

## **OPINION**

**on a competition for holding the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Public Management), announced by Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski (SU), published in State Gazette, no. 61 of 02.08.2022, Faculty of Philosophy (FPh), announced in SG no. 61 of 02.08.2022 and on the websites of the FPh and SU**

The opinion was prepared by **Dr. Veselina Toneva Zhekova, Associate professor at Plovdiv University Paisii Hilendarski**, in the capacity as a member of the scientific jury in professional field **3.7. Administration and Management (Public Management)**, according to Order No. RD-38-491 / 22.08.2022 of the Rector of Sofia University.

Only one candidate submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Chief. Assistant Professor Simeon Atanasov Petrov, PhD from SU St. Kliment Ohridski, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Public Administration.

### **I. General description of the presented materials**

#### **1. Information about the candidacy**

The documents submitted by the candidate for the competition Chief Assistant Prof. Simeon Atanasov Petrov, PhD comply with the requirements of Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria (ASDARB), and the Implementation Regulations of the ASDARB (IRASDARB) and the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at SU St. Kliment Ohridski (RTCASDOAPSU). The presented set of materials includes the following well-formed documents: Application to the Rector; CV in European format; Higher education diploma; Diploma for Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor"; Academic title document; Certificate of work experience in the specialty; Documents proving the fulfilment of the requirements under Art. 105, para. 1, item 2; List of publications, inventions and other scientific and applied results; List of publications, conferences, projects and scientific guides; Sample reference for the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements for the relevant scientific field and the additional requirements of SU St. Kliment Ohridski; Citation Reference; Reference to original scientific contributions; Reference for the indicators under Art.

112, para. 2; List of scientific works; Abstracts of peer-reviewed publications; Copy of the announcement in the State Gazette.

A total of 17 publications were submitted for participation in the competition: 1 monograph, 1 defended doctoral dissertation, 1 book chapter (co-authored, in English), 12 studies (1 in English, 6 in scientific journals and 6 in peer-reviewed scientific collections, 1 co-authored) and 2 articles (one in a scientific journal and one in conference proceedings). Two of the publications are in English and two are co-authored. The monograph, studies and articles were not used for the acquisition of the scientific degree "doctor".

Information is presented on participation in 18 research projects, 12 participations in scientific guidance of successful graduates, participations in editorial activity and editorial board. The achievements of Petrov, PhD are also supported by his participation as a reviewer in internationally recognized journals in the field of management sciences, membership in the Bulgarian Association of Political Sciences, participation as an expert in national and international projects of a practically applied nature. Chief Assistant Professor Simeon Petrov, PhD maintains the website of the Department of Public Administration of the SU, the website of the magazine "Publicni politici.bg" (Public policies) and the electronic platform for checking plagiarism.

## **2. Information about the candidate**

During the period 2003–2009 Chief Assistant Professor Simeon Petrov, PhD achieved a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and Political Science at the Faculty of Philosophy of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, and during the period 2007-2009, again in the FPh, he acquired the Master's degree in Public Management and Policies and an additional qualification in International Relations at the Centre for Educational Services at SU St. Kliment Ohridski. Simeon Petrov continues his studies in a doctoral program in Public Administration (Political Science) at the Department of Public Administration at the Faculty of Philosophy, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, and in 2015 he successfully defended his dissertation on the topic: "*The Change of Public Policies. European Employment Policy*".

Since September 2011, he has held the academic position of "Assistant Professor", and since July 2015, the academic position of "Chief Assistant Professor" in the FPh of SU St. Kliment Ohridski. He is a member of the Scientific Research and Project Committee of the FPh.

Chief Assistant Professor Simeon Petrov, PhD is fluent in two foreign languages (German and English). He has excellent communication, organizational and computer skills. Petrov, PhD possesses the necessary knowledge, skills and scientific-applied competences, which he skilfully uses in his educational and teaching work.

### **3. General characteristics of the candidate's scientific works and achievements**

The scientific texts with which Chief Assistant Professor Simeon Petrov, PhD participates in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" are distinguished by: relevance of the issues developed; with a diversity of research approaches used; demonstrate professional competence; outline the in-depth scientific interests of the candidate in the field of the competition, which is a prerequisite for the successful development of the relevant field in the FPh of SU.

The general formulation of the candidate's scientific contributions may be presented as follows:

1. A wide-ranging, author's study of the civil sector was conducted. A coherent theoretical approach was used to study non-governmental non-profit organizations. Their boundaries and scope are defined by tracking functions and types of organizations.

2. The identification of an independent and significant civil sector is substantiated, considered as a real opportunity for improvement of the so-called public management, through an attempt to integrate the different theoretical approaches to civil organizations.

