

Review

of the candidacy of Assis. Prof. Dr. Simeon Atanasov Petrov
for participation in a competition for the occupation of the academic position "Associate
Professor" in a professional direction 3.7. Administration and Management (Public
Management)

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The competition for the academic position " Associate Professor (Docent)" has been announced for the needs of the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Public Administration at SU "St. Kl. Ohridski" in State Gazette No. 61 of 2022. In it, the only candidate is Dr. Simeon Petrov.

Biographical reference: The academic development of Dr. Simeon Petrov is fully affiliated with the "Public Administration" department of the SU. He completed the Bachelor's program in Public Administration, while simultaneously obtaining a second Bachelor's degree in Political Science. Even then, he showed himself as a highly motivated student who purposefully expanded his knowledge and competences. Graduated from the Master's program "Public Management and Policies". Within this training, he was noted for his research skills and above all for his orientation to scientific methods. This distinguishes him to a large extent from other students, the majority of whom are oriented towards informal knowledge and an intuitive approach related to practices. As a master's student, Simeon Petrov was invited to participate in a major research project in the field of income policy. He independently carries out some of the research tasks and contributes significantly to the final result. Immediately after that, Simeon Petrov participated in a competition and became a full-time doctoral student in the Department of Public Administration with a topic in the field of European social policy. Before his full-time doctoral studies expired, after winning a competition, he became an assistant in the same department and transformed his doctoral program into a part-time one. Since then, he has been one of the most active young teachers in the department. He successfully defended his doctoral thesis and became a chief assistant professor – a position he held at the time of the announcement of the current competition.

Compliance with the minimum requirements for holding an academic position.

Simeon Petrov meets, even significantly exceeds, the minimum quantitative requirements for holding the academic position "Docent". His publishing activity is extremely active. The issues it deals with correspond to the current state of science in the field of public administration. As a result, the points for publication and citation criteria that Simeon Petrov collects are more than enough. In the current competition, he participates with a monograph published in 2022, which meets the requirement of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff. The reference for compliance with the minimum requirements was made in good faith and fully corresponds to the facts.

Research activity and scientific achievements of the candidate.

Simeon Petrov participates in the current competition with one monograph and a series of articles published in collective collections (including one - published by the University of Ljubljana) and scientific journals. They are the basis of this review. As I am intimately familiar with the entire research output of Simeon Petrov, I will allow myself to expand the scope of my review to emphasize what characterizes the entire work of the candidate.

The beginning was made already in his doctoral dissertation, where the author analyzes the transition from active to passive measures in the labor market at the European level. Although the subject of the dissertation is significant enough, the actual contribution of the dissertation is more about the choice of a theoretical framework to explain the policy transition. Simeon Petrov focuses on the horizontal processes in policy-making, on Paul Sabatier's theoretical paradigm for policies as a process of ideas and knowledge spread and sharing, and in particular on the so-called "learning" as a special method for European policy-making.

This theoretical orientation greatly influenced Simeon Petrov's subsequent research and publication activity. In the current competition, in addition to the monograph, which will be presented later, he participates with 15 articles and studies (two of them co-authored). In them, the author seeks answers to basic research questions related to public administration in democratic countries in general and in Bulgaria in particular. He uses the scientific toolkit of public policies and governance, largely remaining true to the theory of Paul Sabatier and the idea of the advocacy coalition. As a true social researcher, Simeon Petrov demonstrates his ability to identify up-to-date research questions and solve them through up-to-date theoretical approaches. All articles and

studies with which the candidate participates in this competition are of high scientific quality, based on reliable information, often collected through own empirical research. The quality of Simeon Petrov's scientific publications is also confirmed by their citations - the level of this indicator far exceeds the minimum requirements for participation in the current competition.

Petrov participated in numerous researches and scientific-applied projects. This is evident from the presented biography and the information in the "Authors" system of SU. My personal observations confirm this fact. The candidate is extremely active in research and projects fields. At the same time, he has exceptional research skills. Dr. Petrov is a disciplined, consistent and thorough researcher with a significant contribution in every research group in which he participated. Good knowledge of real practices in public administration is evident in his scientific publications. At the same time, with his research activity, Simeon Petrov contributes to the development of these practices.

