



OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Hristo Stefanov Kiskinov,
Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics,
Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski",
professional field 4.5 Mathematics,
appointed according to Order No. RD 16 - 1018 / 08.10.2025 of the
Rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv as a member of the
scientific jury

regarding the competition for "professor" in the area of higher education 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics', **professional field 4.5 Mathematics**, scientific specialty Mathematical Modeling and Application of Mathematics, announced in the State Gazette, issue 65/08.08.2025 with a **single candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Nikolaeva Kuneva**

1. Brief presentation of the candidate

The candidate Velika Kuneva completed the five-year course of study in the specialty "Mathematics" (specialization "Informatics") at the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics (FMI) at the Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) in 2001. In the period 2001–2002, she worked as a mathematics teacher in a primary school, and from 2002 to 2008 as a lecturer in mathematics, informatics and information technologies in lower secondary and upper secondary education. In the period 2006-2012, she was a doctoral student in the doctoral program "Algebra and Number Theory" at the Department of Algebra and Geometry at the FMI at the Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", and in 2013 she defended her dissertation on the topic "Multiplicative Groups of Commutative Group Algebras" and acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (PhD). The candidate Velika Kuneva joined the Agricultural University – Plovdiv (AU) as an assistant professor in 2008, since 2013 she has been a chief assistant professor, and since 2016 she has held the academic position of "associate professor" in Mathematics 4.5. She is listed in the national register of academic staff as an associate professor with completed scientometric data. Since 2024, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva has been the Dean of the Faculty of Economics of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv.

2. General description of the scientific production

The submitted set of materials and documents for participation in the competition are in accordance with the Regulations for holding academic positions of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

For participation in the competition for the academic position of "professor", the candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Nikolaeva Kuneva has submitted 33 scientific publications, 1 textbook and 2 teaching aids. A complete list of all the candidate's scientific works, consisting of 69 scientific publications and 3 textbooks/teaching aids, is also attached. It shows that the materials submitted in the current competition are

correctly selected and do not repeat those submitted for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree of "doctor", as well as those for the academic position of "associate professor" and entry in the national register of academic staff. A list of 26 noted citations is also attached, all made after the candidate's habilitation, i.e. obviously not used in previous procedures.

Of the 33 scientific publications submitted by the candidate for participation in the competition:

- ✓ all 33 are in English, published in peer-reviewed journals and each of them is indexed in at least one of the leading world-known databases with specialized scientific information (Web of Science, Scopus);
- ✓ 17 are in journals with an impact factor (total IF=13.35), of which 1 is in Q1; 1 is in Q2 and 15 are in Q4;
- ✓ all 33 are indexed in Web of Science;
- ✓ 11 are indexed in SCOPUS;
- ✓ 11 are with SJR (total SJR=3.199);
- ✓ all 33 are co-authored, of which 10 are with 1, 11 are with 2 and 12 are with 3 or more co-authors.

I accept the participation in publications with co-authors as equivalent. I note that in mathematics there is no concept of 1-st, 2-nd and n-th author.

Since I do not have any joint publications with the candidate, all submitted materials are subject to analysis for the preparation of the opinion.

3. Teaching activities

The candidate has been a lecturer at the Agrarian University since 2008. The candidate's teaching activity is wide-ranging and includes lecturing in the disciplines Higher Mathematics, Higher Mathematics Part I, Higher Mathematics Part II, Applied Mathematics, Mathematical Analysis, Optimization Methods to students from the Bachelor's Degree Program; in the disciplines Applied Mathematics, Economic Statistics and Quantitative Methods in Economics to students from the Master's Degree Program; in the discipline Statistical Data Processing to doctoral students from the Agricultural University, as well as teaching classes in the disciplines: Higher Mathematics, Applied Mathematics, Mathematical Programming to foreign students under the Erasmus program.

According to the attached report, the total classroom and extracurricular employment of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva for the last 5 academic years amounts to 4498 academic hours, which makes about 900 hours of annual workload for the year.

The teaching activity is supplemented by the supervision of 5 successfully defended diploma students and 2 successfully defended doctoral students. Currently, the candidate is a scientific supervisor of 2 doctoral students.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva is an independent author of 1 textbook and co-author of 2 manuals, all intended for students at the Agricultural University.

