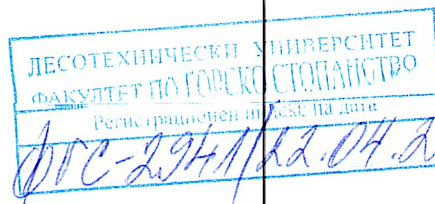


OPINION



On the materials submitted for participation in a competition for „**Professor**“ in the field 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (by branches), in the discipline "Forestry Management"

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 FOR-P-0125-158 for the needs of the Department of „Forestry and Management“ at the Faculty of Forestry, as a candidate, participate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Nikolov Kolev, Faculty of Forestry, Department of „Forestry and Management“

Prepared the opinion: Nikolay Ivanov Tsonkov, PhD, Professor in Professional field 3.7. Administration and Management / Administration and Management (Regional Business and Utilities) from the University of National and World Economy (UNWE)

1. Brief biographical data for the candidate

Only one candidate participated in the competition - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Nikolov Kolev. His curriculum vitae testifies to the gradual acquisition of professional experience and knowledge related to his academic development. In 1999, Assoc. Prof. Kolev graduated with a Master's degree with the specialty "Forestry Engineer". Subsequently, the candidate successively upgraded his professional training by obtaining a Master's degree in Public Finance from the University of National and World Economy (2003) and a Master's degree in Statistics, Econometrics and Actuarial Science from the Sofia University. In 2008, he successfully defended his dissertation thesis on "Economic contradictions and conflicts arising from the mechanism of forestry management after 1997" for obtaining the Ph.D. degree in Professional field 3.7 "Administration and Management", scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (by branches) at the University of Forestry - Sofia.

His professional career and academic development began at the Institute of Forestry at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences as a research associate IIIrd degree, where he worked from 2005 to 2010. Since 2010, Assoc. Prof. Kolev has been a full-time lecturer at the University of Forestry in the Department of Forestry Economics and Management, and since 2014, the candidate has held the position of Associate Professor.

The CV and the attached references on scientific and other activities show a high degree of training and professionalism. In this regard, it can be concluded that Associate Professor Konstantin Kolev has gradually upgraded his theoretical and practical knowledge and skills, which is evidenced by the gradual accumulation of educational and professional experience, and reaching high scientific and teaching standards, as evidenced by his academic development.

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. Konstantin Kolev 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 2008, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Kolev defended his thesis at the University of Forestry, which is evidenced by the diploma No 32802/12.01.2009.

Concerning the requirement for minimum academic experience (Article 60, paragraph 1, item 2 of the ADARB) - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kolev's total work experience as a lecturer at the Forestry University is over 15 years (ref. No FGS-1485#2/14.03.2025). The candidate exceeds the legal requirement for minimum academic experience for 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. Konstantin Kolev has submitted a habilitation thesis on "Competitiveness of forestry: descriptive analysis and impact factors". The thesis has been reviewed by two respected reviewers in the scientific circles - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolay Neykov and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galin Milchev, published in 2025 by Avangard-Prima Publishing House and has 146 pages. The monographic work submitted for review in the form of evidence allows me to conclude that the scientific work has all the necessary attributes of a complete monographic study.

The subject matter of the monographic work submitted in the competition for the post of academic position "Professor", the subject matter, the subject matter and the time to which it relates do not imply any overlap with the thesis defended for the PhD and the monograph for the academic post of the procedure for "Associate Professor". After checking the NACID for the candidate, Assoc. Prof. Kolev. All this gives me grounds to declare that the habilitation work submitted for review - monograph, meets the legal requirement of Article 24, paragraph 1, item 3 of the Law on Habilitation and is respected by me as such work.

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 10 articles and reports in primary databases such as Scopus and WOS. The review of the publications shows that Assoc. Prof. Kolev has contributed to 3 publications independently, in three others he is the first author, and in the rest he 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 33 publications. The submitted articles and reports represent publications in which results of high scientific value are found, which is, to a large extent, a personal contribution of the Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kolev.

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 documents submitted, the candidate has met and even significantly exceeded the minimum national requirements for scientific and teaching activity, for the academic position "Professor" in professional field 3.7 "Administration and Management". The total number of points scored by the candidate on the individual indicators and criteria is 1,167.49, which exceeds the required threshold of 550 points by a considerable margin.

