

STANDPOINT

by

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimitar Alexandrov Panayotov

Professional direction 3.4. Social activities / 3.7 Administration and management - Social management, 05.02.20

New Bulgarian University, Department of Administration and Management

for

the scientific works, the overall research, teaching and administrative activity for participation in a competition and occupying the academic position of

, „Associate Professor“

in the professional direction "3.7 Administration and management (*Entrepreneurship, competitiveness, business development, artificial intelligence*), published in State Gazette, issue. No. 44/19.05.2023,

with candidate Assistant Professor Juliana Hadjichoneva, Ph.D.

The opinion is in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for its Application (PPZRASRB), the requirements of the Regulations for the Application of the Law and the Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff in the NBU (**Appendix No. 3 to the Ordinance on the development of the academic staff of the NBU**) and according to the **Rector's Order -Z-RK-285/13.07.2023, as a member of the Scientific Jury**. And it follows the structure of a model applied to competitions for filling academic positions.

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I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University

The candidate for associate professor Yuliana Hadjichoneva meets and exceeds the minimum requirements for scientific, teaching and research activities for holding the academic position of "associate professor", according to PPZRASRB by groups of indicators (A-E) and the corresponding number of points: indicator **D - 258.4** points out of the required 200, but also

according to **G – 80** points out of the required 50; **Ж – 125** points out of required 50; **З – 90** items out of required 70; **Л - 90** points out of the required 50. *Conclusion:* the performance according to criteria and indicators is fully in accordance with both the national requirements and those of the NBU.

II. Research (creative) activity and results

1. Evaluation of a monographic work, creative performances or other publications, including an evaluation of the author's scientific and scientific-applied contributions

Associate professor candidate Yuliana Hadjichoneva submits for review: **1 independent monograph, 24 articles, studies, collective monographs, and her numerous participations with reports at conferences, symposia, round tables and projects are indicated.** It is noteworthy that the results of her research are regularly presented, discussed and approved in a wide international scope, with applications for an interdisciplinary context and publication in numerous renowned journals, indexed and refereed editions.

The main habilitation thesis "**Entrepreneurship, innovation and artificial intelligence in Bulgaria: dynamics and management**" - structured in *three parts, conclusion, bibliography*, **282** pages, is built on the basis of theoretical-applied analysis, but through the prism of entrepreneurial dynamics, perceived as multifaceted concept and search for appropriate policies/business models in crisis conditions. The new emphasis is on the application of cognitive technologies adapted to Industry 5.0, which, on the foundation of economic and management sciences, create prerequisites for organizational efficiency and competitive advantage. In this direction, the three research tasks were set, analyzed and discussed in the following relationship: *theoretical base - Bulgarian specificity - toolkit for research and formulation of strategies*. In its follow-up, the contributing highlights also stand out:

1. Systematization of ideas from leading theories, reflecting directly or indirectly the key concepts of the study, showing the evolutionary thinking and the stages in the development of the problem. But it is precisely here that their *author's interpretation* in the conditions of the "triple crisis of the market economy" stands out. Demonstrates deep thinking and understanding of these ideas placed in a modern context, a new economic framework and a management perspective.

2. Analysis of the Bulgarian entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem, considered both on a *conceptual level* (macro-/micro-aspect, 4th paradigms, three-level process/phases of development, the influence of external factors and models, including cultural, social and material characteristics), as well and their corresponding *mapping*, with the application of a research toolkit (questionnaires, interviews, index assessments and derivation of good practices/examples). Backed up with *accurate graphics* and data from business statistics for innovative businesses using artificial intelligence.

3. Artificial intelligence in business is seen not only as an application of *technological leadership* in terms of process automation, but also with capabilities and skills for cognitive insights and engagement in *business modeling*, the so-called *canvas* - with defined 9 points tracked in three directions and explored through case studies, cross-content analysis and interviews (range of 40

questions). In this way, the need to link business expertise and leadership with an *integrated approach/scheme* in making management decisions is substantiated.

4. An original presentation approach, which, in addition to the established scientific style and the observed academic standards in the monograph, is also reinforced by the *inductive-deductive switches* in the text, when by asking questions the author looks for the answers, discusses and draws her conclusions.

