

## REVIEW

on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for „**Professor**“ in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and law sciences, Professional field 3.7. Administration and management, scientific specialty "Economics and Management" in the discipline "Economics and Management of Landscape Architecture"

In the competition for professor, published in the State Gazette, 10/04.02.2025 and on the site of the University of Forestry with the code FOR-P-0125-157 for the needs of the Department of "Forest Management" at the Faculty of "Forestry" as a candidate participate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, Faculty of "Forestry", Department of "Forest Management"

**Reviewer:** Nikolay Hristov Sterev, D.S., Professor in a Professional Field 3.8 Organization and Management of production /industry/, from University of National and World Economy - Sofia

### 1. Brief biographical data for the candidate

The sole candidate in the competition for the position of PROFESSOR is Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova. She graduated with a degree in Forestry, specializing in Landscape Architecture, in 1997. In 2012, she earned her Doctorate in the scientific field of Organization and Management (by industries) with a dissertation titled on the Management Model of Landscape Architectural Activity in the Green Systems of Cities.

Professionally, Dr. Dragozova began her career as an assistant in 2005 in the Department of Forest Management at LTU-Sofia. Over the years, she advanced to the positions of Senior Assistant in 2007 and Chief Assistant in 2011. In 2016, she was appointed Associate Professor in the same department. From 2019 to 2023, she served as the head of the Department of Business Administration. In 2024, she was elected Deputy Rector of the University.

Outside the university, Associate Professor Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova is a landscape architect. She holds several certificates in soft skills and specialized competencies, including communication skills and teamwork, web technologies, e-learning methods and systems, business communications (as a lecturer), project management under European funds, and environmental management systems, among others. Dr. Dragozova was a member of the editorial team for the Landscape Architecture Journal and served as the Chairman of the FUNIS trade union at the LTU-Sofia.

She is also a member of two professional organizations: The Union of Quality Specialists in Bulgaria and the Association of Teachers of Economics and Management in Industry. Dr. Dragozova received a Gold Medal in the national Junior Achievement competition for "Best Training Company in Bulgaria for Students" in both 2015 and 2017, as well as the LTU Rector's Award for Scientific and Teaching Activity in 2012.

### 2. Correspondence of the submitted documents and materials of the applicant according to the Rules of the Development of academic staff at the University of Forestry.

The following generalizations can be drawn from the submitted reference regarding the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for the academic position as follows:



- The candidate has submitted a total of 25 scientific papers, books, textbooks, and teaching aids for review, along with a list of 5 research papers. All 25 scientific papers, which are separate from the dissertation and the publications submitted while holding the academic position of at LTU, are accepted for review.
- The reference is well-structured and accurately reflects the candidate's main scientific achievements, including published books, studies, articles, conference reports, and citations of scientific publications, in support of the application for the position of Professor at LTU: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova.
- The reference indicates that all minimum requirements have been satisfied, including:
  - The candidate has obtained the ESD "Doctor" degree, diploma No. LTU-ONS-2012-15, issued on October 24, 2012, by LTU.
  - The candidate has obtained the academic position with diploma number LTU-AD-2016-60, issued by LTU in 2016.
  - The candidate has published a monograph related to the position of PROFESSOR, titled "Management of Competencies for Enhanced Professional Performance: Part 1 - Landscape Architect, reviewed by two reviewers in 2024 and published by Intel Entrans OOD, Sofia, with the ISBN 978-619-7703-72-6.
  - The candidate also participates in the competition with one monograph outside the competition, ten articles and studies (including two indexed), and eleven reports (including five indexed) from conferences, which collectively amount to 265.77 points (the minimum required is 200 points according to the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria).
  - The candidate has indicated a total of 37 citations in the reference, including 15 citations in SCOPUS and WoS, which amount to 360 points (with a minimum requirement of 100 points according to the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria).
  - The candidate also meets the additional requirements for holding the academic position of Professor at LTU-Sofia by providing evidence of achieving 195 points (with a minimum requirement of 100 points) in the following areas:
    - Submitted a report for one successfully defended doctoral student under her supervision.
    - Submitted a report for leading one national project team and participating in one international project and three national research and educational projects.
    - Published one university textbook and one teaching aid.

### **3. Assessment of the candidate's educational and pedagogical activities (work with students and PhD students)**

The candidate for the academic position of Professor, Associate Professor Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, has been appointed as an Associate Professor in the scientific specialty 3.7 Administration. The primary fields of teaching include:



- "Economics and Management of Landscape Architecture
- "Management" for the Landscape Architecture specialty
- "Organizational Behavior for the specialties of Agricultural Technology and Sustainable Use
- "Human Resources Management" for the specialties of Agricultural Technology, Sustainable Use, and Resource Management
- "Economics and Environmental Management" for the Environmental Engineering specialty
- "Business Communications and Public Relations" for the specialties of Agricultural Technology, Sustainable Use, and Resource Management.

A total of 2,624 hours of classroom instruction and supervision of 18 graduates from the following specialties were reported: "Landscape Architecture" (8 graduates) and "Business Management" (10 graduates).

In addition to successfully supervising the doctoral student Paula Veselinova Malkovska-Kutseva (diploma: LTU-ONS-2021-146, dated 27.10.2021), Dr. Dragozova is also the supervisor of two additional doctoral students: Dimitar Plamenov Danchev and Yulian Sandev Andreev. All doctoral students are trained in the scientific field of 3.7 Administration and Management.

#### **4. Assessment of candidate's scientific, scientific-applied and publishing activities**

Candidate Associate Professor Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova participated in the competition with:

- Monographs - 2 number (s);
- Textbooks - 1 number (s);
- Learning materials - 1 number (s);
- Publications - 21 number (s).
- Projects - 5 numbers (s).

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

The candidate, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, has submitted a report detailing her participation in the following scientific, applied science, and educational projects:

- Project NIS-B-114/2021: Research, Analysis, and Modeling of Educational Competencies - project manager;
- Project KP-06-OPR-03-7/2028: Assessment of the Ecosystem Service by Water-Retaining Forest Areas in Bulgaria - member of the project team
- Project KP-06-D002-1/2023: BIOCONSENT - International Team Member
- Project under OP NOIR on the topic Support for the Development of the Scientific Capacity of LTU - Educational Team Member
- Project under OP HRD: Student Internships - member of the educational team.

##### **4.2 Characterization of published scientific results**

The publications can be classified as follows:

###### **By type:**

- Publications in scientific journals - 10 number (s);



- Publications in proceedings of scientific - 11 number (s);

**By significance**

- Articles in magazines with Impact Factor - 7 number (s);
- Articles in journals referenced and indexed in Web of Science and SCOPUS - 2 number (s);
- Articles in journals without Impact Factor - 14 number (s);
- Papers in proceedings of scientific forums - 11 number (s);
- Plenary reports - 16 number (s).

**Place of publication:**

- Articles in Bulgarian and foreign journals referenced in Web of Science and SCOPUS - 7 number (s);
- Articles in reference Bulgarian and foreign journals referenced outside the Web of Science and SCOPUS - 2 number (s);
- Articles in non-referenced Bulgarian and foreign journals - 14 number (s);
- Publications in proceedings of international scientific forums - 5 number (s);
- Publications in proceedings of national scientific conferences, sessions and seminars - 6 number (s);

**Publishing language:**

- In Bulgarian - 13 number (s);
- In a foreign language - 10 number (s);

**Number of co-authors:**

- Stand alone - 4 number (s);
- With one co-author - 10 number (s);
- With two co-authors - 2 number (s);
- With three or more co-authors - 7 number (s).

#### **4.3 Reflection of Candidate's Scientific Publications in Literature (known citations)**

- Total - 37 citations.

**By type of citations:**

- In reference journals and proceedings of scientific forums - 15 citations;
- In teaching aids, monographs, dissertations, etc. - 7 citations.