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

Assoc. Kolev provides information on 3,232 hours of lecture time for the period 2017 - 2024 (see note No.. FGS-1549/12.03.2025). The candidate has developed and successfully teaches the courses - "Forestry Management"; "Forestry Economics and Management"; "International Economic and Monetary Relations"; "Innovation and Investment Management" (ref. note No FGS-1539/12.03.2025). During the period, Assoc. Prof. Kolev worked actively and successfully with the students, under his supervision, 12 graduates successfully defended their diploma theses, which shows his professionalism, teaching, and learning results (ref. note No FGS-1884/17.03.2025).

Under the guidance of Assoc. Prof. Kolev successfully defended a dissertation thesis of doctoral student Zlatina Todorova (ref. note No FGS-1548/12.03.2025).

The successful and consistent active work with students and PhD students, as evidenced by the attached competition documents, gives me grounds to conclude that the candidate meets the high requirements for the position of Professor at the University of Forestry.

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

General description of the presented materials

General description of the submitted materials

The candidate Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Kolev participated in the competition with:

- Monographs - 1 pc;
- Chapter of monograph - 1 pc;
- Textbooks - 2 pcs;
- Articles and reports published in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information - 10 pcs:

- Publications in Web of Science journals - 4 pieces;
- publications in Scopus journals - 5 pieces;
- publications in Scopus and Web of Science journals - 1 pc;
- Articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes - 33 pieces;
- Projects - 5 pcs.

The review and analysis of the publications submitted for peer review show that several scientific areas of the candidate's research activity can be identified: competitiveness of forestry, macroeconomic analyses aimed at assessing consumer behaviour, employment factors, and research on the interrelationship between innovation, investment, and economic development in Bulgaria. The candidate's peer-reviewed publications combine scientific and applied results.

From a review of the evidence on publication activity, it can be confidently argued that Assoc. Prof. Kolev demonstrates in-depth knowledge and skills, expressed in a wide and diverse methodological toolkit, which he uses in his research and the scientific and applied results presented in the publications.

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

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Kolev has extensive research experience, as evidenced by his participation in 3 national research projects and his leadership of two - one national and one university research projects (Table for self-assessment of compliance with minimum national requirements). The submitted record of supervision and participation in research projects shows the professionalism and experience of the candidate.

4.2 Characterization of published scientific results

The results of the publication activity of the Assoc. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Kolev is both scientific and applied. They are concentrated in several scientific areas and are characterized by high scientific value. The main scientific results are as follows:

- The nature, indicators, and factors of competitiveness of forestry are analyzed;
- The process of sustainable management of forest areas is analysed and evaluated using a sustainable management index.
- The effectiveness of the use of the forest resources owned to the gross value added produced in forestry is examined;
- Competiveness indices of forestry at the national and enterprise level are constructed.
- Macroeconomic analyses examining investment, the consumer market, employment, consumer credit, and savings, and the relationship between them.

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

- Total - 42 citations.

By type of citations:

- In refereed journals and proceedings of scientific forums - 11 citations;
- In textbooks, monographs, dissertations, etc. - 31 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

There is no data on the percentage of the applicant's participation in the collective publications submitted for review. The review of the individual publications proves the existence of his own scientific handwriting. It can also be detected in the other publications co-authored. The review of the presented publications shows that out of all 47, 14 are written independently, with one co-author, 24; with two co-authors, 6; with three or more co-authors, 3. We should take into account that the presented main monographic work, as well as one textbook, were prepared independently by Assoc. Prof. Kolev and the other textbook with co-author. This leads me to conclude that the personal contribution of the candidate is high.

6. Critical remarks

I have no significant critical remarks to Assoc. Prof. Kolev, but I would like to make a recommendation related to strengthening his activities in supervising PhD students and their successful defense. Thus, Assoc. Prof. Kolev will establish himself in the academic community as a respected researcher who is creating his own school. By supervising PhD students, the candidate also has the opportunity to transfer to PhD students the knowledge and skills acquired. The accumulated experience is proof in the successful output of PhD students who will leave a lasting scientific mark.

7. Personal impressions

I have no close direct impressions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Kolev and I have not worked with him. But from the review of the publications, I can confidently confirm that the candidate is an esteemed scholar and teacher who has already left a lasting mark in the Bulgarian and world scientific literature.

8. Conclusion

In connection with the above, I propose that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Konstantin Nikolov Kolev be elected as a "Professor" in the discipline "Forestry Management" in the Professional Field 3.7. Administration and Management, scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (by branches)".

Prepared the opinion:

/prof. Nikolay Tsonkov,

PhD/

Opinion delivered to: