



REVIEW

regarding the competition for "PROFESSOR" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agriculture)", announced in SG № 99/ 21.11.2025 with candidate assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Liubcheva Ivanova

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-16-133/26.02.2026 of the Rector of the Agricultural University, Plovdiv

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

Assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Ivanova graduated from secondary school in 1991 at the "Hristo Toprakchiev" School, Bozhurishte and in the period 1991-1993 she acquired a professional qualification in Business and Finance. In 1999, she graduated from the University of National and World Economy with a masters degree in Agricultural Economics, and in 2007, she defended her PhD thesis on the topic of Agricultural Cooperatives in Bulgaria during the accession to the European Union (development, adaptation and transformation).

Assoc. prof. Ivanova's professional experience is connected with the Agrarian University – Plovdiv, where she successively held the positions of assistant, senior assistant, chief assistant and associate professor. Boryana Ivanova participates in numerous national and international projects. She is the author of a number of scientific publications – articles, monographs, papers, participates in summer schools, qualification courses and scientific conferences. Along with her teaching and research activities, she has significant management experience, initially as Director of the educational and information center for the period 2012 - 2016, after which she held the position of Deputy Rector for Academic Affairs and Accreditation (2016 - 2024), and since 2024, assoc. prof. Ivanova has been elected Rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. Within the framework of these positions, she actively participates in the management of educational processes, accreditation, the strategic development of the Agrarian university and the implementation of national and international scientific and educational projects.

2. General description of the submitted materials

Assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Ivanova participated in the competition for "professor" with a total output of 31 works, grouped as follows:

- ✓ Monographs - Assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Ivanova participated in the competition with one co-authored monograph entitled "Potential and prerequisites for the development of the bioeconomy in Bulgaria", published by the Academic Publishing House of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv;
- ✓ Articles and papers published in refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes - 24 issues, of which in Scopus and/or Web of Science - 10 issues, and in other refereed journals with scientific review - 14 issues;
- ✓ Studies published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in

edited collective volumes - 2 issues;

✓ Published chapter of a collective monograph – 4, of which 2 in Web of science.

From the 31 publications submitted for review, 27 are co-authored, and the remaining 4 are independent. The majority of the publications are in English and a positive moment is that 38% of them (12 issues) were published in issues indexed in Scopus and Web of science. On this basis, it can be concluded that in the structure of the types of publications, works published in English, in co-authorship, prevail and more than one third are indexed in Web of science and Scopus.

From the list of publications included for review for compliance with the minimum national requirements for area 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional direction 3.8. Economics, it is evident that according to the National Minimum Requirements under the LDASRB (Art. 2b) and the Regulations for its implementation (Art. 1a, para. 1), the results of assoc. prof. dr. Ivanova are a total of 1164, 65 points (with a national minimum of 550 points), of which for: Group A – 50 (50), Group B – none, Group C – 100 (100), Group D – 309.65 (200), Group E – 450 (100), Group F – 255 (100).

Group of indicators	Content	Professor	Points of Associate Prof. Boryana Ivanova
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	-	-
C	Indicator 3	100	100
D	Sum of indicators from 4 till 10	200	309,65
E	Sum of indicators from 11 till 13	100	450
F	Sum of indicators from 14 till the end	100	255
Total		550	1164,65

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

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. prof. dr. Ivanova's scientific work can be grouped into the following main 5 areas:

✓ Bioeconomy, biomass and renewable energy in the agricultural sector – 9 publications. The area covers research related to the potential for development of the bioeconomy in Bulgaria, the role of biomass from agriculture, renewable energy sources and strategic visions for a sustainable energy transition in rural areas.

✓ Sustainable development, climate change and ecosystem services – 8 publications. The publications analyze the impact of urbanization and climate change on ecosystem services, carbon storage, the vulnerability of agriculture and the opportunities

for adaptation and sustainable development of rural areas.

✓ Agricultural policy, institutional environment and cooperative sector – 9 publications. These directions include research on direct payments in the EU, the EU's long-term vision for rural areas, the regulatory framework and institutional changes in agricultural cooperatives, the distribution of property rights and the impact of subsidies on profitability.

