



## OPINION

on the materials for competition on academic position "Associate professor" field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.7. Administration and management, scientific specialty "Economics and Management" discipline "Macroeconomics" announced by the University of Forestry in SG. 37 / 7.5.2019, procedure code AVM - AsP - 0419 - 05.

### Applicants to the competition are:

#### 1. Chief Assist. Dr. Ivaylo Hristov Ivanov

**Prepared by:** PhD. Stanislava Draganova Kovacheva - Veleva, Assoc. Prof. - Professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, University of Forestry, Faculty of Business Administration. The scientific jury was formed with Order No. ЗПС-319/24. 06. 2019 of the Rector of the University of Forestry.

#### 1. Brief applicant's biographical data

Chief Assist. Professor Ivaylo Hristov Ivanov was born in Tryavna. He graduated higher education in 1997 at the University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Sofia, in "Management of Territorial Systems" and in 1998 - a degree in „Accounting and Control“ at the same university. He acquired PhD in 2017 after studying as a full-time and part-time PhD student in the Department of "Management of Natural Resource" at the Faculty of Business Management (FBM) of the University of Forestry (UF) in the scientific speciality "Economics and Management (by industries)". The topic of the thesis is "Economic problems of the depressed regions in Bulgaria". Since 1999 he has been working at the UF as: 1999-2001 - Assistant; 2001-2004 - Senior Assistant; 2004-2019 - Chief Assistant (with change of position in Assistant for 4 years - from 2014-2018). From 1999 to 2015 he was part-time assistant on "Regional Economics" in the Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management and Administration of UNWE. The main areas of scientific interest are: macroeconomic development of Bulgaria; problems and aspects of sustainable development; economic and governance problems of the regions; competitiveness of regions; development of tourism in Bulgaria; problems of small and medium-sized enterprises; trends in the economic development of the forestry and agriculture sector, etc. The applicant's scientific development is marked by a pursuit of advanced knowledge through participation in various specialized and language courses, project work, work in various scientific and professional teams. Significant Impact to his development as a scientist is the experience from 2009 to the present time as the production editor of the Journal "Management and Sustainable Development" - a referred scientific edition of the University of Forestry with a long history.

#### 2. Conformity of the submitted documents and materials of the applicant (s) in accordance with the Regulations of Academic Staff Development (RASD) at the University of Forestry

The documents submitted by Chief Assist. Dr. Ivaylo Hristov Ivanov, fully meets the requirements of the Law for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the specific requirements for the academic positions



in accordance with the RDAS at UF. *Appendix 8* - Self-Assessment Report for Compliance with Minimum National Requirements (MNR) in accordance with Art. 2a and Art. 60, para 4, p. 8 of RDAS at UF contains correctly filled in information about the scientific and applied scientific activity of the applicant. It exceeds the requirements for indicators that are obligatory for this academic position - a total of 512.98 points. The report also contains activities for indicators E14 to E21 - a total of 236.67 points, which are not required for the AP "Associate Professor". The points with which the candidate participates in the competition are 749.65 according to the MNR.

### **3. Assessment of the applicant's Teaching Activity**

I have witnessed the pedagogical and educational activity of Ch. Assist. Prof. Ivanov. Since 1999 he has been a contract lecturer at the University of Forestry. For nearly 20 years he has established himself as a very good lecturer in Economics and Management - in the beginning - 1999-2004 - as an Assistant and Senior Assistant Professor, and in recent years as a Chief Assistant Professor, PhD and a leading lecturer in 7 disciplines - 5 in "Bachelor's Degree" (one of which is the Macroeconomics discipline, for which this competition was announced) and 2 in "Master's Degree" - *Appendix 11*. The average annual employment of Chief Assist. Prof. Ivanov for the last 5 years is more than 485 hours, less than 5% of which are extracurricular hours - *Appendix 4, 7 and 11*. It should be pointed out that he teaches "Insurance", as a leading lecturer in English for foreign students - average of 65 hours of annual employment. Since 2014, a course and textbook have been developed at the e-learning platform Blackboard Learn + (<http://elearn.ltu.bg/>) at LTU. These types of interactive tools allow monitoring and control of the progress of the students and require high professionalism and dedication by the professor to prepare and evaluate materials, cases, tasks, tests, etc. Chief Assist. Prof. Ivanov works actively with students not only in the auditorium and on the electronic platform, but also as a supervisor and reviewer of diploma thesis, participation in projects with students (E16.1-5), organization of student scientific forums etc. He is the author and co-author of the curriculum of the disciplines he teaches. In the competition he participated with two university textbooks – one authored electronic textbook "Macroeconomics" (E20.1) and one co-authored paper textbook "Microeconomics. Macroeconomics" (E20.2) and one co-authored handbook – "Theoretical Economics. Practice" (E21.1). Both textbooks are in the field of the announced competition and the handbook is very useful in seminars and exercises in the subjects "Macroeconomics", "General Economic Theory", "Microeconomics" and other subjects providing basic economic knowledge. All this is evidence of a responsible and professional attitude to the teaching job and they present the candidate as a very qualified lecture who can fully perform the teaching activities related to the AP of "Associate Professor" for which he applies.

### **4. Assessment of the applicant's scientific, applied and publication activities**

#### **4.1. Participation in scientific, applied and educational projects**

Assistant Professor Ivanov has participated in the work of the research teams of an international scientific project - INTEGRAL "Integrated future-oriented management of European forest landscapes", funded under the 7th Framework Program of the European Union (E17.1) and of five national scientific projects for the period 2006-2015. One of the national projects (E16.1) is



funded by the National Found "Scientific Research", the other 4 are funded internally. The applicant has also participated in three national education projects funded under EU Operational Programs. In 2018, the applicant receives (as a manager) funding from the National Found "Scientific Research" for a national scientific project (E18.1). This information proves that Ivaylo Ivanov is a specialist with systematic research and creative skills, which he successfully applies in various fields of science and practice.

#### **4.2. Characteristics of published scientific results**

For participation in this competition for the AP "Associate Professor" in "Macroeconomics", Ch. Assist. Prof Ivanov has submitted a list including 51 published textbooks, monographies, papers, etc. (other than those included in the doctoral dissertation and for the acquisition of the academic position of "Chief Assistant Professor", for which information is provided in *Appendix 10* ), of which:

- 1 peer-reviewed monography;
- 1 separate article, published in a scientific edition, referenced and indexed in world databases;
- 39 articles and reports published in peer-reviewed scientific editions;
- 7 published chapters of peer-reviewed monographies;
- 3 university textbooks for working with students in the discipline for which the competition was announced – "Macroeconomics" - 2 textbooks and one handbook.

The presented scientific production in quantitative and qualitative aspect exceeds the MNR under LDAS, the Regulations for its implementation and the RDAS at UF. The conclusions of the analysis below are made without taking into account the substantive content of the co-authored publications.

From the list of publications according to MNR, 18 are self-written - the monograph, one publication in a refereed edition, 15 scientific articles and reports, in scientifically peer-reviewed editions and one textbook. Of the submitted works, 33 are co-authored, in two of which the candidate is first in the copyright team and in 31 is in the second, third and next place. In co-authored publications, 29 have two or more co-authors. These facts, on the one side, show a sufficient number of publications and copyright pages in which the applicant's copyright is undoubted. These publications reflect in full the personal creative and scientific interests of the applicant - Bulgaria's macroeconomic development; problems and aspects of sustainable regional development; economic and financial problems of the regions; competitiveness of regions; regional opportunities for the development of alternative tourist offer, etc. On the other side, the considerable number of co-authored publications (in which the applicant's author's involvement is clear) indicate a very good work in different research teams and the multifactorial applicability of the accumulated creative and research potential in the fields of Economics, Territorial Development and Finance.

The presented monograph is on the topic of the competition and is a summary of the long-term research of the candidate in the main area of scientific interests - Sustainable Development of the Regions in Bulgaria and minimizing the regional disparities. It reflects the scientific interests of the applicant, taking into account the topic and results of his doctoral dissertation. Therefore, I

can confidently say that monographic research is a candidate's personal work and a kind of general expression of a long creative search.

It should be noted that 17 of the published works were presented at international forums abroad - Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Russia, and 25 of the total number of articles, reports and chapters of monographs were published on foreign language - English and Russian, which shows the aspiration of the candidate to discuss the results with the scientific teams in the field of their scientific achievements. All this proves that the presented research is on the topic of the competition and the creative author's participation in them is indisputable.

#### **4.3. Candidate's Scientific Activity in Literature (Citation)**

The number of publications in Bulgarian and foreign languages and the participation in international forums lead to a good degree of recognition in the national and international aspect. According to the information provided by the applicant - *Appendix 8* and *10*, 14 citations of various publications of the applicant were noted. According to the MNR (*Appendix 8*) for the AP "Associate Professor" at the University of Forestry, the presented citations are completely sufficient to prove a high level of reflection of the scientific production of Chief Assist. Prof. Ivanov in the research work of Bulgarian and foreign authors. Two of the citations - E11.1 and E11.2 are in the references in SCOPUS editions, one of the citations is in a monographic study. The rest of the citations are in publications in scientifically peer-reviewed journals by authors in the field of the candidate's scientific interests in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, Italy and others. It can be argued with conviction that the applicant's research work is recognizable in the educational environment at home and abroad.

#### **4.4. Contributions to the works of the applicant (s) (scientific, applied, applied)**

The contribution report submitted to the documents shows the basics contributions from the long-standing research, according to the applicant's views. From the attached articles, monographs and books the applicant's contributions can be summarized in the following areas:

**4.4.1. Scientific contributions** - demonstration of significant new aspects of existing scientific economics and management problems and theories:

- Macroeconomic studies in various areas of Bulgaria's development have been enriched and supplemented - the country's development has been examined according to the key indicators for monitoring sustainable development (B3.1, Г7.1, Г7.4), the advantages of the country have been identified through a comparative analysis of the strengths and weaknesses (Г7.9, Г7.19, Г7.23), the districts are ranked by degree of sustainability, and the dynamics of the areas rankings are examined (B3.1, Г7.1, Г7.4) ;
- The theory and practice for research and analysis of the competitiveness of the regions has been supplemented - an assessment of the competitiveness of the regions in Bulgaria has been made, an opportunity for a quantitative assessment of the competitiveness of the regions has been created, inequalities between them have been established, a classification of the regions in Bulgaria by the level of competitiveness has been made through applying a methodology developed by the applicant (Г6.1, Г7.6, Г7.9, Г7.13, Г7.23, Г7.26);



- The theory and practice for researching and analyzing of enterprise competitiveness by studying selected indicators has been supplemented and enriched (Г7.22, Г7.32, Г10.1, Г10.2, Г10.3, Г10.4);

- The knowledge of a priority sector for Bulgaria is enriched - the conditions for the development of alternative tourism in Bulgaria and its tourism potential are explored, the profile of tourists is developed and unique opportunities for diversification of the tourism product and services are identified (Г7.5, Г7.7, Г7.18, Г7.25, Г7.27, Г7.30, Г7.31, Г7.33).

**4.4.2. Scientific and applied contributions** - creation of new classifications, methods and methodologies for increasing the effectiveness of economic and management activities in the regional aspect and at branch level:

- A methodology has been developed to assess the sustainable development of NUTS 3 administrative and territorial units, in accordance with European Union legislation, and a complex index based on 25 indicators, called the Regional Sustainable Development Index (RDSI) has been created (B3.1, Г7.1);

- A methodology for assessing the competitiveness of the regions in Bulgaria has been developed, tested and implemented by applying a specific multifactorial index that values the level of competitiveness (Г6.1, Г7.4, Г7.6, Г7.9, Г7.13, Г7.23, Г7.26);

- Methods and tools have been developed for assessing the corporate competitiveness of enterprises in Forestry, Wood Processing and Furniture Industries, and the place of sectors in the country's economy has been examined (Г7.22, Г7.32, Г10.1, Г10.2, Г10.3, Г10.4);

- New applications and capabilities of methodology with proven capabilities for developing scenarios for Integrated Management of Forest Landscapes have been revealed (Г7.3, Г7.8, Г7.10, Г7.11, Г7.12, Г7.14, Г7.15, Г7.16, Г7.17, Г7.20, Г7.21) .

**4.4.3. Applied Contributions** - Obtaining and proving new facts related to the validation and improvement of economic and management policy at regional and sectoral level:

- Data on migration problems of big cities in Bulgaria and rural regions have been obtained through demographic survey (Г7.28, Г7.39)

- Scenarios for integrated and future-oriented management of forest landscapes have been developed in two key cases - Velingrad Municipality and Teteven Municipality - stakeholder behavior is predicted; management parameters are modeled; a stakeholder request matrix has been developed, roadmaps for sustainable forest management in these municipalities have been created under the most favorable scenarios (Г7.3, Г7.8, Г7.10, Г7.11, Г7.12, Г7.14, Г7.15, Г7.16, Г7.17, Г7.20, Г7.21);

- Trends and problems in the development of the Forestry and Agriculture sector have been identified by examining the economic and management indicators of Forestry in Bulgaria for the period 1990-2015. (Г7.3, Г7.22, Г7.24, Г7.29, Г7.37, Г7.38, Г10.5, Г10.7);

- Trends in the development of the insurance market - structure and leaders of the insurance market in Bulgaria - have been researched (Г7.36, Г10.6).

**4.4.4. Contributions to the methodology of training in the field of macroeconomics** - development and validation of new approaches and methods of training:

- Problems in training in fundamental economic disciplines have been identified (Г7.2, Г7.35);

- The perspectives and opportunities for digital technologies to overcome learning problems and improve the quality of the learning process are analyzed (Г7.2, Г7.34 );
- The achievements of science in the field of macro- and microeconomics are classified and interpreted (Г.7.35, E20.1, E20.2, E21.1).

### 5. Assessment of the applicant's personal contribution

I consider the applicant's contributions are a personal matter, sufficient and fully relevant to the subject of the competition. They present the systematic and persistent nature of the applicant to develop and solve problems related to the competencies acquired and developed over the years. The achieved scientific results are with high scientific and applied scientific value.

I am fully convinced that the qualitative and quantitative indicators and criteria for occupying the Academic Position of "Associate Professor" in accordance with the national MNR in the field of higher education and the requirements of RASD at the University of Forestry have been met.

### 6. Critical notes and recommendations

I have no critical notes of a contentious nature to the applicant's publications. I have some notes and recommendations:

- I recommend that the applicant increase his activity for searching opportunities for implementation and application of the research results in order to extend the knowledge and science transfer to the practice at regional and national level;
- The scientific value of the results obtained in works give me reason to recommend intensify his publication activity in refereed Bulgarian and foreign journals in order to achieve greater recognition by the international scientific community and a higher degree of citation.

### 7. Personal impressions

I know Chief Assist. Prof. Ivanov from the beginning of his work at LTU - more than 20 years and I consider that the presented scientific results are his personal matter. He is proactive, creative, with a high degree of self-organization and precision in carrying out research tasks, works in a team with well-known names in the field of scientific interests, includes in his research younger colleagues, allows students to actively participate in the research work and to take their first steps in presenting their scientific results.

### 8. Conclusion

I appreciate the highly factual information for research activity and **I PROPOSE Chief Assist. Prof. PhD. IVAYLO IVANOV to occupy the academic position "ASSOCIATED PROFESSOR" in the "Macroeconomics" of the syllabus of PF 3.7. Administration and Management, Higher Education Area 3. "Social, Business and Legal Sciences", Scientific Specialty "Economics and Management" in the Department of Economics and Management of Natural Resources at the Faculty of Business Management of the University of Forestry.**

Signature:

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Opinion delivered on: 8/26/2019