And **some advice:** **A.** The wide range of topics of the researched relationship suggests possible limitations, but they should not be reduced to the listing of negative judgments/assertions or counter theses (p.20), which are not the subject of the research, but rather, they should follow the line of *justification and proof of the emphases/tasks/hypotheses set in the monograph and the corresponding difficulties in their implementation.* **B.** The eight significant authors and theories are rightly seen as an illustration of evolutionary thinking and a "bridge" between theoretical and applied knowledge, but presented in chronology and in the nature of a historical overview, they are perceived more as statics of anachronistic ideas and selected axioms - torn from the current reality, but also of the need for new critical reassessments. For example: How do they fit into the emerging "*geopolitics-economy*" dependency that is beginning to dominate the modern world? **C.** The digital transformation requires a new social contract, as rightly noted by Dr. Hadjichoneva, but at the same time it implies reflections on the possible negative consequences of the application of artificial intelligence.

2. Evaluation of the contributions in the other attached publications, made after the appointment of the academic position "assistant professor", including an evaluation of the requirement for peer review of the publications.

And in Yuliana Hadjichoneva's latest developments, the trend towards constant expansion of the theoretical-applied scope of the investigated phenomena, which are the subject and object of her expertise, continues. For example, in the study "**Towards sustainable competitiveness: Bulgaria in the European context**" In: Panayotov D. (comp. and ed.). (2020). The Bulgarian dream – the positive concept. Sofia: NBU. 101-114. ISBN 978-619-233-131-3., a *critical analysis of competitiveness is made* - as an economic essence, but also beyond it, tied to the concept of sustainable development, environmental protection, social cohesion and solidarity. With *five main levels of measurement*: natural capital, resource management, social capital, intellectual capital, management effectiveness. The development also discusses a new stage in the development of the competitive race, marked by the characteristics of "shared", cooperative and solidarity competitiveness.

„Innovations and new challenges for entrepreneurship education in universities“ (2022/23) - again discusses innovative approaches and methods that can be applied in entrepreneurship education. The results of conducted research are analyzed, part of the *GUESSS project*, in which NBU is the main partner of the University of Bern and the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) and the national coordinator for Bulgaria for conducting a *global university survey of entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial activities of students in us, along with 57 countries and 267,000 student respondents*. In a theoretical-applied plan - systematized justifications, the

practices in *three Bulgarian universities with innovations in entrepreneurship education* and specific innovative teaching methods applicable in other Bulgarian universities are presented.

The focus of the many articles, studies and reports presented by the candidate in our and foreign publications are studies with the following more significant relationships: *entrepreneurship - innovation - ecosystem; competitiveness - knowledge society - institutions; digital transformation - sustainability - smart city*. In this direction, publications from indicators stand out, with the set **qualitative parameters and conclusions:** 6-2, 7-4, 7-8, 8-1, 9-1, 9-3, 9-4, 9-5, 9-6, 10-1, 10-4.

In these listed publications, its natural growth, the accumulation of a certain capacity of knowledge and studies, expanding both its scientific and research profile and their respective applied significance in implementation mechanisms and expert solutions, are clearly visible. And carried out constantly in discussions at various scientific forums, seminars and new courses. Therefore, my assessment is **definitely positive**.

3. Citation from other authors

The candidate was cited a total of **8 times** by other authors, but the additional reference from the NBU Library found **65** references to her publications, of which **21** citations by other authors and a minimum of 4 citations in publications indexed by **Scopus or WoS**. The indicated editions of her publications *give reason* to assume that these quantitative characteristics show to a certain degree the recognition of Yuliana Hadjichoneva as a researcher in the scientific fields, studies and topics that she has determined to be leading in her expertise.

4. Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the obtained results in practice

The candidate has participated - according to *indicator 37*, in projects in three directions: *educational, joint publications and inclusion of students in various forms of education*, financed by the EU, Ministry of Education and Science and Research Institute. As long-term projects, the following domestic/national projects stand out: "*Innovative models for increasing the competitiveness of agricultural holdings in Bulgaria*", financed by the Scientific Research Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science, in which the NBU is a partner in the period 2017-2020 ., as well as international: GUESSS Edition 2021 "Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey" led by the University of Bern and the University of St. Gallen (*Switzerland*); under the NBU project with the BAS and the University of Lucerne, Switzerland "*Economy Film Days Festival Program*", 7th Edition, 3-5 June 2020 (2020), but also those for attracting external funding for the NBU under the Erasmus+ Program through a partnership with European universities in the field of European citizenship, entrepreneurship, innovation and business games as a teaching technique.