✓ Regional and rural development and socio-economic transformations – 6 publications. The direction examines regional transformations, the resource potential of rural areas, advisory services, the sustainability of rural communities and socio-economic aspects of development.

✓ Innovation, education and modernization of the agricultural sector – 5 publications that concern diversification in agricultural cooperatives, agricultural education, the adoption of precision technologies, the role of innovation and strategic visions for modernization of the agricultural sector.

From the publications submitted for review, the collective monographic work entitled Potential and Prerequisites for the Development of the Bioeconomy in Bulgaria, in which assoc. prof. Ivanova participated 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: an introduction, 6 chapters, conclusions and recommendations. The aim of the study is: "based on an analysis of the development potential and the territorial distribution of initiatives in the field of bioeconomy, supported at the local level, to outline the priority areas in the implementation of projects in a given direction and to make recommendations for achieving sustainable results". Assoc. prof. Ivanova is the main author of the fourth and sixth chapters. The fourth chapter objectively presents the potential for biomass production by analyzing biomass flows in Bulgaria and the EU, outlines the opportunities of agriculture for biomass production in a global and regional aspect, as well as the potential for using biomass in bioenergy. In the sixth chapter, special attention is paid to the development of the bioeconomy sectors. Logically, this chapter includes the incentives and constraints to the development of these sectors, the strategies for the bioeconomy and the opportunities for financing through grants and financial instruments.

Assoc. prof. Ivanova presents a list of her participation in 8 projects, one of which is international and she is the teamleader. The distribution of the projects by type is as follows:

✓ Participation in an international scientific or educational project – 7, as she is the teamleader in one of them and a member of the team in 6.

✓ Participation in a national scientific or educational project – 1.

The materials submitted for review show the scientific research of the candidate for professor and it is evident that they are aimed at the bioeconomy, the development of a competitive agricultural sector in the context of the CAP, innovations and precision agriculture. It can be concluded that the subject of the publications of assoc. prof. Boryana Ivanova's research corresponds to the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture) and the reviewed scientific production meets the requirements for occupying the academic position "professor". The review reveals that the scientific

production of the candidate for professor and the presented research exceed the minimum national requirements for 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

The submitted document of teaching experience shows that assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Lyubcheva Ivanova has been a lecturer on a full-time employment contract at the Department of Economics at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv since 03.09.2001, and her academic development has included the positions of assistant, senior assistant, chief assistant and associated professor (since 10.12.2012). Her teaching experience amounts to 24 years, 3 months and 28 days (01.01.2026).

The submitted document of academic employment shows that during the period 2021/2022 - 2025/2026, assoc. prof. dr. Ivanova has had a significant workload in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs. The total number of hours reported for the period is 3584.2 hours, distributed by year as follows: 2021/2022 - 673.5 hours; 2022/2023 - 948.9 hours; 2023/2024 - 712.8 hours; 2024/2025 - 800.5 hours; 2025/2026 - 448.5 hours (according to plan). The data on the academic workload of assoc. prof. Ivanova show a consistently high academic workload, including lectures, exercises and extracurricular activities.

The work of assoc. prof. dr. Ivanova with PhD students should also be noted as a significant contribution to the teaching and research activities. The document presented shows that she is the supervisor of two successfully defended PhD students, and under her scientific supervision, PhD thesis were defended in the field of economic growth and sustainable economic development, such as in the field of sustainable development of agriculture through road infrastructure management.

It can be summarized that assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Ivanova has significant years of teaching experience and teaching workload. She works active with students and PhD students, which is an indicator of high academic competence and an established place in the educational process. This gives grounds for a positive assessment of her teaching activities and her contribution to improving the quality of education of students and PhD students. 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.

By group of indicators D (citations), assoc. prof. Ivanova presents a total of 31 citations, which correspond to 450 points, with a minimum required of 100 points for holding the academic position of "professor", which exceeds the requirements more than four times. The citations are found in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information (Web of Science and Scopus), as well as in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review.

The total number of citations 31 are distributed as follows:

- 28 citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes;
- 3 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review.

From the list for citing of the publications of assoc. prof. Boryana Ivanova, it can be concluded that the candidate meets the requirements set out in the LDASRB for the academic position of "Professor" in area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 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

The research activity of assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Ivanova is characterized by a clearly expressed, consistent and building-up profile. The main areas of her research are concentrated in the field of bioeconomy, sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas, the institutional environment and cooperative structures, as well as the assessment of climate risks and ecosystem services in the context of the green transformation.

The significance of the contributions to science is expressed in the further development and adaptation of modern concepts such as bioeconomy, sustainable development, ecosystem services and climate resilience to the specifics of the Bulgarian and European reality. Their practical value is manifested in specific recommendations for policies, strategic planning, resource management and improvement of the institutional framework in the agricultural sector.

The theoretical and methodological scientific results, which have the character of further development, enrichment and systematization, are:

- Substantiation and adaptation of the concept of bioeconomy to Bulgarian conditions by assessing the potential, sectoral priorities and territorial distribution of initiatives.
- Identification of unrealized potential for the development of biomass and bioenergy in Bulgaria and derivation of regional specifics in its use.
- Revealing the interrelationships between urbanization, land use and climate-related ecosystem services through spatio-temporal analysis.
- Formulation of the concept of a local development model as an alternative to centralized policies within the CAP.
- Development and adaptation of an integrated methodological framework for assessing sustainability in agriculture through a system of indicators.
- Application of spatial analysis and modeling for assessing carbon storage, climate risks and ecosystem services.
- Using comparative institutional analysis to study institutional changes and cooperative structures.
- Adapting an analytical framework for assessing the resource potential of rural areas, tailored to the specifics of socio-economic conditions.
- Analysis of the concentration and effectiveness of direct payments within the CAP and their impact on structural imbalances.

- Clarifying the role of the institutional environment and the regulatory framework for the functioning and development of agricultural cooperatives.
- Proving the significant relationship between green policies, industrial development and climate sustainability.

Assoc. prof. Ivanova's scientific and applied contributions can be outlined on the basis of original practical and applied solutions contained in the candidate's scientific output and their practical application. They can be synthesized as follows:

- Formulation of specific recommendations for improving policies in the field of bioeconomy and sustainable development of rural areas.
- Proposals for stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation in the production and use of biomass.
- Guidelines for optimizing the distribution of property rights and improving the functioning of cooperative structures.
- Recommendations for strategic planning at the regional level, taking into account climate risks and resource potential.

It can be concluded that the scientific activity of assoc. prof. Ivanova has a clearly outlined profile, distinguished by consistency, thematic concentration and upgrading. The contributions are significant both in theoretical and methodological terms and in practical and applied terms, which determines the high significance of the research for the development of the topic on which the competition is announced.

7. Critical notes and recommendations

I don't find any shortcomings or weaknesses in the teaching and research activities of assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Ivanova. Her work is distinguished by consistency, academic correctness and high professional level.

I would encourage assoc. prof. Ivanova to continue with the same commitment, scientific precision and determination to develop her research, deepening her studies on current and socially significant problems with a contribution to both theory and practice.

8. Personal impressions and opinion

I know assoc. prof. Ivanova, both as a scientist with clear and consistent scientific interests, and as an administrator with active public engagement. I have direct impressions of her publication activity, which is distinguished by the systematicity, depth and sustainability of her research pursuits. In her work, she demonstrates high organization, strategic thinking and consistency. Assoc. prof. Ivanova's research activity establishes her as an authority among the academic community as a researcher and expert with proven contribution. Assoc. prof. Boryana Ivanova's commitment as Rector of the University of Plovdiv testifies to the high trust in her of the academic community and the opportunities to combine academic leadership with scientific productivity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the candidate's teaching, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I consider that associate professor dr. Boryana Liubcheva Ivanova 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. Boryana Ivanova 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 her as an established scientist.

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

Data: 19.02.2026
Plovdiv

REWER.....
(prof. dr. Zornitsa Stoyanova)