3. Various factors for changing public policies at the national and European level, the role of European integration, Europeanization and social sciences are studied in detail.

4. An independent research model of the change of public policies in the context of the European employment policy has been developed, which is based on the three branches of the new institutionalism – rational choice, historical and sociological neo-institutionalism. The model can serve in the study of other sectoral policies at the European level, in which the Open Method of Coordination is applied.

5. The theory of public administration and public management and the interaction between them in a modern context has been enriched. The specific manifestations of public administration, public policies and administrative reform in Bulgaria are analysed.

### **4. Characteristics and assessment of the candidate's teaching activity**

As a full-time lecturer at FPh in the period 2011 - 2022, Simeon Petrov, PhD led lectures and exercises in the following academic disciplines: (1) Theory of management, (2) Formation and implementation of public policies, (3) Methodology of Public Policy Analysis, (4) Design and Management of Social Programs, (5) Public Policies, (6) Social Policy, (7) European Welfare State, (8) Policy Analysis, (9) Policy Transfer Evaluation, (10) Methods and techniques for the analysis of public policies, (11) Projects in the field of employment and social inclusion' (Master's programs in European studies), (12) Public policies in an urban environment, (13) Methods and techniques for the analysis of public policies.

It is noteworthy that Petrov, PhD has developed a curriculum in English - Public Project Management.

#### **6. Content analysis of the candidate's scientific and applied scientific achievements contained in the materials for participation in the competition**

The obtained results, the scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the presented publications, which are distinguished by the marked relevance of the investigated issues, can be united in the following fields:

1) The theoretical concepts of the structures and organizational principles in the civil sector are comprehensively examined, with an emphasis on the understanding of efficiency and accountability, as well as on the improvement of their forms in civil organizations. (Publications No. 1, 5, 12)

2) The thesis about the role of non-profit organizations in achieving public goals, their ability to correct the imperfections of representative democracy and to identify social values and interests, which turns them into a real "equalizing force" of the market and the state, is supported and defended. (Publications No. 1, 5, 12, 17)

3) A comprehensive analysis of the theories related to the change of public policies is presented and recommendations are made to optimize the policy-making process at the European and national level, which would increase the role of strategic management, knowledge and the possibility of institutionalizing the participation of scientists in the management process. (Publications No. 4, 7, 10, 14, 15).

4) An author's research was carried out on the emergence and development of the European employment policy and the reasons for the existing institutional arrangements in this area, in which the author adopts an approach that considers as factors - the role of the European Commission, the importance of EU enlargements, the change in the structure of the dominant coalition, the importance of the dominant paradigm in relation to employment. The author proposes and uses an approach to research the effectiveness of the Open Method of Coordination, based on the assessment of opportunities for mutual learning and knowledge exchange (Publications No. 8, 9, 10, 15).

5. A comparative analysis of the problems of the labour market in Bulgaria was made, as a result of which problems are identified at the institutional level and at the level of goal setting. Specific recommendations for their removal are proposed. (Publication No. 16)

I support the contributions indicated by the applicant in the reference submitted by him. For the most part, they are reduced to systematization and enrichment of existing knowledge, research and systematization of empirical material, on the basis of which trends and problems are deduced. The overall review of the production presented for review by Chief Assistant Professor Simeon

Petrov, PhD creates the personality of a purposeful researcher who competently complements a number of theoretical and practical-applied aspects in the researched field.

### **7. Critical remarks and recommendations**

I have no critical remarks about the teaching and research activities of Petrov, PhD. I would allow myself only one recommendation for his future scientific, practical-applied and teaching activities, namely – to direct his efforts to more publications in English, and in sources referenced in Scopus and Web of Science.

### **8. Personal impressions of the candidate**

I have not been acquainted with Petrov, PhD personally, which is why I cannot express any personal impressions.

### **9. Conclusion on the candidacy**

After having familiarized myself with the materials and scientific works presented for the competition and based on the analysis of their significance and the scientific and scientific-applied contributions contained in them, I **confirm** that the scientific achievements meet the requirements of ASDARB, the its Implementation Regulations and the relevant Regulations of SU St. Kliment Ohridski for the candidate to occupy the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific field and professional area of the competition. In particular, the candidate satisfies the minimum national requirements in the professional field and no plagiarism has been found in the scientific works submitted for the competition.

I give my **positive** assessment to the candidacy.

## **II. GENERAL CONCLUSION**

Based on the above, I **recommend** the scientific jury to propose to the competent authority for the selection of the Faculty of Philosophy at SU St. Kliment Ohridski to elect Chief Assistant Professor **Simeon Atanasov Petrov, PhD to occupy the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Public Management).**

11.11.2022

Opinion prepared by: .....

Associate Prof. Veselina Toneva Zhekova, PhD