

REVIEW

By: Prof. Aleksandar Ivanov Marinov, PhD,
Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”, Department of Public Administration,
member of scientific jury, appointed by the Rector of Sofia University,
Order № ПД-38-186 от 13.04.2021

Regarding: Competition for awarding the Academic Position
“Professor” in Professional Field 3.3. Political Science
(Local government and self-government)

In the competition takes part a sole candidate - Associate Professor Milena Hristova Stefanova, Doctor of Science.

1. Assessment of fulfilling requirements for admittance to evaluation

According Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), to the evaluation stage of the procedure are admitted candidates, fulfilling the requirements, including correspondence to the minimal national requirements. The verification of the file, namely the information regarding the mentioned fulfillment, accepted by the Commission, responsible for the check-up of the candidates in the competition, proves that Milena Stefanova, DSc is in line with the quantitative and qualitative requirements and should be admitted to the evaluation stage of the procedure.

2. General overview of the candidate’s work submitted for evaluation

The candidate Milena Stefanova, DSc has submitted for participation in the competition 12 papers, including 2 monographic studies. All submitted publications are admitted to evaluation, since none of them duplicates papers submitted in procedures for other scientific degrees and positions.

3. Brief outline of the candidate's scholar career

Milena Stefanova, DSc, graduated with Master's degree in sociology in 1980. In 1990 she was awarded the PhD degree and in 2019 – the DSc degree. Her academic career developed at Sofia University – as Assistant Professor (1996-1998), and since 1998 as Associate Professor.

The scholar profile of Milena Stefanova, DSc fully corresponds to the framework of the announced competition and presents her as a qualified candidate in the field.

4. Overview of the teaching and pedagogical activity of the candidate

The pedagogical activity of Milena Stefanova, DSc at Sofia University ranges over almost 40 years. At the present she teaches several courses in the bachelor and master programs of Sofia University in Public Administration and Political Science which fall entirely in the field of competition: Local government and administration, Comparative local self-government, Comparative European public administration, Public interest, etc.

Milena Stefanova, DSc is also a respected mentor and supervisor. She supervised several successful PhD students.

5. Evaluation of the theoretical and applied contributions of the candidate

As mentioned, in this competition Milena Stefanova, DSc applies with 12 papers, including 2 monographic studies. The publications proposed by the candidate fully meet the requirements of the competition. None of them have been used for participation in other competitions.

In this review I stress especially the monographic studies:

Сравнителните изследвания на местното самоуправление, ISBN: 978-954-07-5154-2, СУ "Св. Климент Охридски", София, 2021 (Comparative studies of local self-government)

Местна власт и местно самоуправление, Второ преработено и допълнено издание, ISBN:978-954-07-5153-5, СУ "Св. Климент Охридски", София, 2021 (Local government and self-government)

Milena Stefanova, DSc is author – except of above mentioned monographic books - of multiple studies, articles and other publications, presented in this competition. Among this broad creative field, the following publications seem to me of particular significance, both theoretically and in applied context:

- Challenges of the Implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government in Bulgarian Legislation , LEX LOCALIS - JOURNAL OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT, Vol. 16, N 2, 2018, 215-227, doi: [https://doi.org/10.4335/16.4.915-927\(2018\)](https://doi.org/10.4335/16.4.915-927(2018)) SCOPUS;

- METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSING THE ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC INTEREST, ПУБЛИЧНИ ПОЛИТИКИ.bg, vol:10, issue:4, 2019, ISSN (online) 1314-2313;
- Local Self-Government in Bulgaria, Local self-government in Europe, editor/s: Brezovnik, B, I. Hoffman, J. Kostrubiec, Publisher: Institute for Local Self-Government Maribor Smetanova ulica 30, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia, 2021, pages: 23-47, ISBN 978-961-7124-00-2 (pdf), doi: <https://doi.org/10.4335/978-961-7124-00-2> .01;
- Децентрализацията на държавното управление: "умрялата патица", В: 30 години реформи на публичното управление в Централна и Източна Европа, редактор: Милена Стефанова, издателство: УИ "Св. Климент Охридски", 2019, стр.:73-90, ISBN:978-954-07-4843-6;
- Доверието в публичните системи, "Европейските ценности. Новата констелация", редактор Георги Фотев, издателство: НБУ, 2019, стр.:103-114 ISBN978-619-233-065-1.

It should be mentioned that Milena Stefanova's ideas have been cited by a lot of researchers in the field – the registered citations amount to 116; the indexed publications of the author are 7.

There are at least four interrelated conceptual areas proving the ability of the candidate to ask and answer complex theoretical questions, following a very sound logic of scholar evolution.

First. Systematic methodology of comparative studies of local self-government.

Second. Outlining of the importance of the institutional approach in local self-government comparative studies.

Third. Analysis of regulations concerning the local level of government and the need of its improvement.

Fourth. Elaboration and applying of methodology of analysis concerning local authorities activities in defending public interest.

6. Evaluation of the personal contribution and authorship

The scholar texts and corresponding contributions are with no doubt personal work of the candidate Milena Stefanova, DSc. I accept entirely the self-assessment of the contributions.

7. Critical remarks and recommendations

I know Milena Stefanova, DSc for 20 years and have a respect for her high personal achievements in research and teaching. I have no significant critique on the publications submitted and the applicant's past activities.

CONCLUSION

The scholar production and contributions of Milena Stefanova, DSc are entirely in line with the requirements of the Development Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and other corresponding regulations. The qualification and performance of the candidate are solid and well proven.

These results give me compelling reasons to state my positive evaluation and propose to the honorable scientific jury to address the Faculty Council with

an unanimous proposition of awarding the academic position “Professor” in the professional field 3.3. Political Science (Local government and self-government) to Milena Stefanova, DSc.

София, 23.06. 2021

Prepared and signed by:

(prof. PhD Aleksandar Marinov)