

OPINION

By: prof., D. Sc (Econ) Rumen Mladenov Georgiev, retired professor at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"; scientific specialties: "Economics and management (in industries)", and "Organization and management of the nonindustrial production"

Regarding: Competition for the position of Associate professor in professional field 3.8 "Economics /Socioeconomics, Economic analysis of law – in Bulgarian and English language/, announced to fulfill the need of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Sofia, State Gazette, issue 93/2019.

I take part of the scientific jury panel for the competition by order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Sofia.

1. Short information about the candidates

There is one candidate entry, namely chief assistant prof. Velushev, Ph.D.

The candidate has completed his higher education in 1996 at the University of National and World Economy, Master of finance. In 2015 at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University he defended a Ph. D. thesis in Economics on the topic "The effect of direct foreign investments for improvement of the competitiveness of Bulgarian economy".

The candidate has significant scientific research and applied experience. He has worked as a tax expert at the General directorate of the tax administration, a manager of currency operations at a financial house, a member of the Board of Directors of a corporation, a manager of limited liability companies, an insolvency trustee and as a consultant for restructuring corporate debt. He has completed a short-term specialization in investments and corporate finance at Georgetown University, Washington. All this allows him to creatively aid the process of education of the students as well as the research activity of the Faculty with up-to-date work methods and topics in the fields of macroeconomics policy and organization and management of the nonindustrial production in the capacity of assistant professor and, later, of chief assistant professor at department "Economics" of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University.

2. Fulfillment of the basic requirements for assuming the academic position

The obligatory conditions set by the law require from the candidates to:

- 1) Have acquired an educational and scientific degree of "Philosophy doctor" or scientific degree of "Doctor of sciences";
- 2) Have assumed for no less than two years the position of assistant professor and then of a chief assistant professor or to have been a lecturer, including part-time higher education school or scientific organization;
- 3) Have filled the minimal national requirements set by art. 26 of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The candidate in this competition for an Associate professor – chief assist. prof. Milen Mitev Velushev meets all the above mentioned lawful requirements.

The candidate for the position of Associate professor has a long experience in teaching the disciplines: Introduction to Economics, Micro- and macroeconomics, Economic analysis of law and Personal finance.

He is the administrator of the Economics and Law Masters' degree program of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University.

The reviews by his colleagues and students are positive. Chef assist. prof. Milen Velushev stands out with the active application of contemporary methods of education as well as with profoundness of the examination of the problems, discussed in his lectures and seminars, which allows for the successful understanding of the study material on behalf of the students.

3. Core scientific results and scientific and applied contributions of the candidate.

The presented information list of the contributions exactly and completely reflects the disciplines on which the candidate for Associate professor has been focused, as well as the scale and scope of his contributions. The list of publications of the candidate includes 18 works, 10 of which are presented for the purposes of the competition- two monographs, three scientific studies as a sole author, two scientific studies as a co-author and three scientific articles. All publications were peer-reviewed and redacted.

Here I will discuss those topics and contributions in the publications of the author that are dated after the defense of the dissertation thesis and that, in my opinion, are most closely related to the title of this competition. In the first place this the monograph "Analysis of education market: characteristics of the Bulgarian education system". It should be considered a complete habilitation work, backed by some of the other works of the author, published after the defense of the Ph.D. dissertation.

The monograph "Analysis of education market: characteristics of the Bulgarian education system" and the others, connected to that topic, publications of the author are characterized by a variety of used quantitative and qualitative inductive, deductive and traductive methods of research. Many concepts of the neoclassical, institutional and behavioral economics were included. An extensive review of many fundamental economic studies was exacted and good practices were identified. Thoroughly formulated and argued theses were developed.

The theoretical aspects of the research work encompass a review of the leading economic theories on the market of education, presented in the order of their evolution. There are certain considerable contributions to the understanding of the examined problem. First, the role of the State for the education system is systematically clarified and parallel is drawn between State and governing elite. This allows the author to more carefully analyze the motives for the actions of the stakeholders in the process of education. Second, a model of the market of education was developed, which includes both the State and the governing elite. The analysis of this model presents a base for the essential part of the reached conclusions. Third, functions of demand and supply in such a market are derived and the systematic place of the variable "quality of education" is clarified and it is established that the variable consists of two components: indoctrination and formation of human capital. Formally the proportion between the two components is set centrally and administratively by the State in the form of regulations, but the true proportions, delivered to the students, depend on the transmission mechanism- the teachers. Highlighted is the key significance of the teachers as corrective for the political wishes of the governing elite. Discussed is a necessity for modification of endorsed theories as those of Becker and Downs because of the transition from industrial to postindustrial society and a logical concussion is reached, leading to a possible solution for overcoming the rational ignorance of the consumers.