III. Learning and teaching activity

1. Auditory and non-auditory employment, work in the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU", provision of student practices and internships, work with students and doctoral students

The associate professor candidate teaches in master's and bachelor's programs *in three departments*. Leads **10 courses** in English and French - *indicator 41*. As can be seen in the inquiries made, the classroom and extra-auditory employment exceeds the specified standard for the position. Indicators of student scientific leadership, peer review and committee participation also outline a high degree of activity and presence in the department. In his teaching approaches, he includes *business cases, practical projects, teamwork, colloquiums, summer schools, joint research and publications with students*. (*Indicator 36*)

2. Work with Erasmus students

It is actively involved in the development of Erasmus activities, together with universities from *France, Poland, Chile*, etc. parties, by: signing a mobility contract; teaching and research with the Université Alpes in Grenoble, France; double degree project with the University of Savoie Mont Blanc in Chambéry, France. At the end of 2021, NBU presents to students interested in Erasmus mobility at the invitation of the University of Savoie Mont Blanc de Chambéry.

3. Student survey ratings

According to a reference from the Center for Quality and Assessment, the average grade from student surveys for the last ten semesters is 4.14 (out of 5.00). (Group H, Indicator 35, 1).

IV. Administrative and public activity

1. Participation in collective management bodies of the NBU

The candidate is a member of the Program Council of the Administration and Management Department and program coordinator of the Master's Program in Business Administration and other master's and bachelor's programs of the NBU (2015-2019). Member of the Council of the Francophone Center for Academic Excellence of the NBU.

2. Public activity

The candidate exhibits outstanding international activity as: national representative of the *Global University Project for the Study of Entrepreneurial Attitudes*; member of the International Association of French-Language Economists AIELF; member of the European Research Network ERECO-PGV (#European #Research #Community); research associate at the Center for Institutional Studies of the Bernardo O'Higgins University in Santiago de Chile, Chile; member of the Editorial Board of the international journal of French-language economists RIELF; member of the Scientific and Organizational Committee of the International French-English Conference "*Transforming Cities: Challenges, (Predictions,) Prospects*"; member of the Scientific and Organizational Committee of the International Scientific and Practical Conferences of the Administration and Management Department of the NBU, etc. Created and maintained since 2016 the Facebook group "*MBA - New Bulgarian University*" with up-to-date information in the field of management, economics and about significant events of the academic community in these areas.

V. Personal impressions of the candidate

I know Yuliana Hadjichoneva from our joint work in the department: defense of a doctoral dissertation in business administration, assistant, and later head. assistant to the department. Consistently develops its scientific profile in the field of *competitiveness, entrepreneurship and innovation*, building teams and looking for like-minded people from other departments - "Economics" and "Political Sciences", on international interdisciplinary projects, seminars, conferences, summer schools, joint publications and collective monographs. Demonstrates high *academic accuracy* as Editor-in-Chief of the Leadership, Society, Strategic Visions series (the English version). He is also a *reviewer* of the journal "Economic Thought" of the Institute for Economic Studies of the BAS.

VI. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate

When following the scientific, research and teaching activities of Yuliana Hadjichoneva, one can find a constant expansion of her range of research interests, the inclusion of ecosystem and artificial intelligence, looking for productivity and practical-applied contributions for organizations. *First recommendation:* focus her future research more strongly on the geo-economic/geo-political context and relevant management decisions. *Second recommendation:* the accumulated scientific expertise on the issue already allows her to offer a specialization to the MP "Business Administration", for example: "**Entrepreneurship, innovation and artificial intelligence: competitive strategies**". *Third recommendation:* to present an overview of all her appearances from 03/29/2022. (when the references are presented) until September 2023, so that the Scientific Jury can get an idea of the last 18 months of her activity in the department and the NBU.

Conclusion

Based on everything stated above, I believe that the presented by Ch. assistant professor, Dr. Yuliana Hadjichoneva, materials for the competition fully meet the requirements for obtaining the academic position of "associate professor" in the professional direction 3.7. *Administration and management (Entrepreneurship, competitiveness, business development, artificial intelligence)*. Her overall scientific and teaching performance is in accordance with the Procedure for long-term attestation of teachers at the NBU. This gives me the reason to give a positive assessment of the presented candidacy of Ch. assistant, Dr. Yuliana Hadjichoneva, for the academic position of "associate professor".

03/09/2023

Signature:

/Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimitar Panayotov/