

## STATEMENT

**From: Prof.Ph.D.Sc. Rumen Mladenov Georgiev, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"; scientific specialties: "Economics and Management (by industry)", code 05.02.18 and "Organization and management outside the field of material production", code 05.02.24.**

**Subject:** competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the professional and scientific field 3.8 "Economics" (Risk Management, e-Management and Digital Economy - in Bulgarian and English), announced for the needs of the Faculty of Economics of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", State Gazette, issue 24/17.03.2023.

The competition was announced in accordance with the Decision of the Academic Council of Sofia University. I participate in the composition of the scientific jury of the competition according to the Order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

### **1. Brief information about the candidate and his/her experience in the field of higher education**

One candidate participated in the competition, namely Assoc.Ph.D. Anton Antonov Gerunov.

The candidate graduated in 2009 with a Bachelor's degree in Integrated Social Sciences from Jacobs University, Bremen (Germany). In 2011 he completed his Master's degree at the Faculty of Economics of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in Economics with a focus on data analysis. In 2019 he graduated with a Master's degree in Computer and System Science with a focus on Open e-Government from Stockholm University (Sweden).

Anton Gerunov has been a part-time assistant from 2011 to 2013, assistant from 2013 to 2015 and chief assistant from 2015 to 2017 at the Department of "Economics and Management by Industry" at the Faculty of Economics of Sofia University.

Candidate Anton Gerunov defended his scientific and educational degree "Doctor of Economics" in 2015 at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" on the topic "Dynamics of basic macroeconomic variables in conditions of heterogeneous expectations". He became a "Doctor of Science" in 2021 after defending a dissertation on "Automated approaches to operational risk management" at Sofia University. He has been an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics, Department of Economics and Management by Industry since 2017 and at present.

The disciplines in which Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov gives lectures and exercises are extremely relevant and represent a wide palette of interrelated disciplines:

- Money, Banks and Financial Markets (Bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Philosophy, Sofia University);
- Economic Aspects of the Information Society (Bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Philosophy, Sofia University);
- Online Marketing Research (Master's degree in the Faculty of Economics, Sofia University);
- Digital Business Models and Processes (Master's degree at the Faculty of Economics, Sofia University);

- Economics of Artificial Intelligence (Master's degree at the Faculty of Economics, Sofia University);
- IT Service Management (ITIL Foundation) (Master's degree at the Faculty of Economics, Sofia University);
- Risk Management (in English) (Master's degree at the Faculty of Economics, Sofia University)

The feedback about the candidate from colleagues and students is convincing. Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov is distinguished by his creative approach and thoroughness in his lectures and exercises, which allows for successful improvement of the competence of students.

Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov has held and performed a number of responsible expert and managerial positions, which directly link his teaching work with research and practice:

- Vice President and Head of Analytics, Prime Holding: leads teams and projects on the topics of digital transformation, data analysis and the application of machine self-learning to business problems;
- Chairman of the Board of the Institute for Data Ethics and Analytics (IDEA):
- Chief Operating Officer, LogSentinel, directly responsible for process and cash flow management, risk management and IT business analysis;
- Board Member, European Institute of Public Administration (Maastricht, Netherlands), from 2015 to 2017.
- He has extensive experience as head of the office of the Deputy Prime Minister and adviser on IT and innovation, Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria.
- He has been a business consultant and project leader in market and financial analysis and statistical modelling, and in the past 2-3 years after the defense of the "Doctor of Science" degree, he was the project leader of three scientific research projects, at the Research Fund of the Sofia University in the field in which he is applying for a professorship.

He has been a business consultant and project manager in market and financial analysis and statistical modeling, and in the past 2-3 years, after defending his Doctor of Science degree, he has been the manager of three research projects at the Research Fund of the University of Sofia in the area of the scientific field in which he is applying for a professorship.

*The synergy between the educational, research and applied activities of the candidate for professor are an important factor in the academic progress achieved by Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov.*

## **2. Publications and scientific contributions of the candidate**

### **2.1 Scientific works submitted for the competition and their compliance with the minimum requirements**

- Habilitation thesis - monograph in English on risk analysis in management decisions, Springer. ISBN: 978-3-031-18099-6;

- 5 articles and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-known databases of scientific information (2 co-authored);
- 7 independent (in English) articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes;
- 2 studies published in peer-reviewed journals and indexed in world-known scientific databases;
- 3 published chapters of a collective monograph;
- 2 published university textbooks used in the university network (including one in English)

The reference for compliance with national science metrics requirements establishes a significantly higher number of points than the minimum required number. All publications and developments of the candidate submitted for review are of a collective nature and have well-designated references and protocols.

The works of Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov correspond in structure, content and quantitative assessment to the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "professor", according to the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (with the latest amendments and supplements). The specific requirements of the Faculty of Economics of the Sofia University to the candidates for "professor" related to the years after holding the position of "associate professor", including in terms of project participation and management, scientific supervision of graduate students and doctoral students, are also covered.

## **2.2 Identification of scientific and applied contributions**

On the basis of the scientific papers submitted for the competition by Assoc. Ph.D. Anton Gerunov, I can identify and confirm the following contributions claimed by the candidate himself and summarize them in a synthesized form in the following order:

Based on the scientific works submitted for participation in the competition by Anton Gerunov, I can identify and confirm the following points of contribution claimed by the candidate himself and summarize them in a synthesized form in the following order:

- Contributions in the field of statistical modeling of the behavior of economic agents in big data environments by using predictive algorithms typical for data science and, in particular, for generating knowledge from data (so-called "machine self-learning"), including the preparation of useful synopsis of programming libraries with reprogrammed open source numerical algorithms - publications [1], [7], [8], [14], [15].
- Contributions to the theory and practice of managerial decision-making under risk and uncertainty, in the form of further development, modelling and prototyping of stochastic approaches and models in the field of financial econometrics (including those based on non-Gaussian and Markovian processes) to uncover and predict (initially) deterministic economic phenomena - publications [1], [2], [4], [5], [11], [15].
- Contributions in the field of discovering and using knowledge and regularities in the behaviour of economic agents discovered by analysing interactions in virtual social networks - publication

[3] and methodological recommendations for modelling economic processes using artificial intelligence - publication [16].

- Contributions in the field of studying the environment and organizational context of implementing e-government solutions in public administration - publications [6], [12], [13], including recommendations for better governance based on the principles of personal data protection - publications [17], [18].

I believe that the analysis made so far is sufficient to state that with his works and activities, Assoc. Ph.D. Anton Gerunov has established a good educational and methodological basis for further development of risk management, e-governance and digital economy - in Bulgarian and English at Sofia University, Sofia. The candidate's scientific production presented for review gives a systematic picture of the current state of knowledge and problems in the field of risk management, e-governance and digital economy and contains useful bibliographical descriptions of the main information sources.

### **3. Notes and recommendations to the candidate**

Some minor critical remarks can be made to the scientific production submitted for evaluation, which are mainly of a complementary nature in relation to the future scientific activity of the candidate, which gives me a reason not to engage the attention of the esteemed jury with them, but to inform Assoc. Ph.D. Anton Gerunov of their content in a personal discussion.

### **4. Conclusion**

I know Assoc. Ph.D. Anton Gerunov personally. My impressions of his work can be briefly formulated as follows: organized, creative, hard-working and consistent in his work, possesses very good teaching and methodological and professional training. He has a broad general culture, deep and lasting scientific interests. These personal impressions complement my idea of the candidate, formed on the basis of the works, as an extremely useful teacher, expert and researcher.

I express my strong opinion that the candidate for the academic position of "Professor" in the professional and scientific field 3.8. "Economics" (Risk Management, e-Management and Digital Economy Assoc. Ph.D. Anton Gerunov meets the explicit legal requirements and provisions, has the necessary publications and outstanding contributions, which allows me to recommend the members of the distinguished scientific jury to vote "yes" for his election. This is also my personal decision.

Note: The statement is prepared in Bulgarian and English.

Date: 20.07.2023

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(Prof.Ph.D.Sc. Rumen Mladenov Georgiev)