

# OPINION

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**Regarding:** Competition for the academic position of Professor in the professional field 3.8. Economics (Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, and International Economics – in Bulgarian and French) for the needs of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

**Grounds for the opinion:** Member of the Scientific Jury by virtue of Order RD 38-272/06.06.2022, issued by the Rector of the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

## *Information about the competition and the candidate*

The competition is for the academic position of Professor in the professional field 3.8 Economics (Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, and International Economics – in Bulgarian and French). The competition is announced in the State Gazette, issue 30/15.04.2022, for the needs of the Department of Economics of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski.

Only the documents of Assoc. Prof. Vania Petrova Ivanova, PhD, have been received for participation in the competition. The submitted documents have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules on the Conditions and Procedure for Acquiring Science Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski.

Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova graduated from the French Language High School in Vratsa and has a degree in Political Economy at the Karl Marx Institute of Higher Education, now the UNWE. She holds a Master's Degree in European Studies from the University of Nancy, France, and in 1997 defended her thesis on "The Concept and Features of the Construction of the European Monetary Union". Both from the completed educational and scientific degrees and from the rich teaching experience of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova's solid preparation and development in the subject of the announced competition is evident. Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova has taught various courses on microeconomics, macroeconomics, international economics, international finance, economic policies for sustainable development, economic and financial system of the EU, etc. in Bulgarian and

French at the UNWE, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, Plovdiv University Paisii Hilendarski, Burgas Free University, etc. She is also a well-known and respected lecturer in the French program of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University St. Kliment Kliment with experience since 2011 and currently. Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova has had numerous specializations abroad, directly related to upgrading competences for teaching and research. In addition to her administrative experience in the structures of the UNWE, Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova has participated in research and applied projects under European and national funding in various positions. In recent years, she has an increased interest in current issues of economic development related to circular economy and sustainability.

***Meeting the minimum national requirements under Article 26 of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria***

According to the report on the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements under Article 26 of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria in the professional field 3.8. Economics for the academic position Professor Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova, PhD, repeatedly exceeds the quantitative criteria – with a minimum of 550 she has 1430.6 points, including:

- Indicators of group A – dissertation for the award of PhD – 50 points;
- Group B – habilitation thesis, monograph – 100 points;
- Group D – monograph, including not presented as the main habilitation thesis, and publications (studies, articles, reports, etc.) in scientific papers of different rank and type – 460 points;
- Group E, citations and reviews in scientific publications – 610 points;
- Group F, scientific supervision of PhD students, participation in scientific and applied projects and published textbooks and teaching materials – 200.6 points.

Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova has rich scientific research activity over time. Specifically for participation in the competition, in addition to the two monographs presented, the reference contains data on more than 30 other publications in various journals, including 17 in English and 1 in French. Separation protocols with the co-authors of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova are presented, in most of which it is clearly possible to identify her contribution in relation to other co-authors.

### ***General characteristics of the presented scientific papers***

A list of all publications of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova is provided. There are more than 80 of them and from them one can get an overall picture of both the scientific interests and the teaching and methodological work of the candidate for professor. Of more specific interest is the list of publications related to the announced competition. The publications total 40 and are described as follows:

- 1 independent monograph (250 pp.) and 1 monograph co-authored with the text of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova (135 pp.), which are directly related to current issues of the sustainability of the economic development today;
- 6 studies, referenced and indexed in well-known world databases with scientific information, that focus on the convergence process of the Bulgarian financial sector to the euro area;
- 8 articles aimed at broadening the topic of the circular economy and the opportunities and challenges for macroeconomic policy;
- 5 chapters from collective monographs focusing on the sectoral development of the Bulgarian economy, the prospects for the European Banking Union and specifically the potential of eco-fiscal policy;
- 11 papers from national scientific conferences and abroad, published in refereed journals, incl. Web of Science. Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova has examined various aspects related to the financial sector and the labour market, as well as economic policies for building an economic development model adequate to the current challenges.

In addition, Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova presents 8 textbooks and teaching materials, of which she has contributed to 3 textbooks on international economics and 1 on macroeconomics, as well as 4 textbooks for self-study of the students on general economic theory.

The scientific publications and teaching materials submitted for review fully coincide with the topics of the announced competition. The depth of the studies, their multifaceted nature and topicality are in line with the level of the academic position of Professor. Among the scientific publications there are also those in French, which shows the preparation and capabilities of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova for research and teaching activities for the needs of the French program of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. The wide citation of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova, including 13 citations

submitted to Scopus/Web of Science, also demonstrates the national resonance among the scientific community and abroad of the issues under study. The presented publications clearly show the aspiration of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova's efforts to give a topical sound to the fundamental directions of economic analysis (not only in terms of the circular model of economic development, but also on eco-fiscal policy, green jobs, educational policy in an ecological context, eco-innovation, and technology, etc.), thus expanding, enriching and giving a topical sound to the fields of research in the field of the announced competition. This is also an indication of the capabilities of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova to convey to the students not only basic knowledge, but also to demonstrate its modern dimensions in different languages, which guarantees the quality of the educational process.

### ***Evaluation of the scientific contributions of the candidate***

The contributions of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova, PhD, to the competition for the academic position of Professor are defined in three directions – scientific-theoretical, scientific-applied and educational-methodological. From the scientific-theoretical point of view, Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova has justified the need for a new model of economic development in Bulgaria, based on ecological transformation, resource efficiency and sustainable development, while addressing the short-run challenges and long-run benefits of its implementation. She outlines the benefits at micro- and macroeconomic level of moving from a linear to a circular model, including as regards the institutional capacity. In applied terms, Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova examines the instruments and opportunities of macroeconomic policy for implementing a strategy for economic sustainability appropriate to the current specifics at national and global level. Concrete recommendations for the implementation of a sustainable economic policy in Bulgaria are made, including as regards the sectors and activities of the economy (education, technology and innovation, SMEs, entrepreneurship, etc.).

The conclusions and assessments of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova's analysis of the Bulgarian economy are linked to European and global trends, which allows her analysis not to sound isolated and out of context. It should be emphasized in the teaching and learning plan that Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova is the co-author of one of the first textbooks on international economics in Bulgarian, which has become a benchmark for teaching the discipline in the country, and its improvement and supplementation over the years also gives it a very topical sound.

The contributions presented by Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova fully cover and correspond to the attached publications. I would make a recommendation to Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova to expand her publishing activities in French, which will allow to promote in another language the linking of fundamental and current issues of economic development, which in many aspects Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova has been done in her research.

### ***Conclusion***

Assoc. Prof. Vania Petrova Ivanova, PhD, exceeds the minimum national requirements for the academic position Professor, and in terms of content, the subject matter and quality of the presented publications fully cover the field of the announced competition. The rich teaching experience of Assoc. Prof. Vania Ivanova and her linguistic knowledge will allow a serious strengthening and development of the French programme of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Considering the project activity of the candidate as well as the developed teaching materials, I confidently express my positive opinion on the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Vania Petrova Ivanova, PhD.

8 August 2022

Sofia

Assoc. Prof. Dimitar Zlatinov, PhD