



REVIEW

regarding the competition for "professor" in the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture), announced in the State Gazette No. 99 of 21.11.2025 with candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Lyubcheva Ivanova, from the Agricultural University of Plovdiv,

Reviewer: Prof. D.Sc. (Econ.) Julia Markova Doitchinova, University of National and World Economy, field of higher education Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agrarian Economics), determined according to Order No. RD 16-133/26.01.2026 of the Rector of the Agrarian University - Plovdiv as a member of the scientific jury

1. General data on the career and thematic development of the candidate

The candidate for the academic position Boryana Ivanova is a graduate of the UNWE, where she defended her master's degree in the specialty "Agrarian Economics" (1999). Her doctoral degree was defended before the Specialized Scientific Council of the Higher Attestation Commission of the Republic of Bulgaria in 2007 in the scientific specialty 05.02.18 Economics and Management. The candidate's good economic and pedagogical preparation is complemented by professional qualification in business and finance, as well as participation in a summer school in Germany and 5 qualification courses in scientific institutions in Bulgaria, Germany, Romania, Russia, the Netherlands. In this way, the candidate's professional qualification is constantly upgraded, expanded, enriched and updated with up-to-date knowledge and skills in the field of economics and agricultural management.

The competition documents present information on more than 24 years of teaching experience. Ivanova's professional development at the Agrarian University includes the academic positions of assistant (2001-2004); senior assistant (2004-2007); chief assistant (2007-2012) and associate professor since 2012.

Simultaneously with her teaching activities, Ivanova also performs a number of administrative functions as scientific secretary of the Department of Economics, director of the Educational and Information Center (2012-2016), vice-rector of the university (2016-2019 and 2019-2024) and Rector since 2024.

2. General description of the submitted materials.

In the competition for "professor" Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova participated with a total output of 31 works, grouped as follows:

□ Scientific publications in the nomenclature specialty - 31 pieces, of which:

- Publications with impact factor - 6 pieces

- Publications in peer-reviewed and refereed scientific journals - 19 pieces;

Boryana's personal participation in the indicated 31 works is illustrated by the fact that 4 are independent, in 5 pieces - she is the first, in 6 - she is the second, and in the remaining 16 - she is the third and subsequent author.

31 publications are subject to analysis for the preparation of the opinion.

A Report-Declaration on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2, 3 and 5 of the Law on the State of the Republic of Bulgaria is presented in the materials for the competition. The points scored in total and in the individual groups of indicators show a significant exceedance of the requirements. The total number of points is 1164.65, with the requirements for indicators from group D for citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes being exceeded the most (4.5 times) and for indicators from group E for participation in projects, defended doctoral students, etc. (2.55 times).

3. Main areas of the candidate's research work.

Assoc. Prof. Ivanova's rich scientific output includes several scientific areas:

- Climate change, ecosystem services and sustainable territorial development;
- Cooperative models, institutional environment and organizational development;
- Bioeconomy, biomass and sustainable agrarian chains;
- Economic analysis, agrarian policies and structural transformations;
- Institutional economics, transaction costs and regulatory environment.

To a large extent, these areas reflect the results of the significant number of projects in which Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova participates and leads. Information is presented on leadership and participation in 26 research, teaching and administrative projects. Among them, the most numerous are research projects (16), followed by administrative and educational projects. Participation in 10 international, 10 national and 6 university projects deserves high praise.

The presented habilitation thesis "Potential and prerequisites for the development of the bioeconomy in Bulgaria" is dedicated to the analysis of the development potential and the territorial distribution of initiatives in the field of bioeconomy, supported at the local level, with the aim of outlining the priority areas in the implementation of projects

in a given area and developing recommendations for achieving sustainable results. Based on the analysis, it is summarized that an evolution of the definition, content and scope of the term "bioeconomy" is observed at the global and European level. I highly appreciate the approach used to identify challenges and problems, as well as the concept's ability to respond to the key global challenges facing the modern world. o society. The place of Bulgaria and the achievements in the practical application of the concept are assessed, revealing unrealized potential, as well as opportunities for development and application of various activities. Measures at the state policy level, recommendations for stakeholder participation, development of social capital are outlined. The role of research and development and the need for broader public engagement for the green transformation of business are emphasized.

4. Assessment of the candidate's pedagogical training and activities. His role in the training of young scientists.

Boryana Ivanova actively participates in the preparation of students from the specialties of the Faculty of Economics of the Agrarian University not only with her academic work, but also with the organization of scientific seminars and conferences; guidance of students from the Student Scientific Group at the Department of Economics, etc.

The competition documents include an official note for the supervision of two successfully defended foreign doctoral students.

5. Significance of the results obtained.

The majority of the publications submitted for the competition have been evaluated and published in prestigious journals, which creates opportunities for their rapid dissemination among the academic community. I highly appreciate the candidate's achievement - four of the articles have been published in journals with the highest rank - Q1.

The scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Boryana Ivanova has received recognition from the scientific community. Proof of this is the information about 109 citations, including a total of 81 in foreign publications, 27 in authoritative journals with impact rank (25% of the total number of citations).

6. Significance of contributions to science and practice.

In her role as a researcher, Boryana Ivanova has a clearly outlined profile in the field of agricultural economics with a focus on climate change and its impact on agriculture and rural areas. This research field is interpreted in the context of bioeconomy and sustainable development.

