

OPINION

by **Prof. Dr. Teodor Sedlarski**, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Department of Economics | Scientific area 3.8 Economics /05.02.01 "Political economy (Microeconomics and Macroeconomics)"/

for the scientific papers presented in the contest for the academic position of Professor

in the scientific area 3.8 Economics (Risk management, e-governance and digital economy – in Bulgarian and English language) for the needs of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, announced in the State Gazette, No. 24 of 17.03.2023

of the candidate:

Anton Antonov Gerunov, Associate professor, Dr.Sc. in the scientific field 3.8 Economics

1. Information about the contest

The contest for awarding the scientific title Professor was announced for the needs of the Industrial Economics and Management department of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration in SG, No. 24 of 17.03.2023. The composition of the Scientific Jury for the contest was determined by Order No. RD 38-238/11.05.2023 of the Rector of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski.

Assoc. Prof. Dr.Sc. Anton Gerunov is the only candidate in the contest.

2. General information about the candidate and evaluation of his pedagogical activity

Anton Gerunov graduated with honors from the First English Language High School in Sofia in 2006. He received his bachelor's degree in "Integrated Social Sciences" from Jacobs University (in Bremen, Germany), where he graduated in 2009. He obtained a master's degree in "Macroeconomics" in 2011 at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

In 2019 he completed a second master's degree – focused on open e-governance – at the Department of Computer and System Sciences at Stockholm University (Sweden).

In 2015 the candidate obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific field 3.8 Economics after successfully defending a dissertation thesis on the topic "Dynamics of basic macroeconomic variables under conditions of heterogeneous expectations" at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, and the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" was awarded to him in 2021 with a thesis on "Automated Approaches to Operational Risk Management".

Anton Gerunov's academic career began at the Faculty of Economics of Sofia University, where he has been a part-time assistant from 2011 to 2013, full-time assistant from 2013 to 2015, chief assistant professor from 2015 to 2017 and associate professor since 2017 at the Industrial Economics and Management Department.

At the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University, Assoc. Prof. Gerunov conducts following lectures and seminars in Bulgarian and English language

at the Bachelor's level:

- o Money, banking and financial markets
- o Economic aspects of the information society

and at the Master's level:

- o Online marketing research
- o Digital business models and processes (in English)
- o Economics of artificial intelligence
- o IT Service Management (ITIL Foundation)
- o Risk Management (in English)

The disciplines led by Associate Professor Gerunov are distinguished by their modern themes, content, and connection with the current technological and theoretical level in the field of the taught subject.

Parallel to his academic career over the past years, Anton Gerunov acquired valuable practical experience, which he has the opportunity to pass on to students, by occupying managerial and expert positions closely related to the taught disciplines and his scientific research:

- Vice-president and head of the analytical department at "Prime Holding", where he leads teams and projects on the topics of digital transformation, data analysis and application of machine self-learning to business problems;
- Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Ethics and Data Analytics (IDEA);
- Operations Director of "LogSentinel", directly responsible for the management of processes and financial flows, risk management and IT business analysis;
- Member of the Management Board of the European Institute of Public Administration (Maastricht, Netherlands) from 2015 to 2017;

- Head of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Advisor on IT and Innovation, Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria.
- Business consultant and project manager for market and financial analysis and statistical modeling
- Head of three scientific research projects, financed by the Scientific Research Fund of Sofia University in the scientific area of the current contest.

The awarded educational and scientific degrees, many years of teaching and business experience, as well as the high assessment of the students for the in-depthness of the studied matter testify in an indisputable way to the experience, skills, competences and excellent preparation of Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov in the field of the announced contest.

The aspiration for constant renewal and improvement of the taught material through participation in university projects with a theoretical and methodological orientation is clearly visible. Associate Professor Gerunov's permanent commitment to practice in the field of taught disciplines deepens his competence and professionalism as a teacher.

3. Fulfillment of the requirements for occupying the academic position and general characteristics of the candidate's research activity

Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov fulfills the quantitative criteria of the minimum national requirements under Art. 26 of the Law for occupying the academic position "Professor" in the scientific field 3.8. Economics.