The monograph "Non-profit organizations - essence, roles, management", published by the UP "St. Kliment Ohridski", has the greatest weight for the assessment of Simeon Petrov as a participant in the current competition. It is a serious and in-depth scientific-theoretical and scientific-practical study of non-profit organizations, their role as providers of public services and the challenges facing their management. The main research question, the answer to which the monograph seeks and largely finds, is related to the characteristics of non-profit organizations and their ability to be a partner of the State in the process of public governance. Due to the growth of their functions and their number, as well as due to the crisis of the New Public Management - the theory that actually empowered them, the topic is extremely relevant. The predominant part of the studies of this type of organizations take for granted the public need for their inclusion and participation in the process of public policies and in the provision of public services. Simeon Petrov's approach leads rather to a critical understanding of the theories and public practices related to the activity, structure and management of non-profit organizations. The author identifies contradictions embedded in the very characteristics of non-profit organizations - mission versus search for efficiency; volunteering vs. organization; inclusion through values vs. business behavior etc. Simeon Petrov clarifies many concepts that are often used with different meanings: civil society and civil sector; types of non-profit organizations etc. The author defines non-profit organizations as a third reality, different from organizations with institutional powers and from

those with market behavior. He outlines comprehensively the specifics of this third organizational form, which is based on network rather than hierarchical relationships.

The monograph of Dr. Simeon Petrov is a complete scientific study that poses the main questions related to non-profit organizations and, without being a textbook, can be used as such for the purposes of higher education in the field of governance and management.

Main scientific contributions

The self-assessment of scientific contributions is credible and largely corresponds to the real state of scientific research and publications of Dr. Simeon Petrov.

From my point of view, the following contributions of the candidate in the current competition are essential for the development of science. In substantive terms, this is the proven thesis about non-profit organizations as a specific organizational form that should be managed in a specific way. Methodologically, there are two valuable contributions of the candidate - it is the clarification of a series of concepts related to civil society and its organizations, and the developed methodology for researching policy change. In this sense, the contributions of Dr. Simeon Petrov enrich the theory of management and scientific methods for researching processes in organizations and in public governance. These contributions give Simeon Petrov a worthy place among social researchers.

Teaching activity.

The candidate in the current competition is an established teacher in two areas of theoretical knowledge. On the one hand, Simeon Petrov leads a basic course in Theory of Management for undergraduate students in Public Administration. On the other hand, he leads lectures and seminars on Public Policy Analysis and Public Policy Process. Leads disciplines in the master's programs of the Public Administration and supervises the development of master's theses.

I have personal impressions of Simeon Petrov's teaching activity - he leads the seminar classes in the discipline of which I am the holder. The candidate not only has a deep knowledge of the areas in which he teaches. He has the motivation and qualities to teach in such a way that it is interesting and useful for students. He knows and applies interactive teaching methods, thanks to which he is extremely useful for the teaching process. At the same time, he is demanding of

students, sets clear requirements for them and their work, and evaluates them fairly on the basis of pre-formulated criteria. This also explains the high marks he received in the student assessment.

Contribution to the development of the department.

Dr. Simeon Petrov is an extremely useful member of the Department of Public Administration at SU. He actively participates in every accreditation process. His skills contribute to a large extent to the preparation of the department and the professional stream at SU for accreditation. Maintains the page of the department on the website of the Faculty of Philosophy. During more than two deanships, he was a member of the Faculty Committee for the approval and evaluation of projects under the "Scientific Research" fund. Always and to a great extent supports the maintenance of the study documentation of the department. As the head of the department for two terms, I can say that I have always and for everything relied on the voluntary help of Simeon Petrov.

Publishing activity.

Simeon Petrov supports the publication of the electronic magazine o "Public policies.bg". It would not be an exaggeration to say that the magazine is developing thanks to his voluntary commitment to this activity. The candidate for associate professor is the author and editor of three collections of articles from the International Conference on Public Administration. Both in teaching and in publishing, Simeon Petrov follows high quality standards and takes continuous action to implement them.

Question for the candidate.

Simeon Petrov is a young man who is dedicated to science and to the Sofia University. Since I believe this, I would like to know what the next direction in his research is. What is the important up-to-date problem in the field of Public Administration that he thinks needs to be solved? And in what direction should the educational programs in Public Administration be developed?

Conclusion: My assessment of the scientific output, research qualities and morals of Dr. Simeon Petrov as a scientist and teacher is extremely high. This is the reason I am fully convinced

to support his candidacy in the competition for the academic position of Docent, announced by SU for the needs of Faculty of philosophy and the Department of Public Administration.

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Sofia

Signature:

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