#### **4.4 Contributions to the candidate's work (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)**

I fully accept the contributions made by the candidate:

- **SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS**

- Scientific knowledge regarding the specialization of labor and its impact on societal well-being has been significantly enhanced. For the first time in Bulgaria, a comprehensive analysis of the educational competencies of graduates in the field of "Landscape Architecture" is being conducted, based on a twenty-year study of labor specialization within this profession. This analysis is framed within the context of the European Qualifications Framework and international standards for training in landscape architecture. (B3.1.; D.7.4.; D.7.5.; D7.7)



- Basic scientific theories related to the study of individual aspects of human resource management for implementing the principles of sustainable development in green infrastructure have been examined and theoretically synthesized. A significant scientific contribution has been made through the development of models aimed at enhancing training to acquire competencies necessary for applying the principles of sustainable development. (D6.2; D6.4; D6.6; D7.1)
- A scientific summary has been developed regarding the formation of modern general and professional competencies through the application of the competency approach. This approach is a crucial factor for effective implementation in various professions and indirectly contributes to the enhancement of well-being and the sustainable management of the social, economic, and environmental conditions that influence the development of contemporary society. (D6.3; D7.8; D7.10)
- A toolkit has been proposed, and scientific results from research on various alternatives for building green infrastructure that maintains sustainability across economic, social, and environmental systems have been obtained and summarized. (D7.11; D7.12; D7.13)
- Approaches have been developed and proposed to study the factors, relationships, and dependencies that influence stakeholders' behavior in managing green infrastructure, as well as their attitudes toward various ecosystem functions and services. (D6.1; D6.5; D6.7; D7.2; D7.3; D7.6; D7.9)
- **SCIENTIFIC AND APPLIED CONTRIBUTIONS**
  - The author's methodology for evaluating the alignment between educational competencies and the professional competencies of landscape architects has been developed and tested through practical studies. (B3.1.; D7.4.)
  - A scientific toolkit has been developed to study stakeholders' opinions on the quality of specialized work performed by landscape architects. This toolkit has been systematically organized and verified. It can be utilized periodically to identify the educational deficits of landscape architects. (B3.1.; D6.2.)
  - Based on the results obtained from the research, the primary objectives related to the need for regulating the profession of "Landscape Architect" have been identified and theoretically organized. These objectives should align with the necessary educational and professional knowledge, skills, and relevant European practices. (D7.14)
  - A research toolkit has been proposed and tested to examine the motivation and level of satisfaction among employees in higher education institutions. (D4.1)
- **APPLIED CONTRIBUTIONS**
  - A map for assessing the alignment between educational competencies and workplace competencies has been developed and tested through applied research. Additionally, a survey toolkit for ongoing monitoring of acquired



educational competencies, aligned with labor market requirements, has been developed and successfully implemented in practice.

- Based on the results of long-term research on competencies, educational profiles have been proposed for the specialties of "Landscape Architecture, and
- Methodological elements in the training program for "Economics and Management of Landscape Architecture" have been developed and proposed, including content specifically designed to facilitate the acquisition of specialized educational competencies.

## **5. Assessment of the applicant's personal candidate**

The contributions of the candidate for the academic position of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, are undeniable. Her recognition for scientific and applied contributions includes:

- Joint publications with both Bulgarian and international authors.
- Publications indexed in primary databases and referenced in secondary indexing systems.
- A total of 37 citations reported in monographs and indexed and referenced publications.

## **6. Critical remarks**

In essence, the scientific and creative contributions of the candidate for the academic position of "PROFESSOR" at LTU-Sofia align with the scientific direction and specialty of the competition. While there may be some minor criticisms and observations regarding specific aspects of the candidate's submitted scientific work, I believe that, overall, no significant criticisms can be directed at her.

## **7. Personal impressions**

I am familiar with the candidate for the position of "PROFESSOR": Associate Professor Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, through her participation in conferences organized by LTU and other universities across the country. My impressions of her are outstanding.

As the Chairman of the Board of APIUI, I have also observed her positive contributions to various initiatives, including workshops, projects, and the review of publications from scientific forums associated with the organization. Additionally, she actively engages in the activities and tasks of the annual meetings for colleagues in Economics and Management of Industry throughout the country.

## **8. Conclusion**

**In connection with the above, I propose that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova be elected as a „Professor“ in the discipline “Economics and Management of Landscape Architecture” in the Professional field 3.7. Administration and management, scientific specialty Economics and Management**

Signature of the reviewer:

Review submitted to: