



## REVIEW

by Prof. DSc Plamena Georgieva Yovchevska

### 3.8 Economics

Prepared on the basis of the order of the rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv № RD 16-44/19.01.2024 to determine the composition of the scientific jury in the competition for the academic position "Professor" and the decision of the first meeting of the scientific jury held on 2.02.2024. The review is in accordance with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Application of the LDASRB and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Agricultural University-Plovdiv.

The scientific jury was determined in connection with a competition for the occupation of the academic position "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences" in professional direction 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty Production Organization and Management (agriculture and sub-sectors). The competition was announced for the needs of the Department of "Management and Marketing" at the Faculty of Economics at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. It was promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 99 of 28.11.2023.

For participation in the announced competition, documents are submitted by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Dinkova Dirimanova, who is the only candidate and fulfills the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "Professor" in accordance with Art. 4(3) of LDASRB, as well as the requirements of the Agricultural University-Plovdiv, regulated in art. 5(3) of RALDASRB.

#### **Personal characteristic of the applicant**

##### **➤ Education**

The documents attached to the competition and the creative autobiography confirm that Violeta Dinkova Dirimanova has a master's degree in electronic engineering and microelectronics, obtained after studying at the Technical University - Sofia, Plovdiv Branch during the period 1991-1996. In 1997-1999, Dirimanova studied agribusiness, management and

marketing in agriculture, accounting, finance and other related disciplines at Perrotis College, American Farm School, Thessaloniki, Greece. During the period 2004-2007, the applicant was trained in doctoral studies at the Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany, Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture, Research Group on Resource Economics. The scientific supervisor of the dissertation thesis was Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Konrad Hagedorn, awarded with the honorary scientific recognition "Doctor Honoris Causa" from the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. After a successfully defended dissertation on the topic: "Economic effects of land fragmentation: property rights, land markets and contracts in Bulgaria", Violeta Dirimanova obtained the scientific degree "Doctor". It was approved by the Presidium of the Higher Attestation Commission under the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria with certificate No. 713/19.06.2008.

➤ ***Professional development***

On 10.01.2000, Violeta Dirimanova held the academic position of "Assistant Professor" at the Department of "Management and Marketing" at the Faculty of Economics at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. The applicant's academic development continued successfully. From 14.11.2002 she became a Senior Assistant Professor, and from 21.07.2008 held the academic position of Chief Assistant Professor. Seven years later, she was habilitated and from 19.01.2015 became an Associate Professor at the Department.

At the time of application in the competition for the academic position "Professor", Violeta Dirimanova has a total teaching experience at Agricultural University - Plovdiv amounting to 24 years. An opportunity that enriches, deepens and expands the research potential and provides rich cognition of the applicant. This implies the development of teaching skills and the combination of the processes of knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing from the initial period in the professional development of Assoc. Prof. Dirimanova. The applicant's sustainable development is a prerequisite for her successful participation as a leader and participant in a number of national and international research projects. The experience makes her a desirable partner in a number of studies, the results of which have been published in articles in a number of world-renowned scientific databases.

➤ ***Teaching activity***



The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Violeta Dirimanova is directly related to the scientific and teaching expertise she possesses/has accumulated. She delivers lectures on the disciplines: "Agrarian Management", "Organization and Management of Agrarian Production", "Planning and Forecasting", "Entrepreneurship", "Organizational Behavior", "Organizational Culture", "Business Analysis" and "Branding".

The leadership of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv certified that during the period 2018/2019 to 2022/2023 in the EQD "Bachelor" and in the EQD "Master" Assoc. Prof. Dirimanova had classroom employment with lectures, exercises and non-audit employment of a total of 4310.6 hours. During the period, the applicant delivered 45 hours in a foreign language to students from South Africa.

Dirimanova actively and successfully works with young people in science. Evidence of this is the scientific supervision of six doctoral students, all of whom have successfully defended their dissertations. A hard-to-achieve success rate for most science supervisions. This can be considered as a certificate of possessed scientific approach and expert professional qualities with which the applicant succeeds in motivating doctoral students. The successful completion of training for the ESD "Doctor", 100% success rate, with defended dissertation research for all students, is a high certificate for Assoc. Prof. Dirimanova and a testimony of her readiness to acquire the academic position of "Professor".

