

01C-3035/24.04.2025T.

OPINION

on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for „Professor“ in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.7. Administration and management, scientific specialty "Economics and management" (by branches), in the discipline "Economics and management of landscape architecture"

In the competition for professor, published in the State Gazette No. 10/04.02.2025 and on the site of the University of Forestry with the code procedure FOR-P-0125-157 for the needs of the Department of „Forestry and Management“ at the Faculty of Forestry as a candidate participate Assoc. Prof. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, Faculty of Forestry, Department of „Forestry and Management“.

Prepared the opinion: PhD, Galin Iliev Milchev, Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.7. Administration and Management /Application of Computer Technology in Economics/, University of Forestry – Sofia.

1. Brief biographical data for the candidate

Only one candidate participated in the competition – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova. The candidate graduated from the University of Forestry – Sofia in 1997, majoring in “Landscape Architecture” with the qualification “LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT (Master)”. After graduation, she worked successively in various organizations as a designer and management staff in the field of landscape, thereby gaining significant practical experience as a specialist in the field. The acquired level of the national qualification corresponds to group 216 “Architects, designers, surveyors and designers”, Single group 2162 “Landscape architects”, 2162-7001 - Landscape architect.

From 2003 to the present, she has been working at the University of Forestry – Sofia. She started as an “Organizer of educational activities” /2003-2005/, after which she developed as a leading lecturer at the university:

- Assistant /2005-2007/;
- Senior Assistant /2007 to 2011/;
- Chief Assistant /2011 to 2016/;
- Associate Professor from March 2016 to the present.

Leads lectures and exercises in the disciplines: "Economics and Management of Landscape Architecture"; "Organizational Behavior"; "Human Resource Management"; "Business Communications and Public Relations"; "Management"; "Investment Process Management".

With the accumulated experience and management qualities, for the period 2019 - 2023 she was elected as the head of department, and from 2024 she is the Deputy Rector for "Accreditation and Rating, Communication Policy and Career Development" at the University of Forestry - Sofia.

The CV and the attached references for scientific and other types of activities show a high degree of preparation and professionalism. Her resume testifies to the gradual acquisition of professional experience and knowledge related to academic development and reaching high scientific and teaching standards.

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 submitted documents and supporting materials of the Associate Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova fully meet the requirements and comply with the requirements under the Regulations for the Regulation of Academic Development (RAD) at the University of Forestry.

The candidate meets all the mandatory conditions under Article 15 and Article 24 of the Academic Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADARB) and Article 60 of the ADARB, as well as the Regulations of Academic Development of the University of Forestry.

About the requirement for obtaining the PhD degree (Article 60(1)(1) of the ADARB)– In 2012, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova defended her thesis at the University of Forestry, which is evidenced by the diploma she obtained with No. UF – PhD – 2012 - 15.

Concerning the requirement for minimum academic experience (Article 60, paragraph 1, item 2 of the ADARB) - the total work experience of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova as a lecturer at the University of Forestry is over 19 years (following ref. No. HR 861/10.02.2025), whereby the candidate exceeds the legal requirement for minimum academic experience for holding the academic position of "professor".

Regarding the requirement for a published major monographic work (Article 60, Paragraph 1, Item 3 of the ADARB) – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova has presented 1 habilitation thesis:

- "Management of competencies for better professional performance - Part 1: Landscape architect". The work was reviewed by Prof. Dr. Nikolay Hristov Shterev and Prof. Dr. Ivan Petrov Paligorov. It was published in 2024 by Intel Entrans Publishing House Ltd. and has a volume of 151 pages. The monographic work submitted for review in the form of evidentiary material gives me reason to define it as a completed monographic study. After checking in NACID, the same was entered in the candidate's file under No. 70 in her publication activity, and the content does not overlap with the defended dissertation work for the ONS "Doctor" on the topic "Research on the model for managing landscape-architectural activity in the green systems of cities". In summary, all of this gives me grounds to declare that the habilitation thesis - monograph submitted for review meets the legal requirement of Article 24, paragraph 1, item 3 of the Law on Habilitation and is respected by me as such work.

In addition to the presented habilitation thesis, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova also has 1 published monograph, as part of her participation in the competition for AD "Professor", which is not presented as the main habilitation thesis.

- "Research on motivation and job satisfaction". The work was reviewed by Prof. Dr. Nikolay Hristov Shterev and Prof. Dr. Marina Petrova Mladenova. It was published in 2023 by Intel Entrans Publishing House Ltd. and is 180 pages long. The monographic work submitted for review in the form of evidentiary material gives me reason to define it as a completed monographic study. After checking in NACID, the same was entered in the candidate's file under No. 64 in her publication activity, and the content does not overlap with

the defended dissertation work for the PhD on the topic "Research on the management model of landscape-architectural activity in the green systems of cities".

Concerning the requirement to have submitted other original scientific research works - articles and reports published in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-known databases of scientific information (Article 60, Paragraph 1, Item 4 of the ADARB) – The candidate has submitted a total of 7 articles and reports to primary databases such as Scopus and WOS. A review of the publications revealed that she did not participate independently in these publications, in six she is the lead (first) author, and in one she is a co-author.

About the requirement to have submitted other original scientific research works - articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes (Article 60, paragraph 1, item 4 of the ADARB) – the candidate has submitted a total of 14 publications.

About the requirement to meet the relevant minimum national criteria and the requirements under Article 1a, paragraph 2; (Article 60, paragraph 1, item 5 of the ADARB) – According to the submitted documents, the candidate meets and even significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements for scientific and teaching activities for the position of "professor" in the specialty 3.7 "Administration and Management". The total number of points collected by the candidate according to individual indicators and criteria is 970.77 points.

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

The candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, in her attached evidentiary material / LIST of educational, administrative and expert activities / for the period 2017-2025 / has indicated 3,126.9 hours of classroom employment for the period. In addition, she has submitted a reference for developed curricula in the following disciplines:

- "Economics and Management of Landscape Architecture" for the LA specialty;
- "Management" for the LA specialty;
- "Organizational Behavior" for the AT and SU specialties;
- "Human Resources Management" for the AT, SU and RD specialties;
- "Economics and Environmental Management" for the EEOS specialty
- "Business Communications and Public Relations" for the AT, SU and RD specialties.

In addition to the educational employment, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova also works very actively with students, and during the period 18 graduates have successfully defended their degrees – 8 in the specialty "Landscape Architecture" and 10 in the specialty "Business Management". This is a result of the successful teaching and teaching activities of the candidate.

Under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova, doctoral student Paula Veselinova Malkovska-Kutseva (2021) successfully defended her dissertation. The two current doctoral studies supervised by the candidate are also impressive – those of Dimitar Plamenov Danchev and Yulian Sandev Andreev, the topics of which demonstrate the broad

scientific potential of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova. The consistent work with students and doctoral students, as well as the successful completion of their dissertations, give me reason to conclude that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova meets the requirements for employment as "Professor".

4.1 Participation in scientific, scientific-applied and educational projects

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova possesses the necessary research experience, which is evident from her participation in 4 national projects /leader in one of them/ and participation in one international scientific project (Self-assessment table of compliance with minimum national requirements).

4.2 Characterization of published scientific results

The results of the publication activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova can be characterized as scientific and as applied science. The main scientific results are the following:

- a research toolkit has been developed in poorly researched aspects of human resources management for the implementation of the principles of sustainable development of green infrastructure;
- approaches have been proposed for studying factors, relationships and dependencies influencing the behavior of stakeholders in managing green infrastructure with respect to various ecosystem functions and services;
- after a thorough analysis, a toolkit has been developed for constant monitoring in the assessment of acquired educational competencies, synchronized with the requirements of the labor market;
- the content of the educational competencies of graduates of the specialty "Landscape Architecture" has been analyzed, in the context of the "European Qualification Framework" and international standards for landscape architecture training.

In terms of scientific and applied results:

- the author's methodology for assessing the correspondence between the educational competencies and the work competencies of the landscape architect has been developed and tested, as well as a scientific toolkit for studying the opinion of stakeholders regarding the quality of the specialized work of landscape architects.
- a research toolkit for studying the motivation and degree of satisfaction of employees in higher education institutions has been proposed.

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

- Total - 36 citations.

According to the type of citations:

- In refereed journals and proceedings of scientific forums - 15 citations;
- In monographs - 7 citations;
- In non-refereed journals and proceedings of scientific forums - 14 citations;

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

The publications contain several scientific, scholarly, and applied contributions. I accept the statement of contributions as they are prepared by the candidate. I agree with the proposed categorisation, which divides them into scientific, scholarly, and applied contributions, which can be found in the candidate's publications.

5. Assessment of the applicant's personal candidate

The review of the independent publications shows the existence of a developed own scientific style and manner of presentation. This is also evident from the co-authored publications. The review of the submitted publications shows that out of all 23 – 4 are independent, with one co-author – 10; with two co-authors – 2; with three or more co-authors – 7. The two submitted monographs, the prepared textbook and teaching aid are independent and show the candidate's own contribution.

6. Critical remarks

I have no significant critical remarks towards Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova. As a recommendation, I would point out, based on her accumulated rich experience, that she should strengthen her project activities, which will enable her to expand her contacts and opportunities for a more complete presentation of her scientific and educational potential.

7. Personal impressions

I have close impressions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Ilieva Dragozova. Throughout the time we have known each other as colleagues, I can only express positive things related to our common work. She always manages to find an approach to achieve the desired results, and during the administrative duties we perform, she proves to be a good and responsive colleague who can be relied on. I know the field of her scientific interests closely, which, in addition to the review of the publications submitted for review for participation in the competition, confirms that she is an established scientist and teacher.

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" (by branches).

Prepared the opinion:

Assoc. Prof. Galin Iliev Milchev, PhD

Opinion delivered to: 24.04.2025