

REVIEW

by: Prof. Milen Ivanov Baltov, PhD

member of the scientific jury in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.8. Economy (Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility – Bulgarian and English Programmes), announced for the needs of the Business Faculty at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski", in SG no. 30 of April 15, 2022

Pursuant to Order № RD 38-273/ 06.06.2022 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski", for the appointment of a Scientific Jury for the selection of "Associate Professor" I have been appointed as a reviewer of the competition.

The submitted documentation is in the required volume and complies with the Regulations for application of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for development of the academic staff in SU.

One candidate, namely Dr. Marina Dimitrova Stefanova, submitted documents in the announced competition.

1. Presentation of the candidate for participation in the competition

Dr. Marina Dimitrova Stefanova completed her higher education majoring in Master of Laws from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski" (2001), followed by Business management at SU "St. Kliment Ochridski" and specialized in European law at Cambridge University. In 2016, he defended his doctoral dissertation on "Factors for the implementation of corporate social responsibility in Bulgarian small and medium-sized enterprises" at the same university. In 2020, she was appointed as head assistant doctor in the Department of "Economics and Management by Sectors" at the Faculty of Economics at Sofia University. From 2015 to 2019, she taught "Introduction to corporate social responsibility and sustainable business development" to bachelors (in Bulgarian and English) and "Corporate development. Mergers and Acquisitions" (2017-2021) of Masters in SU.

From 2021 is the director of the Master's program "Responsible and Sustainable Management" at SU and leads new disciplines such as "Systematization

and Standardization of CSR" and "Responsible and Sustainable Development". Head of the ESG Academy at the Center for Educational Services at SU. In recent years, she has participated in 2 international scientific projects, in one of which she holds the position of head of scientific communications. He has participated in a number of national and international scientific forums, round tables and discussions. He speaks English and uses Spanish and Russian.

From 2021 is the director of the Master's program "Responsible and Sustainable Management" at SU and disciplines such as "Systematization and Standardization of CSR" and "Responsible and Sustainable Development". Head of the ESG Academy at SU. She participated in 2 international scientific projects, in one of which she held the position of head of scientific communications. He has participated in a number of national and international scientific forums, round tables and discussions. Chairman of the Bulgarian Association of CSR Specialists. I have direct impressions from the fact that together we participate in the KOST Action "Multidisciplinary Innovations for Social Changes", where it contributes to the concepts of the "Knowledge-Management-Business-Society" quadrangle. I find that the accumulated teaching experience is completely sufficient for acquiring the academic position of associate professor.

2. Personal characteristics, compliance with the legal requirements of the candidate and quantitative measures

Dr. Marina Dimitrova Stefanova works as a part-time teacher and holder of disciplines at SU and has submitted the required full set of documents for participation in the competition for the academic position "docent".

On this basis, the applicant may be judged:

- The educational and scientific degree "doctor" is in the same scientific field in which the competition was announced;
- There are two peer-reviewed independent monographs on the subject of the competition and a book has been published based on a protected dissertation work for the award of the ONS "Doctor";

- She has presented 8 articles and papers, as well as 3 chapters in books, mostly published in peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes, which do not repeat those presented for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor";

- Availability of a lecturing materials, incl. electronic;

- She participated in research and applied projects at the national and international level.

It can be concluded that according to the minimum requirements and criteria and indicators of the SU for the evaluation of the academic and research work, the candidate exceeds the requirements.

Groups of indicators.	Content	Requirement	Performance
A	Indicator 1. Dissertation for obtaining the "doctors" degree	50	50
B	Indicator 3. Habilitation – monography	100	100
D	Total for Indicators from 4 to 10	200	210
E	Total for Indicators from 11 to 13	50	55
	Total	400	420

In the reference for citations, 4 citations of the candidate's publications are noted. In addition to everything stated above, in our country the candidate stands out with her accurate hits on scientific topics, as well as with her competent analysis and clear presentation of high scientific language. Possesses undeniable organizational skills, knows how to work highly efficiently in a team. She is known as a competent specialist who is distinguished by exceptional precision and scientific dignity.

3. Qualitative evaluation according to the criteria and indicators for the research activity

Regarding the monographic edition on the subject of accounting for the sustainability of enterprises. Namely, on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG). Another main direction in the candidate's work is the study of the dependence of corporate social responsibility on the scale of enterprises in Bulgaria and specifically in SMEs. The candidate's efforts are directed to these scientific questions and they are the subject of research in the majority of the presented materials: the main habilitation work, the publications in periodicals and the presented reports.

The author seriously develops the historical and conceptual stages for the formation of non-financial reporting as a tool for presenting the activities of enterprises. The types of data, their sources and users are analyzed. It builds a theoretical framework for the principles and indicators used in sustainability reports, as well as the processes of their communication, verification and evaluation. The candidate systematizes and examines the annual reports on the activity, including the non-financial declarations and the declarations for corporate management of the enterprises. The practical reflection of the researched data makes it possible to draw up a framework for rating their achievements in the field of ESG.

Several of the indexed articles systematize the main theoretical assumptions of the socio-economic context, as well as the employer-related CSR and non-CSR preferences of young job seekers in the country, among the countries of Eastern Europe: Bulgaria, Georgia, Poland and Russia. These countries have common roots, but at the same time they have a diverse cultural heritage and have experienced different socio-political developments in their history. All four countries have transformed their economies since 1989, following different trajectories and speeds.

Through her numerous appearances, the candidate focuses the attention of conference participants on contemporary problems, issues and directions of the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development, to a certain extent also on the circular economy. She defends her opinion as bravely and responsibly. Enters

areas that are particularly relevant for the stock exchange o explores the processes from a scientific point of view.

4. Correspondence with research contributions

The candidate's scientific and scientific-applied contributions are of a theoretical and practical-applied nature. The scientific contributions are indisputable and highlighted in the comparative analysis of the quantitative and qualitative state of models for the inclusion of small and medium-sized enterprises in corporate social responsibility. Examining opportunities for integrated reporting - historical development, concept and scope. Emphasis is placed on accounting for the sustainability of enterprises.

Among them invariably environmental, social and governance (ESG) aspects of their activities. This allows to draw important and significant conclusions regarding the long-term prospects for the Bulgarian economy in view of the economic growth potential. Practical contributions are also available. A serious empirical assessment of corporate social responsibility in Bulgarian small and medium-sized enterprises has been made. Systematic analysis of scientific publications in the scientific literature databases Scopus and Web of Science, as well as the benefits of applying corporate social responsibility in Bulgarian small and medium-sized enterprises, the quality of the workforce on the overall activity in European countries. Teaching-methodical tools have been developed, in line with case studies to ensure the learning process and the formation of knowledge and skills in the taught disciplines. A fine example is the Overgas case study designed by the candidate.

5. Notes and recommendations

Despite her serious international and national performances so far, it is desirable that the candidate be more critical of the Bulgarian practice in the ESG application levels - it will be valuable to examine the problems from the point of view of territorial processes also. A little-studied area in Bulgaria that deserves the candidate's attention is the study of the state of ESG service providers - agencies, international organizations and consultants. I wish Dr. Stefanova to work actively with

young researchers, and PhD students to pass on her accumulated scientific experience.

The critical remarks made are not of such a nature as to dispute the contributions of the candidate for the academic position of "associate professor".

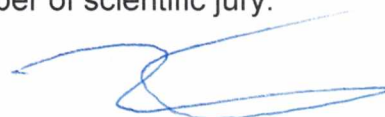
CONCLUSION

Dr. Marina Dimitrova Stefanova in her capacity as a candidate for the academic position of "Associate Professor" meets the accepted national minimum and recommended to SU scientific and scientometric requirements. The scientific production of the candidate contains results representing scientific and scientific-applied contributions; it is aimed at improving the theory and practice; contains summaries of results obtained through research. Her teaching work presents her as an excellent university lecturer, and her publications in prestigious journals and appearances at national and international forums have given her a certain authority and name in the scientific community.

I find sufficient grounds to propose Dr. Marina Dimitrova Stefanova to be elected to the academic position of "associate professor" in the professional field 3.8. - Economics (Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility – Bulgarian and English Programmes), according to the competition announced for the needs of Business Faculty at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ochridski". I am convinced that taking the academic position of "associate professor" will be deserved and will give her good opportunities for future research and performance as a lecturer, and the University quality staff with a contribution to its management and prosperity.

22.08.2022

Reviewer, member of scientific jury:



Prof. Milen Ivanov Baltov, PhD