Subsequently are analyzed the systems of primary, secondary and higher education and attention is given to the State strategy for the development of higher education in the period 2014-2020. The contribution of applied nature is connected to the efficiency of the delivery of education as a service by the State in terms of excess regulation. It is determined why the national educational program is not conformant to the guidelines of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 11) regarding the length of education and why the age at which some of the Bulgarian students pass to upper ISCED 11 level is lower than that of the students in the majority of the member countries of EU. The effect of the lower age entry the fact that those students are not adequately psychosocially developed for the complexity of the study material and their results in the international tests PISA are understandably low.

The quality of the provided primary and secondary education by the State leaves long-lasting traces in the development of the adolescents by inducing self-doubt in their cognitive abilities and lack of sense of belonging to society. To convince us in the last claim, the author of the research uses statistics that show the constant level of youth emigration against a backdrop of falling overall migration. Clarified are the problems connected to the national examinations in the primary and secondary education and a system error in relation with the philosophy of the existence of such examination is identified – instead of assessing for an accumulated minimum of knowledge, necessary for passing to an upper educational level, these exams are oriented toward demonstration of supremacy of knowledge. Such supremacy can be attained only through the use of the system of private tutoring, which means that the State demands a level of knowledge that it is not providing for in the process of state-financed education. I consider the recommendations for improvement of the existing rules in the system of primary and secondary education as well-argued and important for arrival at better results in the international tests.

The author's publications discuss the particularities of the state financing of higher education, a thorough analysis of the existing regulations is exacted to establish that the methodic of state financing is of significant importance for the quality of the higher education. These conclusions are backed-up by analysis of empirical data about the provided higher education in scientific field 3.8 Economics in the state-owned university, holding the highest score in the rating system of the Ministry of education and science for 2018, compared to the state-owned university holding the lowest score in the same field for the same year. Analyzed are the state requirements toward the lecturers and conclusions and recommendations, concerning the perspectives for the improvement of the quality of higher education are drawn.

The monograph of the author “Analysis of education market: characteristics of the Bulgarian education system” can be viewed as somewhat of a continuation of our mutual analysis of the higher education in the study “The strategy for higher education development: European requirements, metrics, problems”. The candidate introduces additional arguments and clarifications concerning the creation of a new strategy for higher education development during the next prognosis period after 2020.

I think that the author well-argued the problem with the market power of the State in supplying the education as a service in the sense that in Bulgaria, at present, the needed instrumental conditions for the transition to an economy of knowledge are not created. This mandates a rethinking of the adopted system by the introduction of new rules that will guarantee the independence of that system from the State and the governing elite in order to secure the high quality of the human capital, needed for the forthcoming stage of economic and social development.

I view the peer-reviewed monograph as a ground for building a correct conceptual and regulatory frame for the system of education, guaranteeing that the quality of human capital in the country will be

constantly high. In this respect the monograph is needed and helpful for a broad circle of readers, parents, researchers, administrators, and politicians, in general for everybody who has an interest in the development of the educational system.

I consider that my analysis so far is sufficient for me to conclude that in his work chief assistant prof. Velushev, Ph.D. has created a good teaching methodology base for the development of teaching Economics in particular for the program “Economics and Law” at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration as part of the preparation of experts- economists and managers, in the conditions of the extension of the Fourth industrial revolution. The presented reviewed scientific production of the candidate demonstrates a grounded and specific understanding of the contemporary condition of the economy of knowledge and of the problems in the fields of social economics and education and contains detailed bibliographic descriptions of the main informational sources.

4. Notes and recommendations toward the candidate

There are some insignificant critical notes regarding the presented for review scientific production, but those do not, in any way, change the validity and the significance of the provided contributions. This gives me the reason not to engage the attention of the jury panel, but instead to discuss them privately with the candidate.

5. Conclusion

I personally know the candidate. My impressions of his work can be formulated shortly as organized, efficient, hardworking, expert in economics, education, and science with the contemporary format of thinking; he has very good teaching methodological and professional training; possesses vast general knowledge, in-depth and persistent scientific interests. These impressions are deepening my image of the candidate as a useful lecturer, expert, and researcher.

I express my categorical stance that the candidate for an Associate professor in professional field 3.8 “Economics /Socioeconomics, Economic Analysis of Law – in Bulgarian and English language/, chief assistant prof. Velushev, Ph.D. fulfills the explicit legal requirements and norms, has the necessary publications and outlined contributions, which allows me to recommend to the members of the honorable scientific jury panel to vote “yes” for his candidature. This is my personal decision also.

Sofia

Signature:

04 March 2020

/prof. Dr. Sc (Econ) Rumen Georgiev /