#### **Characteristics of the presented scientific works**

The references-declarations attached to the documents for the competition and signed by the applicant and the information contained in them certify the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", in professional direction 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty Organization and Management of Production (agriculture and subsectors), according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of LDASRB, as well as in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

The quantitative requirements are satisfied by the presented scientific works. 40 publications have been submitted for participation in the competition. In addition to monographic work, the list contains 18 scientific publications in publishers that are referenced

and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - Scopus and WoS; 17 scientific publications in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or in edited collective volumes; Published chapter of collective monograph; three published teaching aids, manuals and textbooks. The highest relative share, almost half, are publications in publishers that are referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information - Scopus and WoS, together with the share of scientific publications in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or in edited collective volumes representing almost 90% of the publications submitted to the contest. I consider this as a sign of high approval of the publications with the participation of Assoc. Prof. Dirimanova and the ability to work with both Bulgarian and foreign researchers.

The submitted scientific works do not repeat those submitted for the acquisition of the ESD "Doctor" and the academic position "Associate Professor".

Plagiarism in scientific works has not been proven according to the regulatory requirements. There is a declaration signed by the applicant about the originality and credibility of the results and contributions in the scientific production and compliance with the objective truth of the documents and publications provided in connection with the competition.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dirimanova covers/satisfies the number of points for all groups of indicators from the criteria for fulfilling the minimum national requirements: successfully defended dissertation; published one-person monograph; she exceeds the indicators of group "G" (second monograph; publications in Scopus or Web of Science; publications in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or in edited collective volumes, studies, book chapter); according to group "D", the number of points from citations, considering the collective publications, has been exceeded many times, which satisfies/covers the required norm almost 14 times (citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in Scopus or Web of Science and citations in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals); by indicator group "E" the required points have been exceeded more than five times (six successfully defended doctoral students, participation and management of national and international educational and scientific projects, co-authored textbooks).

The content of the presented scientific works is a research palette of upgrading and deepening knowledge and analytical skills, a result of the applicant's scientific and teaching activity after acquiring the academic position of "Associate Professor" in 2015.



One of the publications submitted for participation in the competition for AP "Professor", the monographic work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dirimanova "Consultancy: knowledge and information system for the development of agriculture", registered in COBISS.BG-ID - 60808968, deserves special attention. It was reviewed by two habilitated persons, authorities with high scientific and expert potential in the given research field - Prof. Dr. Vasko Koprivlenski and Assoc. Prof. DSc Petar Borisov. The 136-page monograph was printed in 2023 in the specialized Academic Publishing House of the Plovdiv Agricultural University.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dirimanova applies appropriate methodological solutions with potential for analysis of quite current problems of society, including problems related to the system of knowledge and information and the role of the advisory activity for the development of agriculture. The structure of the monographic work is organized in a balanced way and corresponds to the purpose of the author's research. Its achievement is a synthesis of a theoretical summary and a solution to a scientific-applied problem, inherent for centuries in the primary sector, enlightened by the potential of knowledge in societies, which acquired a new relevance in Bulgarian agriculture in the years after the macro-social transformation in our country. The worked-out topics are at a high modern level. The monograph is a completed scientific work, an author's research with a significant theoretical contribution to the national research ecosystem.

The quintessence of Assoc. Prof. Dirimanova's monographic work "*Consultancy: a system of knowledge and information for the development of agriculture*" is a systematic presentation of the ways to support and develop the capacity of individuals and communities, through the provision of information, with a view to solving the problems of farmers and the population in rural areas.

The need to provide information is a recurring process, the essence of which is to maintain and upgrade knowledge necessary to improve the economic environment, economic results and social status of the individual and the community.

In a number of the scientific publications attached to the competition, there is evidence of the accumulation of cognition and enrichment of the research of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Dirimanova as a result of her participation in scientific teams of a number of international and national projects. During the execution of the assignments, from the testing of methodological solutions to the subsequent conduct of research, several directions can be outlined from the

analysis of the results of the worked-out projects. In the monograph and in the scientific works 1, 14, 15, 16, 21, 23, 25, 26, 32, 33, 34 of the list for participation in the competition, an analysis of the theory of consulting activities in agriculture is made and a dependence between economic results is established of entities and the role of consulting organizations. The study of the relationship consulting services - economic activity by agricultural producers in Bulgaria shows only one type of consultation, which is related to the planning, preparation and application for the various measures of the RDP. Economic and specialized agronomic consultations are not actively used by farmers and are not offered by consulting organizations. The applied model of the "Knowledge and Innovation System in the field of agriculture" shows how the European Agrarian Policy works in practice for all farmers and at different administrative levels. Its connection with the Strategic Plan for the development of agriculture and rural areas during the program period 2023-2027 stands out.

