

## REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Spartak Vasilev Keremidchiev - Economic Research Institute of the BAS, professional field 3.8. Economics on academic work submitted for participation in the contest for awarding the academic degree "Associate Professor", in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Entrepreneurship, competitiveness, business development, artificial intelligence), announced in the State Gazette, no. 44/19.05.2023, with candidate Chief assistant professor Dr. Juliana Bozhidarova Hadjitchoneva

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

According to the submitted reference by Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva, she has a total of 793.4 points with a minimum threshold for the academic position of associate professor in NBU of 570 points (see table below). In the first and third group of indicators Dr. Yul. Hadjitchoneva gained the minimum number of points, while in the remaining 7 groups she exceeded in most cases the minimum thresholds set. The first group of indicators refers to the presence of a dissertation and the third - to the presence of a monograph. It also meets the other requirement, namely that the sum of indicators 4 to 10 must be at least 200 points.

Group of indicators	Content	Minimum points required for Associate Professor at NBU	Fulfilment of requirements for "Associate Professor" by the candidate
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	-	-
C	Indicator 3	100	100
D	Sum of Indicators 4 -10	200	258,4
E	Sum of Indicators 11 -13	50	80
F	Sum of Indicators 14 - 21	-	-
G	Sum of Indicators from 22 to the end	50	125
H		70	90
I		50	90
	<b>Total</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>793,4</b>

In this way, Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva not only meets all the quantitative requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor at NBU, but also significantly exceeds the minimum thresholds.

### II. Research (creative) activity and results

1. Evaluation of the monograph, creative performances or other publications corresponding in volume and integrity to those of a monograph, including evaluation of the scientific and applied contributions of the author.

The monograph submitted for review: Hadjitchoneva Jul. (2022). Entrepreneurship, innovation and artificial intelligence in Bulgaria: dynamics and management. Sofia: Publishing complex - UNSS. 282. ISBN 978-619-232-597-8 is dedicated to two of the major and systemic gaps in

the development of the Bulgarian economy - insufficient innovation and entrepreneurship. It is spread over 264 p., of which the main part is 261 p., and the other parts are the table of contents, appendix, list of abbreviations, list of tables and figures, and indexes. The main text is structured into three chapters, along with a preface, introduction and conclusion.

The topic of the research is not new for the Bulgarian economy, on the contrary - in the literature you can find numerous publications on this issue. What is new and makes the publication relevant is that: a/ it connects entrepreneurship and innovation in a single whole; b/ puts the issue on the basis of the new industrial revolution; c/ assesses the changes and peculiarities resulting from the unique pandemic situation characteristic of recent years.

The structure of the development is built on a solid structure consisting of theory, development of methodological apparatus and its practical application. The main method of structuring is deductive. The study has a monographic character because it covers the main aspects both in depth and as a coverage of entrepreneurship and innovation.

The language of the presentation is professional, the terminology is specific, but correctly used. The sources of information contain both theoretical and practical research and rich statistical information, which is appropriately presented and used to argue the author's thesis.

The subject and the object of research are precisely brought out, which helps to construct the monograph.

The main points of contribution in the monograph, in my opinion, boil down to the following:

- The issue of entrepreneurship and innovation is considered in unity and within the framework of the new industrial revolution. The latest technologies that define the content of the digital revolution are expertly presented and how they lead to value creation in various examples.
- An original common business value model was created. Its content is a combination of different elements united in the cycle of input resources, processes and achieved results. This model has been tested and successfully implemented in three companies from fintech, retail and e-commerce. Through this verification, the functionality of the business value model has been proven.
- On the basis of up-to-date comparative information and by using two surveys, the current problems of the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem in the country have been identified and summarized.
- The conclusions and recommendations made are valuable for improving the management of the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem, as well as for the further development of entrepreneurship and innovation in the country's enterprises.

The analysed examples from practice can stimulate and catalyse the use of artificial intelligence in various business sectors and enterprises. In conclusion, it can be summarized that the presented monographic study is current, necessary and useful. It successfully combines theory with practice. Successful practices of enterprises using artificial intelligence in the country are presented. The achieved results of the research can be evaluated as contributions of a theoretical and practical nature.

My assessment of the presented monograph is positive, as it contains an original reading of modern business practices, knowledge and solutions for the future, which are useful for policy makers, entrepreneurs and managers.

2. Evaluation of the contributions of the other attached publications (creative performances), made after being awarded the academic position Chief Assistant

Professor. It shall also include an assessment of the requirement to review the publications.

Outside the monograph Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva has presented publications, which are chapters in 4 collective monographs, 30 articles and studies, of which 11 are stand alone, and the remaining 9 are co-authored. One study and three articles have been published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - Scopus and Web of Science. Many of the publications of Dr. Jul. Hadjitchoneva are in English and French and have been published by prestigious academic publishers such as L'Harmattan in Paris.

The problems of the scientific production of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva fully corresponds to the topic of the announced contest. It can be grouped into the following four directions: (1) entrepreneurship dynamics and development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, (2) competitiveness management at the national, regional and company level, (3) management and business development to expand business operations, increase of market presence and increasing the overall profitability of companies, (4) innovation and management of innovation processes, and application of cognitive technologies for artificial intelligence to improve productivity and overall business performance and business policies.

From this group of publications, the following contributing points can be deduced:

- The cultural, social and material characteristics of the Bulgarian entrepreneurial ecosystem have been established. A map of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Bulgaria has been created.
- The factors that influence the development of entrepreneurship in an urban business environment, as well as the trends in entrepreneurship for a long period of twenty years, are brought out.
- Regarding competitiveness, a new formulation of the category "competitiveness of agricultural holdings" is presented, the concept of "shared" competitiveness is developed, the trends in the dynamics of the business environment in Bulgaria and Brazil are identified, the factors of the institutional environment that influence on the competitiveness of enterprises in the country, proposals have been made for building sustainable competitive advantages based on digitization.
- On the issue of business development - a generalized scheme for the analysis and assessment of the implementation of innovative technologies and artificial intelligence in management was drawn up, and a model was developed for assessing the development of digitalization of companies, which was applied to the classification of companies.

The presented publications do not repeat those presented for obtaining the degree "Doctor" and for occupying the academic positions "chief assistant professor".

The achieved scientific results from Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva, is her personal work, the result of stand-alone and collective research. They have an original character and represent scientific novelty, confirm and enrich existing knowledge. They are obtained through the use of reasoned methodology and credible sources of information.

I have not received any plagiarism alerts during the preparation of this opinion.

### 3. Citation by other authors.

The total number of citations from other authors of publications of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva is 21, with three citations in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned

databases of scientific information and 5 citations in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes.

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

Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva participated in the implementation of a scientific research project "Innovation models for increasing the competitiveness of agricultural farms in Bulgaria", funded by the Scientific Research Fund. She is the national representative of the Global University Project for the Study of Entrepreneurial Attitudes and Entrepreneurial Activities of GUESSS Students of the University of Bern and the University of Saint Gallen, Switzerland, as well as of other project teams to improve learning and teaching.

From the first project, she has one joint publication on farm competitiveness in a WoS-indexed journal as well as a joint monograph. The second project concerns the collection of information on students' entrepreneurial activity. This gives me reason to evaluate Dr. Juliana Hadjiçoneva's project activity positively.

### **III. Teaching and Learning Activities**

1. Auditorium and non-auditorium employment, work in the electronic learning module "MOODLE - NBU", providing student internships and placements, work with students and postgraduate students.

Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva teaches in master's and bachelor's programs of the Department of Administration and Management, Department of Economics and Department of Political Science of the NBU - MP "Business Administration" (MBA), MP "Marketing and Management", MP "Human Resource Management (in English)", MP "Tourism Management", MP "Management for Organizational Excellence", "Business, Technology and Innovation Management (in English)", BP "Business Management and Entrepreneurship", BP "Tourism", BP "International Policy (in French)".

She teaches (multi and inter) disciplinary courses in the field of management sciences, economic sciences and public management - Competitiveness and business development; Strategic management and analysis tools; Models of organizational excellence; Project management; Public policies in tourism; Economic policies of sustainability; Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Entrepreneurship and business; Competitiveness and innovation; Business environment and innovation; Management of innovation processes; Project and program management; Public finance and budget policy; Society, economy and business, etc. Predominantly, the courses are in a regular form of education, with a part also in a distance form of education.

The total classroom occupancy for the Academic year 2021/2022 of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva is 242 hours, and the total extracurricular employment for the same period is 130 hours. The number of students taught by her for the academic year 2021/2022 is 622. Over the years, she has led more than 700 teaching hours per academic year, e.g., total for the Academic year 2016/2017 - 705.5 study hours, of which 460.5 classroom hours and 245 extra-auditory hours.

In the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU" Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva has provided author's materials on the course topics: MVAM187 Competitiveness and Business Development and VAVV500 Competitiveness and Innovations (part of competitiveness).

Regarding the work with students Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva participated in a joint collective monograph with students from BP "Business Management and Entrepreneurship" and MP

"Business Administration", one joint article with a student from BP "Business Management and Entrepreneurship" and one joint participation with 8 students in a field study for an educational project "Urban policies, business environment and local democracy: study of a medium-sized Bulgarian city (Lom)".

In this part, it should be noted the scientific guidance of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva to 13 graduates who successfully defended their diplomas in direction 3.7 "Administration and management" in 2016-2021, as well as her participation in more than 10 commissions for state exams and the preparation of more than 40 reviews of student works.

## 2. Work with Erasmus students.

Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva participated in the training of MUNM100 Economic Policy of Sustainability I in English for Erasmus students.

Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva supports the development of Erasmus, the NBU's activities by organizing the signing of a contract for the mobility of students and teachers in the thematic area "Business Administration" and launching joint initiatives for project and research activities with the University of the Alps in Grenoble, France. He is also working on a double degree project with the University of Savoie Mont Blanc in Chambéry, France.

At the end of 2021, he presents NBU to students interested in Erasmus mobility from Savoie Mont Blanc University in Chambéry, and in mid-2021 he gives a lecture on the topic "Decision making and artificial intelligence in multicultural contexts" at the International Teaching Week through business games, organized under the European project for university cooperation UNITA - Staff Week International Cooperation and Projects under the Erasmus+ program.

## 3. Student survey ratings.

The average rating from the partial surveys conducted for student satisfaction with Dr. Hadjitchoneva's teaching activity is excellent. The overall student rating for Dr. Hadjitchoneva as a teacher for the academic year 2021/2022 is excellent - between 5.17 and 6.00 (out of 6.00) according to the references in the eTeacher system.

According to a report presented by the Center for Quality and Evaluation of the NBU, the average rating from student surveys for the last ten semesters is 4.14 out of 5.00, which represents 83% satisfaction with the teaching activity of the head. Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva. This is a very high rating that should be welcomed.

## **IV. Administrative and public activities**

### 1. Participation in collective management bodies of the NBU.

Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva actively participates in collective management bodies of the NBU. She is a member of the Council of the Francophone Center for Academic Excellence of NBU. Since 2020, she has been a member of the Program Board of the Political Science Department of the NBU. He is also 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 in the period 2015-2019.

## 2. Public activity.

Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva is the main driver in the application and preparation of the 63<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of Economists in French on the topic: "Facts and theories about instability in the economy and management", which will be held from May 27 to 29, 2024 in the NBU. This is an extremely prestigious event in the calendar of the global Francophone economic community, and hosting this forum is a high honour not only for the NBU, but also for our country.

Also, in 2011-2018, she was the vice-president and co-founder of a non-governmental organization in the field of public administration, democracy, civic participation and corporate social responsibility.

## V. Personal impressions of the candidate

I have personal impressions of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva on the occasion of reviewing her monograph: Hadjitchoneva Yu. (2022). Entrepreneurship, innovation and artificial intelligence in Bulgaria: dynamics and management. Sofia: Publishing complex - UNSS. 282. ISBN 978-619-232-597-8., my participation in the publication: Staykova E., Hadjitchoneva Yu. (comp. and ed.). (2021). Sustainable urban development - lessons for Sofia. Sofia: NBU Publishing House, as well as in connection with her publications in the Economic Thought journal. I also know her from participation in scientific conferences in Bulgaria and Morocco and as one of the initiators and organizers of the Summer School "Policies and Innovations for Cities" of the NBU.

My personal impressions of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva are that she is a purposeful researcher who seeks the new, strives to creatively apply the highest achievements in science and education. She has excellent communication skills, making good use of her high-level proficiency of French and English, and is organized and business-like in her interactions with colleagues and students. He knows how to propose interesting ideas and initiatives and skilfully propose them for practical application.

## VI. Opinions, recommendations and comments on the activities and achievements of the candidate

My acquaintance with the work of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva opens up opportunities for making several recommendations in her future scientific and teaching activities:

- In terms of scientific issues, it would be useful to continue to deal with the economic dimensions of the digitalization of business and society. One of the major themes and hurdles for the development of digitalization is cybersecurity. It is worth making this topic the focus of its research as well as in the renewal of training programmes.
- The training of PhD students would also be a favourable direction for spreading her ideas and creating like-minded individuals.

## Conclusion

The presented by Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva's scientific production and activity in terms of volume, structure, quality of scientific results and contributions present her as an established and outstanding researcher in the field of entrepreneurship, competitiveness, business development and artificial intelligence.

The candidate's teaching, publication and research work and its results fully meet and exceed

the quantitative and qualitative requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor at NBU.

This gives me full grounds to support the choice of Dr. Juliana Hadjitchoneva "FOR" holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Entrepreneurship, Competitiveness, Business Development, Artificial Intelligence) at NBU.

31.8.2023

Signature: