

## REVIEW

By Professor DrSci Todor Alexandrov Tanev,  
Faculty of Philosophy, SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”

of the works of Assistant-in-chief Dr. Simeon Atanasov Petrov

sole participant

in the contest for obtaining the academic position of

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**

in Scientific Direction 3.7. Administration and Management (Public Management)

announced by SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”,

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for the needs of SU - PhF - Department of Public Administration

### I. General characteristics of the candidate

In my capacity as his professor and later colleague, with whom I work in tandem, I can safely say that I have known the scientific development of the candidate for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, Dr. Simeon Atanasov Petrov, very well and for many years. I have been working tirelessly with him since 2003 (when he entered as a Bachelor's student in Public Administration at the Department of Public Administration at SU) until today, when he is already a Doctor of Public Administration (Political Science) (2014), assistant professor (since 2011) in the same department, teacher of basic disciplines in the field of public management, public policies and the narrow field of competition - a colleague who has won the excellent opinion of colleagues and students for several generations. As a member of the department, Dr. Petrov undertakes and strictly implements a large number of project activities, including the editing of the scientific journal "PUBLICHNI POLITIKI.bg". In addition, Dr. Petrov has a significant publication activity, the fruit of which are such works in prestigious publications, as 1 monograph (directly related to the topic of the competition), 1 fundamental university textbook in co-authorship, studies, articles and numerous reports at conferences. Outside of his strictly academic work, Dr. Petrov has worked in structures such as the Ministry of Education, other Ministries and research institution. He was particularly actively involved in the creation and improvement of bachelor's and master's curricula at the three levels of higher education. In summary, Dr. Simeon Petrov has established

himself as one of the most active and prominent and useful members of the faculty of the Faculty of Philosophy and the Department of Public Administration in particular and has acquired an impeccable reputation. All this is documented in the attached references to the competition.

Dr. Petrov belongs to those who entered immediately after the first echelon in the emerging Bulgarian schools in the field of public administration and management sciences at the beginning of the 21st century. It is very characteristic of the very first generation of these groups that they came with their scientific "background" built elsewhere and thus enriched the concept of policies, administration and management from the very beginning. Petrov is one of the first researchers and lecturers in public administration to have completed this discipline. This position proved to be fertile ground for heuristic theoretical and applied research work – something that can be fully claimed for Dr. Petrov. At the same time, he did not lose the inherited taste for a multifaceted – political, sociological, economic, etc. – examination of research problems, so characteristic of pioneers. Simeon Petrov developed his analytical views in an interdisciplinary and methodologically complementary environment. His greatest credit is for turning this initial cloud into an actual system that did not exist in our country until recently. In this regard, Petrov showed serious innovative and creative abilities, as his publications contain resourceful ideas, defended with the pathos of complementary arguments from different fields of knowledge, but definitely looking for and discovering the new center - the public-administrative scientific field in itself.

## II. General description of the candidate's works.

The candidate presents himself in this competition with a significant volume and quality of scientific production, exceeding the usual cases in similar competitions: 1 new monograph "Organizations with an ideal purpose - essence, roles, management", SU publishers 2022, 1 university textbook - "Theory of management in the public sphere", same publisher 2020, 1 book chapter (in English), as well as studies in scientific collections and articles in scientific periodicals, 17 in total, all referenced (see List of Publications). Dr. Petrov also presents several of his major publications in scientific conference proceedings. Their summaries are also presented in the attached documentation. As I am well acquainted with the content of the works of the candidate in the competition for "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" Dr. Petrov, I state the following findings about them: (1) All works meet the requirements of the competition for associate professor both in terms of volume and content; (2) All of them are strictly scientific in character, method, and result; (3) Are referenced and printed in authoritative publications; (4) Without exception, the

submitted works fall within the thematic field of the competition; (5) The significant number of publications after obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor" is impressive; (6) Apart from the works submitted directly for participation in the competition, the serious production of research reports by Dr. Petrov during the last decade, detailed in the attached documents, is impressive; (7) I have no reason to reject any of the works as unsuitable for any requirement of the scientific legislator for such competitions; (8) It is logical to take into account the entire creativity of the candidate for the occupation of the academic position of ASSISTANT PROFESSOR; (9) I find that the monograph has a special place in this competition, since it covers a greater part of the ideas in the other publications and best represents the achievements and claims of the candidate for associate professorship; (10) the works presented clearly outline the line of succession of Dr. Petrov's scientific interests.

III. General characteristics of the candidate's (1) research, (2) scientific-applied and (3) pedagogical activities.

III.1. Scientific areas and problems on which the candidate has worked and continues to work.

Simeon Petrov is at the same time a researcher, pedagogue, implementer and popularizer of science in several areas related in his research - public policies and their analysis, social policies, public administration from the point of view of the relationships between the three public sectors, civil self-organization and democratization processes, the modern and classical theory of management, public-administrative reforms, European public policies, the network society, the community of policies. I find that the analysis in Petrov's works are organized in the thus formed multidimensional disciplinary space. The axes of this space intersect in the field of community participation in public administration, an area that is very new and just beginning to be studied. I can confidently confirm that Simeon Petrov has a leading role in the creation of a Bulgarian standard for scientific research in this field, including that he is the Bulgarian researcher who fixed both the theoretical foundation of the analysis in the field in question and his research tools.

III.2. Characteristics of the candidate's research, pedagogical and scientific-applied activities

(a) As a researcher, Dr. Simeon Petrov managed in a short time to actively participate in laying the foundations in our country for in-depth and multifaceted research in areas such as employment and the labor market, modern standardization in Bulgaria, the improvement of Civil Protection, basic problems of child protection, local self-government in specific municipalities (see scientific biography).

(b) Associate Professor Petrov has been developing as a pedagogue and lecturer since 2010 at SU - PhF. The report on the indicators under Art. 112, para. 2 clearly shows that Assistant Professor Simeon Petrov had and continues to have a very high teaching load in the bachelor's and master's degrees of three specialties from the PhF of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Public Administration, European Studies and Political Science, as the holder of 6 courses and leads seminar exercises of 4 courses. Ch. Associate Professor Simeon Petrov holds or assists in bachelor's and master's degrees in the disciplines "Theory of Management", "Formation and Implementation of Public Policies", "Methodology of Public Policy Analysis", "Design and Management of Social Programs" , "Public Policies", "Social Policy", "European Welfare State", "Policy Transfer Evaluation", "Methods and Techniques for Public Policy Analysis", "Public Project Management" (in English, "Projects in the field of employment and social inclusion", "Public policies in an urban environment". In addition, Simeon Petrov is the author or co-author of several of these courses. Dr. Petrov has developed and intensively applies in his teaching work several author's methodological approaches, incl. introduction of case studies, interactive seminar classes, specialized scientific essay (see the Reference under Article 112). He is the author of electronic content of courses in Moodle. To date, he has supervised 12 graduates who have successfully defended their diplomas (see list generated by the "Authors" system). Dr. Petrov works closely with students and has one of the highest ratings in the Faculty of Philosophy in the online student satisfaction survey. Petrov supports the electronic plagiarism checker platform. For two terms, he was a member of the committee for project and research activities of the PhF of the SU.

(c) As an implementer and popularizer of the topics of public policies, social policies, non-governmental organizations, the relationship between the three sectors and other related topics, Simeon Petrov is among the leaders in the scientific community at SU in the scientific and applied field of these topics through his participation in numerous research projects. He is documented to be involved in, lead or have led over 10 projects, one part of which is in-depth research in his field. The rest are related to academic construction. Along with this, Dr. Petrov supports the website of the Department of Public Administration of the SU and the website of the magazine "PUBLICNI POLITIKI.bg".

#### IV. Basic scientific and applied scientific contributions.

I claim that the main scientific contribution of Dr. Simeon Petrov is the construction of a theory for the public participation of communities as a subject of public policies with an exit to a methodology of empirical analysis of this relatively new phenomenon in our country, a result of the processes of democratization in recent

decades. This is a novelty in Bulgarian science and was done in a convincing, complete and multifaceted scientific way. This theory and methodology are communicative in every respect and can be proven to serve as a basis for other searches in this direction within the scientific community in the developing public-administrative science. Such a contribution can only be characterized as significant at the same time in a scientific and socio-practical field. In more detail, I fully agree with the self-assessment of the contributions made (see Reference) and accept the proposed 5 contributions, namely: (1) As a result of a large-scale theoretical analysis of the contemporary type of civil sector, a new theory of non-profit organizations as an independent area of public administration theory equal to and parallel to older theories of the role of the state and the market. This enables, for the first time, non-profit organizations to be defined simultaneously as an emanation of individual civil rights and a form of representation and community problem-solving; (2) Through an exhaustive parallel analysis of all existing main theoretical understandings of civil organizations, the key contribution is reached - defining the functions of the new public administration beyond the state administration beyond the horizons, known integrated and the liberal emphasis on social participation, and so far through traditional approaches such as "the new public management". "Conceptually conservative to reduce the role of government in the provision of social services, and the idea of creating alternative visions of justice and cooperation"; (3) Thus systematically modeled public participation as a factor for the formulation of public policies is reasoned and authoritatively supplemented with its European context and the resulting factors for changing public policies at the national and European level are explained in their interrelationship; (4) A model of a methodological approach to the analysis of the change of public policies in the context of the European employment policy has been created, which is based on the three branches of the new institutionalism - rational choice, historical and sociological neo-institutionalism. The model can be used in the study of sectoral policies; (5) Of particular interest is the author's attempt to rationalize political decisions in state administration and to find a balance between "the managerial drive for optimality and the political logic of what is acceptable and possible." This is how the theory of public management (governance) is further developed and new connections between political and managerial in a modern context are discovered.

The contributions can be grouped in several areas: (1) *Formulation of a new scientific field and problem* - definitely Dr. Petrov is one of those who established in Bulgarian science the basis of a local public-administrative school in a clear connection with the European one; (2) *Formulation of a new theory* - in his last

fundamental study of the phenomenon, Dr. Petrov creates organizations with an ideal purpose as the foundation of the modern concept, but also a multifunctional model of this phenomenon, which I can reasonably assume is the quintessence of new in our country, quite complex but also necessary interdisciplinary management theory. I find this model to be a major scientific achievement, which imposes Dr. Petrov as a settled scientist in the field of public administration; (3) Contributions to implementation, practical methods, etc. - Petrov's theoretical schemes reach concrete proposals for improving reality; (4) I draw the general conclusion that contributions have a social effect. Petrov's theory of the public participation of communities as a subject of public policies is too new, and also not yet developed as a separate paradigm, although this appears to be its future. So far, it has shown convincingly that it has the potential for a beneficial effect on society. However, it has already been used by more than one author in our country, which is evident from the number and direction of the impact factor of Petrov's works. It has been established that his analyzes have been cited repeatedly by several Bulgarian authors up to this point.

#### V. Citations.

Dr. Petrov reports 23 registered cases of citation of his works by other authors to date. According to data from CINTI, there is one case of citation in a scientific publication referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific information databases, 4 cases of citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review, and the number of citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review is one. Considering the usual rate of citations to habilitation candidates in the many proceedings in which I have been involved, I find the number of reported cases of citation to be above average.

As for citations in the opposite direction, ie. the citations of other authors by Dr. Petrov himself in his works, I believe that Petrov defends his theses in an impeccable manner. In each work, and especially in the monographic study, he works precisely, with a well-formed, developed scientific apparatus with logically complementary sources. Emphasized, Simeon Petrov bases his research on quotations from the bosom of many social and humanities sciences, among which mainly administrative sciences, economics, political science, sociology, which are used equally, crowned with the surprisingly relevant presence of philosophy, with which the author of theses seems to allude to that shadowy world of knowledge which unfolds beyond the philosophy of transcendental being. Several hundred sources of this type were used in the monographic study presented for the competition. At the same time, they all find their place at the basis of the analysis, thus missing hollow volumes of some common professional culture. I find that the peculiarity of Dr. Petrov's way of

quoting is that he cites authors and schools that form a unity in Petrov's concepts. I claim that Simeon Petrov demonstrates a rare seriousness and breadth of knowledge of the scientific sources of his research.

#### VI. Critical notes.

To an author's theory, which achieved its completeness for the first time only recently, and a theory with a markedly interdisciplinary character, in which not only different scientific directions are complemented, but also whole scientific directions - representatives of different floors of knowledge, it is as easy as it is hopeless to present of claims from the point of view of one dogma or another. I will not do this, since I sympathize with Petrov's innovative flight, which I want to encourage with my critical remarks. I will limit myself to the following: An indisputable and obvious fact in modern times after the Second World War is the establishment of the civil sector and public participation in state and local government alongside the previously well-developed market and government sectors (whatever they are theoretically called). The aspiration in all of Dr. Petrov's long-term research is to emancipate the civil sector to the level of the other two. Two related questions follow from this: (1) what arguments prove that a lasting equalization in importance (ie, role in public decision-making) of the three sectors is in principle possible, and (2) is the methodological fusion of fundamentally different existing theories a sufficient basis is to find such solid arguments?

VII. Personal impressions and opinion about the candidate's activities. Being particularly well acquainted with Dr. Petrov's academic activities for two decades and the opinion of the college and students about his work, I am convinced that he is a recognized researcher and innovator in the field of theory and methodology of public policy research, social policy and in particular to non-profit organizations. Apart from that, I consider him to be a loyal colleague and an excellent teacher, such as the good universities in Bulgaria represent.

**CONCLUSION:** Given the convincing scientific contributions of the candidate, his recognized as active and high-quality teaching activity, as well as the general need to stimulate the development of modern social, political and management theory on the border between the three public sectors and modern public administration, I confidently offer to the respected jury of the contest ch. Assistant Dr. Simeon Atanasov Petrov to receive the academic position of ASSISTANT PROFESSOR in scientific direction 3.7. Administration and Management (Public Management).

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