

STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Todor Yalamov
Department of Business Administration,
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski "

Regarding: Competition for obtaining the academic position of "Associate Professor" in a professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Fundamentals of Management/Introduction to Management, Strategic Management, International Management - in Bulgarian and English), announced in State Gazette N103 of 10.12.2021.

Grounds for the statement: Order RD 38-96 / 07.02.2022 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. . Kliment Ohridski "

1. Information about the candidates in the competition

The only candidate in the competition is Dr. Ivan Ilchev Angelov, Chief Assistant in the Department of Business Administration at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". He submitted a complete set of required documents. He meets the conditions specified in the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ordinance for its implementation, as well as the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ". According to the information provided, the minimum requirements have been met.

Dr. Ivan Angelov graduated from the First English Language High School in Sofia in 1997. He immediately began his higher education in Business Administration at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", where he graduated as a bachelor in 2001. As a high-school student he started working in the field of economics as a financial expert, and while at the university he worked in a foreign trade company. He has been actively involved in the organized life of the faculty since his enrollment and is one of the founders of the

Business club. He has entrepreneurial experience by founding and managing a marketing agency. In the period 2002-2004 he was an advisor to the Minister of Youth and Sports and worked in the Directorate for European Integration and Youth Policy. After that he was a coordinator in the Bulgarian Football Union (2006-2010), followed by gaining experience in the Research Sector of the Technical University - Sofia (2010-2014).

He graduated with a master's degree in Business Administration (Business Administration - Strategic Management program) at the faculty in 2008 and in 2018 he defended his PhD in the professional field 3.7. Administration and management with scientific advisor Prof. Dr. Anastasia Bankova.

Dr. Ivan Angelov has diverse experience in the private sector finance, foreign trade and marketing (including as an entrepreneur), public (public administration), non-governmental sector and education - secondary (he was an English teacher in several schools) and higher (as part-time assistant from the academic year 2016/2017, and later as an assistant - from March 2019).

Dr. Angelov's practical experience is an exceptional asset from the point of view of teaching management disciplines, because he can easily integrate his personal experience within the theoretical material. An important detail to note is his interest in the Middle East, his previous acquaintances and experience with various businesses and business organizations in these countries, which is a factor in his success as a lecturer in the MBA program in English, as it accommodates many students from this region.

Dr. Angelov was a "recognized R2 researcher" in 2019 under the national program to support young scientists and postdoctoral students within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's scientific publications and evaluation of its scientific and applied contributions

The full list of the candidate's publications includes 15 titles, 12 of which are submitted as part of this competition. Three of them are in the process of being published and official notes have been provided confirming this fact. To the extent that it is a well-established practice in all procedures (doctoral dissertations and competitions for academic positions) to recognize notes before their actual publication, as well as the fact that periodically the scientific community of the faculty refuses to accept additional

(stricter requirements) for scientific growth (degree and position), I have no reason not to accept the notes as legitimate proof of the relevant points.

In addition, one note is for a publication visible in the Web of Science (Strategies for Policy in Science and Education Journal), which will ensure the entry of Dr. Angelov as an associate professor at NACID with **two** publications in the "target" journal databases. The other two are for publications of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration from our international conferences in 2020 and 2021.

The reference for citations includes 16 citations from 6 publications. Four of the citations (6,14,15,16) may not be recognized by NACID (as the report has no ISBN), but they are a demonstration that Dr. Angelov is noticed and respected by the authors of this significant policy research. This report also cites other colleagues from the department, such as Prof. Dr. Sc. Tsvetan Davidkov, Prof. D.Sc. Zhelyu Vladimirov, Prof. Dr. Desislava Yordanova, Prof. Dr. Anastasia Bankova and Assoc. Prof. Teodor Atanasov.

But, even without them, with the other 12 citations, Dr. Angelov exceeds the minimum points of the citations (50). Of course, it is necessary for Dr. Angelov to make efforts to "promote" his scientific production in order to expand the audience he reaches. In this regard, I have formulated some recommendations in section 4. In any case, Dr. Angelov's active research and publishing activity has been going on for three or four years, so miracles cannot be expected. By the way, many colleges attract professors/associate professors who have a doctorate, but are not necessarily research-oriented and even have lower scientometrics than some of our assistants.

The average time for habilitation after defending a dissertation has decreased in recent years to reflect trends in the Anglo-Saxon world, where "long-term" positions are for associates and full professors only. Assistant positions are mostly held on a fixed-term basis by doctoral or post-doctoral students.

Dr. Angelov works (according to his wording) in the following areas: Fundamentals of management (*general management issues* - my italics), strategic management, international management, innovation and industrial clustering. These areas to some extent reflect the institutional need (or at least the expectation - in our country) to have publications in the areas in which you teach and even more - the expectation of how to structure your "contributions" in a habilitation competition.

For the purposes of this statement, I must say that I accept that there are enough realized "contributions" that will lead to my recommendation that Dr. Angelov be confirmed as an associate professor. The formulations for the scientific and applied contributions of Dr. Angelov, related to new knowledge, facts, arguments, analyzes,

conclusions and analyzes in the field of his research, seem much more legitimate and understandable to me. I accept the various claims for developed reviews, as well as the approbation of the model for research of the innovative ability of the enterprise.

On the other hand, I have some resistance to the expectation of theoretical impacts at this stage of his career. In fact, such an expectation is lacking in the standard career path to becoming an associate professor in developed countries. You are usually required to have the ability to do research and publish articles in good journals and to teach (well). Mass articles at the "entry" level do not imply "theoretical impact", but the generation of "new knowledge" and "explanation" of phenomena that cannot be explained by previous models. Usually "theoretical impacts" are recognized decades later (after you become an associate professor or professor) and only for some researchers.

Dr. Angelov demonstrates that he can plan and conduct a wide range of research - quantitative and qualitative, use a variety of statistical methods of analysis, develop case studies and publish in journals from the "target" bases. He is able to summarize and conceptualize. One of the comprehensively tested hypotheses is that the average levels of innovation characteristics of the companies participating in clusters are higher than the non-participating companies.

This, although an expected result, is not entirely obvious. In Bulgaria, there are various suspicions (and often at the beginning of their construction - enough legitimate facts) that clusters are not authentic partnerships of innovative companies (or at least with an innovative orientation), but rather rent-seeking coalitions. Although Dr. Angelov does not apply a systematic approach to testing the hypothesis of "normalization" (now compared to 20-25 years ago) or other changes over time, yet - his conclusions are scientifically and practically interesting.

3. Assessment of the teaching and learning activities of the candidate

Dr. Angelov lectures on "International Management" (Bachelor's degree), "Fundamentals of Management" (Bachelor's degree), "International Business Strategies" (MBA), "Strategic Management" (MBA), as well as seminars - in all the mentioned disciplines plus "Human Resources Management" (Bachelor's degree). He has always (since he was a staff member at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration) had a full workload (and above it). He is the supervisor of over 10 defended master's theses and has several more in progress.

The practical experience of Dr. Angelov, his acquaintances with a wide range of specialists from practice at home and abroad make him an attractive teacher. He has

experience teaching on the UCLAN (University of Central Lancashire) campus in Cyprus on Erasmus exchanges.

I work with Dr. Angelov within the MBA program in English and he proves to be cooperative and skillfully balancing the cultural differences of students. He is open to interdisciplinary links, as well as for partnerships with colleagues from other universities. You can rely on him. Dr. Angelov took over the classes of a colleague who went into maternity leave, which seriously hindered his academic research, but on the other hand, many of us have gone exactly the same way.

During the current academic year she has partnered with Prof. Veneta Andonova from the University of Los Andes in Bogota, Colombia to conduct the course "International Business Strategies".

4. Critical remarks and recommendations

Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Ivan Ilchev Angelov has complied with the "informal" recommendations in the scientific community of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration to orient their publications to outlets that are visible in the Web of Science or Scopus and although it has the necessary minimum citation points, he is still far from being an internationally recognized researcher.

One of the reasons for this is that only 1/5 of his publications are in English, and they are solely in Bulgarian outlets. One possible strategy is to translate some of his publications into English and upload them as additional versions to ResearchGate.net and Academia.edu. This would increase the chances of his articles being read and cited.

I also recommend Dr. Angelov to expand his areas of study and to include the countries of the Middle East. The tacit knowledge he has gained by communicating with businesses and students from these countries can easily be explicated in articles that would be attractive to international journals (including those that publish teaching cases) and a wider audience.

5. Conclusion

The documents provided by Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Ivan Ilchev Angelov give grounds to assume that the candidate meets the minimum requirements of the Law

on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ordinance for its implementation and the relevant internal regulations of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration has not (yet) adopted additional requirements.

Taking into account all the above, I can confidently recommend to the esteemed scientific jury to propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" to approve the candidacy of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Ivan Angelov and to appoint him "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management.

March 25, 2022