



OPINION

regarding a competition for the academic position of *Professor* in the scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Agriculture)”, announced in State Gazette issue No. 99 of 21.11.2025, with candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Lyubcheva Ivanova, for the needs of the Department of Economics, Agricultural University – Plovdiv

by Prof. Dr. Dimo Atanasov, area of higher education 3.0 Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Agriculture)”, appointed by the Order No. RD 16-133/26.01.2026 of the Rector of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv as a member of the scientific jury.

1. Brief presentation of the candidate

Boryana Ivanova was born in 1975 in Sofia. She graduated from secondary school in the town of Bozhurishte in 1991 with advanced study of mathematics, economics, and computer programming. In 1993 she obtained a professional qualification in business and finance from the branch of The College of North West London in Bozhurishte. Between 1994 and 1999 she studied Agricultural Economics at the University of National and World Economy – Sofia, where she obtained a Master’s degree. In 2007 she defended her doctoral dissertation at the same university and obtained the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in the scientific specialty “Economics and Management.”

Her professional career began in 2001 when she won a competition for assistant professor at the Department of Economics, Agricultural University – Plovdiv. She progressed through the positions of assistant, senior assistant, chief assistant, and since 2012 she has been an associate professor. She teaches courses in Microeconomics, Labour Economics, E-commerce, Economics of Cooperatives, and others. She has also held significant administrative responsibilities: since 2012 she has been Director of the Educational Information Center, since 2016 Vice-Rector for Education, and since 2024 Rector of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv. This is recognition of her professional authority, leadership qualities, and institutional contribution. Her scientific activity is characterized by a clearly expressed interdisciplinary profile and consistent development over time.

2. General description of scientific output

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova has submitted a list of scientific works totaling 55, of which:

- Publications related to her doctoral dissertation – 4 (not subject to review);
- Publications related to acquisition of the academic title “Associate Professor” – 17.

For the preparation of this opinion, 31 scientific works were analyzed:

- Habilitation thesis – monograph – 1;
- Publications in journals indexed in Web of Science and SCOPUS – 10;
- Publications in refereed and peer-reviewed journals – 14;
- Studies published in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals or edited volumes – 2;
- Chapters in collective monographs – 4, of which 2 indexed in Web of Science;
- Textbooks – 0;
- Teaching manuals – 0.

Her personal contribution to these 31 works is illustrated by the fact that 3 are single-authored, she is first author in 6, second author in 7, and third or subsequent author in the remaining 15. This demonstrates active and leading scientific contribution as well as sustained participation in collaborative interdisciplinary research.

3. Teaching activity

Assoc. Prof. Ivanova has over 24 years of teaching experience. She teaches students at all three educational levels – Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral. Courses taught include Agricultural Economics, Microeconomics, Labour Economics, E-commerce, Economics of Trade, Economic-Mathematical Modeling, Economics of Cooperatives, Institutional Economics, and others.

Teaching workload:

Her average annual teaching load is about 716 hours. She has supervised 7 doctoral students, 2 of whom have successfully defended their dissertations. She has also supervised more than 20 graduates at Bachelor's and Master's levels in developing their diploma thesis.

Published teaching materials:

She is the author of one textbook, which was not included in the documentation submitted for this competition and therefore is not analyzed in this opinion.

Developed curricula:

The candidate has developed curricula for all courses she teaches, some in English. She has also actively participated in preparing documentation for the master's programs "Economics and Management of European Agriculture and Rural Areas," "Bioeconomy," and "E-commerce," and is administrative head of the latter.

4. Research activity

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivanova's research is characterized by thematic consistency, interdisciplinarity, and high relevance to contemporary challenges facing agriculture, rural areas, and sustainable development. Her publications can be systematized into several main interconnected scientific areas:

- Bioeconomy and sustainable use of bioresources, with emphasis on the key sectors of the bioeconomy, the potential of biomass, and the role of the bioeconomy as a driver of sustainable development;

- Sustainable rural development, strategic planning and regional development policies, as well as the socio-economic transformations of rural communities;
- Economics and management of agriculture, covering issues related to agricultural land, rent relations, transaction costs, and institutional changes in the agrarian sector;
- Agricultural cooperatives and institutional economics, focusing on ownership and governance of cooperatives, the regulatory framework, public policies, and the application of new institutional economics;
- Climate change, risks and adaptation, including analysis of the impacts of climate change on agriculture and rural areas, assessment of climate risks, adaptation strategies, and resilience of agrarian systems;
- Ecosystem services, land use and urbanization, examining interactions between urbanization and ecosystem services, carbon storage, climate effects, and existing trade-offs and synergies;
- Energy cooperatives and renewable energy, addressing economic and legal aspects, the role of cooperatives in the renewable energy sector, and the market and regulatory framework;
- Precision agriculture, innovation and digitalization, focusing on farmers' perceptions regarding the adoption of new technologies and environmental solutions;
- Agricultural education and human capital, analyzing their development, challenges and prospects, and their role in the transformation of the agrarian sector.

Taken together, her publications form a broad, interdisciplinary yet logically consistent scientific profile with a strong focus on bioeconomy, sustainable agriculture, rural development, and climate change.

Citation and referencing of scientific output:

She reports a total of 109 citations referring to 14 publications, demonstrating scientific relevance, visibility, and recognition, as well as use of her results by researchers in Bulgaria and abroad.

Participation in scientific projects:

The project activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova is at a high professional and organizational level. She has participated in a total of 26 projects, including:

- 3 educational projects;
- 16 research projects;
- 7 administrative projects.

Regarding the funding sources, 6 of the projects were financed by the Center for Scientific Research, Technology Transfer and Protection of Intellectual Property at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv, 10 had international funding, and 10 national funding.

Her active participation, including as project leader and coordinator, demonstrates sustainable scientific development and significant contribution to the university's research and innovation capacity.

5. Remarks and recommendations

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova's scientific output covers several important thematic lines, demonstrating interdisciplinarity; however, a clearly articulated dominant scientific specialization is not sufficiently defined. Empirical analyses focus mainly on the Bulgarian context, while substantial international-scale studies are lacking.

Given her rich and diverse research output, for future work I would encourage the publication of review studies summarizing and conceptually linking scientific results, thereby enhancing their visibility. Broader use of comparative and transnational analytical approaches could further emphasize international applicability and recognition.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the candidate's teaching, administrative, research, and applied scientific activity, I consider that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Ivanova meets the requirements of the Law of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the regulations for the implementation of the Law of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as the rules of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv . She significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements for the academic position of Professor. The total score according to the national requirements for scientific, pedagogical, project and administrative activities is 1164.

This gives me grounds to evaluate her overall activity **positively**. I therefore propose that the esteemed Scientific Jury also vote positively and that the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boryana Lyubcheva Ivanova as **Professor** in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agriculture)" for the needs of the Department of Economics, Agricultural University – Plovdiv.

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Plovdiv

Prepared by:.....

(Prof. Dr. Dimo Atanasov)