

## STANDPOINT

by: Assoc. Prof. **Blaga Blagoeva**, PhD, Political Science, professional field 3.3 Political Science, UNWE, Department of Political Science

Subject: Competition for associate professor in the professional field 3.3. Political Science (Regional Governance and Policy), announced by Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski "

### 1. Contest information

The competition was announced for the needs of the Department of Public Administration at the Faculty of Philosophy, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", published in the State Gazette, edition/№ 93 of 11/26/2019.

I participate in the jury of the competition according to Order RD 38-697 / 09.12.2019 of the Rector of Sofia University.

### 2. Brief information about the candidate in the competition

One candidate is participating in the announced competition - Chief Assist. PhD Elena Angelova Kalfova.

Assistant Professor Elena Kalfova received her educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the specialty 05.11.02 "Political Science" in 2008 (diploma № 32672 from 08.12.2008) - protected dissertation on the topic: "Development of the regional administrative structures in Bulgaria. " The applicant has over 18 years of experience as a lecturer in the Department of Public Administration of the Sofia University, successively in the positions of assistant and chief assistant.

I do not personally know the candidate.

### 3. Fulfillment of the requirements for occupation of the academic position.

Assistant Professor Elena Kalfova meets all the obligatory conditions for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" under Art. 53, paragraph 1, Items 1-5 of the ZRASRB (Law about the growth and development of the academic staff of Republic of Bulgaria) and the Rules on the Terms and Conditions for Acquisition of Academic Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski "(Section IV), namely:

- Acquired educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Political Science";
- Total work experience as a university lecturer over 18 years;
- Habilitation work presented, monograph (Kalfova, E., 2019, Regional Governance and Regional Policy - Application and Evaluation, St Kliment Ohridski IM, ISBN 978-954-07-4863-4, p. 342) repeats the work presented to obtain a doctoral degree;
- Meet the minimum national requirements and the requirements of art. 2b of the ZRASRB for scientific field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences (410 points in total);
- There is no proven plagiarism in the scientific works;
- Meets the indicators under Art. 121, paragraph 2: teaching load in the bachelor's and master's degrees of three majors from the Faculty of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski "- Public Administration, European Studies and Political Science (as a holder of 10 courses and conducts seminars of 2 courses); Head of the Master's Program in Policy Evaluation and Impact Assessment, major in Public Administration; scientific leader of an impact assessment postgraduate program; qualified and applies forms of e-learning in his work; manager of 32 successfully defended graduates; awarded by the Dean of the FF for his contribution to research in 2009; Member of the Bulgarian Association for Political Science and the Bulgarian Association for European Studies.

#### **4. Assessment of the applicant's educational activity.**

I have no direct impressions of the teaching work of Ch. Assistant Professor Elena Kalfova. The information provided shows that the applicant is a teacher who is striving for continuous improvement and development. In recent years, her classroom employment has been in the range between 730 and 576 hours. She is a holder of 10 training courses and leads seminars in two training courses. I know from my colleagues that in her work she uses a variety of non-standard interactive approaches and forms of training, which is highly appreciated by the students. In addition, the students highly value her honesty, collegiality and sense of justice.

*The general conclusion regarding the teaching-teaching activity is that there is a correspondence between the academic employment and the competency of the applicant with the specifics of the competition.*

#### **5. Brief description of the submitted scientific papers/publications**

Dr. Kalfova presents for the competition scientific works, which are entirely in the problematic field of the announced competition. I would like to point out that all of the candidate's publications are of a high theoretical level. The latter benefits entirely from my personal professional admirations.

A total of 15 publications were submitted for participation in the competition: 1 monograph, 7 studios (2 in English, 1 of which was in SCOPUS, and 5 in Bulgarian) and 7 articles (3 in English and 4 in Bulgarian).

In general, the applicant's thematic areas of research interest can be summarized as follows:

- The development of regional governance and its institutional organization;
- Analysis of regional governance, regional institutions and regional policy;
- Regional governance and specific public policies in Bulgaria and in the EU;
- Assessment of regional policies;
- Impact of EU structural funds on the economic environment in Bulgaria;
- Regional policy and processes of Europeanization;
- Local government and regional policies;
- Regional differences and sustainable development;
- Impact assessments;
- EU programs and projects and the development of local governance.

In the monograph "Regional Governance and Regional Policy - Implementation and Evaluation" the impact and connections of regional governance and regional policy are analyzed. The study is an in-depth and accurate analysis of the problems posed by the author and evidence of the author's creative and research maturity. The conclusions reached - in theoretical-analytical and practical-concrete terms - are convincing and reflect the author's position.

The rest of the research submitted for the competition are also of good scientific and methodological level and show general and specialized training in the scientific specialty of the competition.

## **6. Synthesized evaluation of the applicant's major scientific and applied contributions**

The careful reading of the papers and scientific papers submitted for participation in the competition by Dr. Kalfova gives me reason to highlight the following main scientific and applied scientific contributions:

(1) An original, coherent theoretical approach to the study of regional policy and regional governance has been developed and implemented, through a model-based integration of the approaches of institutionalism and the new institutionalism (mainly publications 1, 5, 6, 11, 15);

(2) An analysis of the process of differentiation and development of regional policy has been carried out: the theoretical grounds, the historical stages, the change of its conceptual basis;

(3) A system for assessing regional policy has been developed and argued by developing a comprehensive, theoretically sound framework (publications 1, 9, 11, 13);

(4) The relationship between the factors of development and the perception of a certain type of regional institutions has been analyzed; outlining the reasons for building different institutional models at regional level in individual countries (publications 1, 5, 7, 12, 15);

(5) The process of development of regional governance and regional institutions in Bulgaria has been analyzed; the results of the reforms implemented were evaluated (Publications 1, 2, 3, 8, 12, 14);

(6) The results of the applied regional policy in Bulgaria have been evaluated through an analysis of the objectives, instruments, approaches and the management system. Motivated proposals for improvement of the regional policy in Bulgaria have been made. (Posts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8).

*All the mentioned scientific and applied scientific contributions of Dr. Kalfova are in the thematic direction of the competition, announced for the needs of the Department of Public Administration of Sofia University.*

## **7. Key critical notes and recommendations to the applicant.**

The candidate has a broad spectrum of expertise. Its scientific output covers various aspects of regional governance and policy. I have no critical remarks.

## 8. Conclusion

From the findings made and the estimates given for the teaching and research work of Ch. Assistant Professor Elena Kalfova, on the basis of the materials and evidence presented by her, it can be concluded that all the requirements for occupation of the academic position of "Assistant Professor" in the Department of Public Administration of the Sofia University in the scientific direction of PN are fulfilled. (Regional Governance and Policy).

Presented by Ch. Prof. Dr. Kalfova's scientific production in terms of volume and quality meets the requirements of the announced competition.

This is sufficient reason to make a proposal from the Scientific Jury to the Faculty of Philosophy of the Faculty of Philosophy **to select Ch. Assistant Professor Elena Kalfova, PhD in the academic position of Assistant Professor.**

20.03.2020

Sofia

Signature: .....

(Assoc. Prof. Blaga Blagoeva)