The candidate has participated in the development of new and updating of old education programs for the training of bachelor's and master's degree students from all specialties at the Agricultural University, as well as for foreign students (under the Erasmus program) in the field of mathematics.

4. Scientific research activity

All 33 submitted publications are on the topic of the competition, namely Mathematical Modeling and Application of Mathematics. This direction implies two features – first, that usually work is done in a team with specialists in different fields and second – that the contributions can be classified as scientific and applied. Therefore, I fully support the self-assessment of the contributions made by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva, which defines them as the use of mathematical and statistical methods mainly in agriculture.

An excellent attestation for the scientific and applied contributions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva is the attached list of 26 citations of her publications selected for the competition, all in journals indexed in Web of Science and/or SCOPUS. A good impression is made by the fact that the citations are from a variety of and mostly foreign authors.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva has submitted a report on participation in 1 international and 1 national project.

5. Implementation of the minimum national scientometric and other requirements of the law

Regarding the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "professor": Indicator A - the candidate has 50 points from a dissertation for the PhD doctorate with a minimum requirement of 50 points (overfulfillment is not possible here); Indicator B - although an extended habilitation report has not been submitted, the candidate collects 222 points, obtained from 5 scientific publications submitted, referenced in world-known databases (B4 - 222 points) with a minimum requirement of 100 points (i.e. overfulfillment 222%); Indicator D - the candidate has 738 points, obtained from 28 scientific publications submitted, referenced in world-renowned databases (D7 - 738 points) with a minimum requirement of 200 points (i.e. overfulfillment 369%); Indicator D - the candidate has 208 points, obtained from presented evidence for 26 citations in scientific publications, referenced in world-known databases (D11 - 208 points) with a minimum requirement of 100 points (i.e., 208% overachievement); Indicator E - the candidate has 186.67 points, collected from supervision of 2 successfully defended doctoral students (E13 - 100 points), participation in 1 national scientific or educational project (E14 - 10 points), participation in 1 international scientific or educational project (E15 - 20 points), 1 published university textbook (E19 - 40 points) and 2 published university teaching aids (E20 - 16.67 points) with a minimum requirement of 100 points (i.e., 186% overachievement). This review shows that the candidate not only meets, but significantly exceeds, the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "professor" in the professional field 4.5 Mathematics.

Despite a hard search, I could not find additional requirements for holding academic positions at the Faculty of Economics of the Agrarian University. This, together with the fact that there is no reference to the fulfillment of such, convinces me that there are none.

I do not find any plagiarism in the works of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva.

6. Notes and recommendations

Нямам съществени критични бележки. Бих си позволил да препоръчам на кандидата за в бъдеще да не се ограничава с научни разработки само в областта на математическото моделиране в агрономството. Потенциал за това има (докторската дисертация на доц. д-р Велика Кунева е по алгебра), но за жалост огромното административно натоварване, свързано с найната длъжност като декан на факултет, едва ли би позволило на доц. д-р Велика Кунева да последва препоръката ми.

I have no significant critical remarks. I would take the chance of recommending the candidate in the future not to limit himself with scientific research only in the field of mathematical modeling in agronomy. There is potential for this (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva's doctoral dissertation is in algebra), but unfortunately the enormous administrative workload associated with the current position as dean of a faculty would hardly allow Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva to follow my recommendation.

7. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the candidate's pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I believe that **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Nikolaeva Kuneva** meets the requirements of the ZRASRB, PPZRASRB and the Regulations of the Agrarian University for its application for occupying the academic position of "**professor**".

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works that do not repeat the materials used in previous procedures. The candidate's works contain original scientific-applied contributions that have received international recognition.

The results achieved by the candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Kuneva in educational and scientific-research activities fully satisfy the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "professor".

Therefore, my conclusion for occupying the academic position of "**professor**" by **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Nikolaeva Kuneva** is **POSITIVE**.

I would like to propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to also vote positively, and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv to elect the candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velika Nikolaeva Kuneva as "professor" in the area of higher education 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.5 Mathematics (Mathematical Modeling and Applications of Mathematics).

10.11.2025
Plovdiv

This opinion is prepared by:



(Prof. Dr. Hristo Kiskinov, PhD)