The presented list of contributions largely reflects the scientific theoretical and practical-applied contributions contained in the candidate's production. I group the main and significant of them as follows:

I. ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- ✓ Enrichment of the theoretical analysis of rents and transaction costs as interconnected categories by proving their role as a mechanism for the distribution of economic benefits and interpreting them as a factor for deepening inequality and market distortions.
- ✓ Further development and enrichment of the analysis of contractual relations and market power in the context of understanding the role of incomplete contracts, economies of scale and the concentration of resources in the formation of asymmetric relations between economic actors.
- ✓ Development and enrichment of the theoretical framework for assessing climate risk, vulnerability and resilience. This has been achieved through the integration of climate scenarios, spatial analyses and socio-economic factors, adapted to the specific conditions of Bulgaria, rural areas and urbanized territories.
- ✓ Further development of the theory of diversification as a mechanism for economic stabilization of cooperatives by enriching the theoretical models for cooperative behavior in conditions of risk and uncertainty and on this basis understanding cooperatives as a market stabilizer and bearer of public benefits;
- ✓ Systematization of the theoretical framework of the bioeconomy as an interdisciplinary concept by distinguishing and integrating the bioresource, biotechnological and sustainable transformation perspectives. On this basis, the place of agriculture and agricultural biomass as the core of the bioeconomy is justified;
- ✓ Further development of the theoretical debate on the relationship between bioeconomy, circular economy and sustainable development, which connects resource efficiency, environmental sustainability and economic competitiveness.

- ✓ Theoretical understanding of the sustainability of bioeconomic chains by integrating economic, environmental and social dimensions, including the balance "food - energy - materials" and the limitations of the use of biomass.

II. METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- ✓ An integrated institutional-economic framework for the analysis of regulated markets has been developed. It combines the theory of transaction costs, rent-seeking behavior and the analysis of institutional change.
- ✓ An interdisciplinary approach to the study of climate sustainability has been developed, which combines tools and scientific results from climatological, agrarian-economic approaches with spatial planning and ecosystem services and thus allows upgrading the sectoral analysis to a systematic understanding of climate risks.
- ✓ Enrichment of the theoretical framework for the analysis of agricultural and energy cooperatives in the conditions of market and institutional transformation by integrating the approaches of the new institutional economy, the theory of property rights and the theory of organizational behavior in transition and economies.

III. SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS

- ✓ Development of an integrated theoretical framework for the economic analysis of the agricultural sector and rural areas by combining a sectoral, territorial and institutional approach to the analysis of agriculture and rural areas;
- ✓ Enrichment of theoretical models for cooperative behavior in conditions of risk and uncertainty and on this basis understanding cooperatives as a market stabilizer and bearer of public benefits;
- ✓ Substantiation and disclosure of sustainable spatial models (in precipitation, ecosystem services, etc.), which contribute to a better understanding of regional climate heterogeneity;
- ✓ Disclosure and disclosure of institutional instability as a key source of economic inefficiency based on the dual effect caused by frequent and inconsistent regulations and increasing transaction costs while limiting the adaptive capacity of economic actors;
- ✓ Development of the theoretical debate on the role of agricultural policies as a factor for structural transformation based on analyses of the impact of subsidies,

direct payments and strategic plans under the CAP on profitability, specialization and concentration in agriculture;

- ✓ Enrichment of knowledge on the distributional effects and fairness of public support by substantiating the relationship between the structure of farms, land concentration and the uneven distribution of direct payments;
- ✓ Development of theoretical models for regional and sectoral differentiation of bioeconomic potential depending on the cultural structure, resource base and institutional environment.

IV. APPLIED CONTRIBUTIONS

- ✓ Enrichment of knowledge on the social and behavioral aspects of climate adaptation through the analysis of the perceptions of farmers and local communities in the adoption of innovations and adaptation measures.
- ✓ Enriching knowledge about the interactions between ecosystem services in the context of urbanization based on the relationships between carbon storage, water extraction and urban cooling, which are dynamic, scale-dependent and strongly influenced by the stage of urbanization development.
- ✓ Assessing the sustainability of bioeconomic chains through an integrated analysis of economic, environmental and social dimensions of the “food – energy – materials” balance and the limitations of biomass use.
- ✓ Enriching the analysis of human and social capital in the bioeconomy with an emphasis on the importance of education, age, experience and social networks for the adaptability and innovative potential of bioeconomic actors.

7. Recommendations

I have no significant critical remarks on the candidate's scientific output. I recommend Boryana Ivanova to continue her active research and publication activity with studies and articles in authoritative journals with impact rank and impact factor.

8. Personal impressions and opinion of the reviewer

I know Boryana Ivanova from her years of study at the University of National and World Economy and from her development and dissertation work in the Department of "Economics of Natural Resources". She stood out among her colleagues with motivation, curiosity, responsibility, analysis and synthesis capabilities, critical thinking

and teamwork skills. She successfully developed, upgraded and enriched these skills in her teaching, research and expert activities within the Agrarian University of Plovdiv.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the candidate's pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I believe that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova fully meets the requirements of the ZRASRB, PPZRASRB and the Regulations of the Agrarian University for its application to the Agrarian University of Plovdiv, because:

- ✓ is the author and co-author of a significant number of scientific publications that contain original theoretical, methodological and practical-applied contributions;
- ✓ academic publications have been published in authoritative scientific journals in Europe and Asia, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information;
- ✓ the candidate's scientific output has received a high rating and has been repeatedly cited in reputable scientific journals;
- ✓ carries out teaching activities at a high level using active teaching methods;

All this gives me reason to evaluate her overall activity POSITIVELY.

I allow myself with full conviction to propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to also vote positively, and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics at the Agrarian University - Plovdiv to elect Dr. Boryana Lyubcheva Ivanova as a "professor" in the scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agriculture).

Date: 23.02.2026.

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(Prof. D.Sc. Julia Doitchinova)