Assoc. Prof. Violeta Dirimanova is registered in the global scientific networks for sharing the content of projects and research publications:

[https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=bg&as\\_sdt=0%2C5&q=violeta+dirimanova&btnG=and](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=bg&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=violeta+dirimanova&btnG=and)

<https://scholar.google.com/scholar>. The publicity of the applicant's work is also confirmed by the number of points for the author certifying the performance of the indicators from group "D". The applicant repeatedly exceeds the norm for fulfilling the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "professor".

The scientific works are written in the spirit of the scientific style, they are tailored to the specifics and terminological peculiarities of the research fields, the results of which are analyzed in the publications presented by the applicant.

In a significant part of the scientific research, Assoc. Prof. Dirimanova applies the theoretical achievements of neo-institutional economics. When studying property rights, transaction costs, contracts between owners and producers, the influence on the effective management of land resources and the processes of capitalization of land resources is studied (2, 3, 5, 9, 20, 36). The application of the achievements of neo-institutionalism in the study of changes in the social model of society in our country and the construction of new economic entities in the primary sector is a complex research process requiring in-depth theoretical knowledge, which Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dirimanova possesses and applies successfully.



The applicant's research in the field of multifunctional agriculture is evaluated from the perspective of economic, social and ecological development of rural areas. The upgrading of research in the direction of protecting natural resources is also related to the application of innovations to ensure their rational use, preservation of biological diversity, study of regional ecosystems and their role in the development of bioeconomy. For this purpose, the main actors, the network structures between the different actors and the relations between the consultants and the beneficiaries are analyzed. The role of policy for cooperation between different actors and the importance of knowledge transfer for future bioeconomy development are assessed. Through the methods used, different approaches and requirements for knowledge transfer related to the bioeconomy and sustainable development of agricultural production are evaluated. The expectations are that the specific knowledge and information about the bioeconomy will influence the growth of agricultural production, change the approach to production and sustainable development. (4, 21, 27, 29).

#### **Contributions to scientific publications**

I accept the reference attached by the candidate for the contributions from the scientific works presented in the competition. In a synthesized form, they can be formed as follows:

- Systematicity is established in the connection between the ways of supporting and developing the capacity of individuals and communities, through the provision of information, with a view to solving the problems of agricultural producers and the population in rural areas. The need to provide information is a recurring process, the essence of which is to maintain and upgrade knowledge necessary to improve the economic environment, economic results and social status of the individual and the community.
- The scientific method is applied, which allows Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Dirimanova to build and use an adequate logical framework for her studies in the field of land relations after the macro-social transformation in Bulgaria and in the implementation of the Community agricultural policy. The complexity in creating sustainability in the development of public relations in the use of the land resource in economic activity in the primary sector and the influence of the dynamically changing institutional framework stands out.

- Study of current processes in the economic environment of Bulgarian agriculture, related to the ecological sensitivity of the society, the questions and the policy for a green contract, the answers and solutions of which are often not unambiguous.

### **Recommendations**

I know the applicant personally. I have worked in joint scientific projects with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Dirimanova. We have no joint publications and no direct co-authorship in scientific works. This review and the judgments contained in it are the result of the objective reading/review of the materials presented in the competition and of my direct observations during our joint activity in the course of field studies, discussion of the implementation of planned activities in projects with joint participation, presentation of results from analyzes multi-year research in conferences, seminars, etc. forums.

### **Conclusion**

Based on all the achievements reflected in this review, I express a positive assessment of the documents submitted by the only applicant for the announced competition. With full conviction, I propose to the members of the respected scientific jury to vote for awarding Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Dinkova Dirimanova the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences" in professional direction 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty Production Organization and Management (agriculture and subsectors). The competition is announced for the needs of the "Management and Marketing" department at the Faculty of Economics at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv, promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 99 of 28.11.2023. I recommend the Faculty Council to vote **POSITIVELY** for the appointment of Associate Professor Violeta Dinkova Dirimanova to the academic position of "Professor" in the Department of "Management and Marketing".

15<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Sofia

Reviewer:



Prof. DSc Plamena Yovchevska