and can be attributed to the group of " enrichment of existing knowledge " and " application of new scientific achievements in practice ", as well as " obtaining new data and facts" for studied economic objects.

6. Key critical notes and recommendations

I have no critical notes.

7. Conclusion

The submitted materials for participation in the competition meet the requirements of the RSARB and the regulations for its application. All requirements for the candidate's

scientific and teaching activities have been met. Sufficient scientific, scientific- applied and applied contributions have been received. Prominence has been achieved in the scientific circles and the professional community.

The competition documents testify that all the national minimum criteria and *the quantitative and qualitative requirements* of AU-Plovdiv for the occupation of the academic position "Professor" have been met.

With complete conviction, I give my POSITIVE evaluation and recommend to the other respected members of the Scientific Jury to vote FOR AWARDING the academic position of "Professor" to Assoc. prof. Dr. Violeta Dirimanova in professional direction 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Production Organization and Management".

14.01.2024
Plovdiv city

Prepared the opinion:

/ Prof. V. Nikolova-Aleksieva, PhD /