To participate in the competition, the candidate submitted the following publications:

- Habilitation thesis – a monograph in English language on the topic of risk analysis in management decisions, published by Springer;
- 5 articles and reports in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information, of which 3 are written by the candidate himself and 2 are co-authored;
- 7 articles in English and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes;
- 2 studies published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information;
- 3 chapters in collective monographs;
- 2 university textbooks, one of which is in English.

All publications submitted for the competition and participation in projects are from the period after the acquisition of the scientific title of associate professor in 2017.

In the presented reference, 106 citations of scientific works of Associate Professor Gerunov are indicated, including citations in publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information.

A large part of Prof. Gerunov's publications is in English, which contributes to establishing the international recognition of the author and the scientific unit.

The scientific publications and educational materials submitted for review completely match the subject of the announced competition.

4. Main scientific results and contributions

The contributions of Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov, Dr.Sc. in the publications submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of "professor" are of a scientific-theoretical and scientifically applied nature. The most significant among them are contained in the independent monograph in English, published by the prestigious international publishing house Springer. The scientific contributions in the main monographic work are a natural continuation of the direction of scientific research, followed since the beginning of his research activity and maintained during his academic career.

Among the scientific contributions of the candidate in the publications presented for the competition, the following can be highlighted, primarily in four main areas:

- (publications from the list under item 10b: 1, 7, 8, 14, 15): In the field of statistical modeling of the behavior of economic agents by using big data and predictive algorithms applied in data science and "machine self-learning", including a prepared synopsis of programming libraries with reprogrammed open source numerical algorithms;
- (publications from the list under item 10b: 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 15): In the field of theory and practice of management decisions in conditions of risk and uncertainty, more specifically further development, modeling and prototyping of stochastic approaches and models in the field of financial econometrics (including based on non-Gaussian and Markov processes) for revealing and forecasting deterministic economic phenomena;
- (publication from the list under item 10b: 3): In the field of revealing regularities in the behavior of economic agents through the study of interactions in virtual social networks and (publication from the list under item 10b: 16): methodological recommendations for modeling economic processes using artificial intelligence;
- (publications from the list under item 10b: 6, 12, 13): In the field of studying the environment and organizational context when implementing e-government solutions in the state administration, (publications 17, 18): including recommendations for better management based on the principles of personal data protection.

One cannot fail to note the pioneering nature of Assoc. Prof. Gerunov's work in recent years for the Bulgarian scientific literature, linked to the current theoretical, technological, behavioral and ethical progress in the field of digital economy, risk analysis, e-governance and financial markets . Its particular mission relates to the presentation to the scientific community of transformative developments with the significance of the revolution in data processing, data privacy, artificial intelligence, cryptocurrencies, etc. in the context of the prospects for the development of corporate and state management, financial markets and risk management, found its final and complete expression in the monographic work presented for the competition on the topic "Risk Analysis for the Digital Age".

Contributory moments are contained in the theoretical treatment of explanatory models basic to analytical directions and in their application to specific problems of practice and teaching. The role of his work in imposing a new way of thinking about the emerging future of e-Government and the digital economy, which awaits its wide scientific and educational reception in the context of first-hand experience of large-scale technological, organizational and institutional changes, is among the great merits of Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov.

5. Notes and recommendations

The monographic works of Dr. Anton Gerunov can be used as a means of establishing a modern way of teaching up-to-date economic, financial and management disciplines. In the future, they could be expanded with additional appropriate cases studies with application in the relevant topics of different courses and would contribute significantly to the understanding of the most current theoretical and practical approaches by students in economic, financial and management university programs in the country.

6. Conclusion

The scientific contributions of the candidate in the publications submitted for review in the competition, as well as the quality and quantity of the pedagogical activity, give grounds for the conclusion that all the requirements of the Law, the regulations for its application and the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and academic positions at Sofia

University "St. Kliment Ohridski" have been met. Assoc. Prof. Anton Gerunov, Dr.Sc. fulfills all the quantitative requirements for holding the academic position "professor" at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. I propose to the Scientific Jury to choose Assoc. Prof. Anton Antonov Gerunov for occupying the academic position of "professor" in the competition for professional direction 3.8 Economics (Risk management, e-governance and digital economy - in Bulgarian and English language), announced for the needs of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in State Gazette, issue 24/17.03.2023.

**Jury member:
Prof. Dr. Teodor Sedlarski**

Sofia, 27/07/2023