

## OPINION

by **Assoc. Prof. Yuliana Galabinova, PhD**, New Bulgarian University,

3.7 Administration and management (Cohesion Policy and Regional Development)

Regarding the scientific works submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods in Management), announced in the State Gazette, issue 95, dated 8 November, 2024 with **candidate Chief Assistant Professor Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD**

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

For participation in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, has submitted self-assessment and evidence that fully align with the provisions of the national legislation and the normative documents of NBU.

I believe that Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD fulfills the minimum eligibility requirements for the scientific and teaching activity in area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.7 Administration and Management, as stipulated in the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (Art. 2b), the Regulation on the Implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (Article 1a, subparagraph 1), as well as the requirements of NBU, as stipulated in the Regulation on the Development of Academic staff at NBU, which candidates for the position of Associate Professor are required to meet.

Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva was awarded a doctoral degree in 2018 at New Bulgarian University, in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management, for her dissertation entitled “Adapting Altman’s Z-Score model for assessment of the risk of company insolvency in Bulgarian context”. Since 2019, after successfully completing a competition, she has held the academic position of Chief Assistant Professor in the Administration and Management Department at NBU.

The monographic work which Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva has submitted for the competition for the position of Associate Professor entitled „Health Status Indices of the Population in Bulgaria: Can Social Progress Preserve More Lives than Medicine?” (ISBN 978-619-233-320-1) has been reviewed by Assoc. Prof. Ivan Kostov, PhD, and Prof. Hristo Hinkov, PhD, with Prof. Kristiyan Hadzhiev, PhD, serving as the science editor, was published in 2024 by NBU.

The summary report submitted by Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, for compliance with the national requirements indicates that the total compulsory score for the position of Associate Professor has been fulfilled. For each indicator group, Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva, has provided sufficient evidence to confirm the following scores:

- Indicator group A “Dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree of Doctor” – 50 points (required: 50 points);
- Indicator group C “Habilitation work – monograph” – 100 points (required: 100 points);
- Indicator group D “Additional scientific publications” – 246.13 points (required: 200 points);
- Indicator group E “Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific peer review and in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review” – 120 points (required: 50 points).
- Indicator Group G – 70 points (required: 50 points);
- Indicator Group H– 100 points (required: 70 points);
- Indicator Group I – 80 points (required: 50 points).

## II. Research (creative) activity and results

### 1. *Evaluation of the monographic work, creative accomplishments, or other publications equivalent in scope and comprehensiveness to a monographic work, including evaluation of the scientific and applied contributions of the author*

My evaluation of the scientific and applied contributions of the author in the submitted monograph „Health Status Indices of the Population in Bulgaria: Can Social Progress Preserve More Lives than Medicine?“ is positive. I believe that the study has not only theoretical, but also practical and applied orientation.

The key contributions of the author can be summarized as follows:

- The author has developed the first comprehensive study of the health status of the Bulgarian population and the factors that condition it. She has ascertained that the health status in this country basically does not depend on clinical care, but rather is far more dependent on the socio-economic environment, personal health behavior and the physical environment.
- The author has devised the first health status index of the Bulgarian population based on various statistical methods. The contribution of the applied methodology lies in the fact that it derives its results and conclusions based on the statistically accessible indicators and objectively established relationships between them.
- The author has analyzed the current state of the health status in Bulgaria at district level and suggested specific recommendations for public policies to be adopted across several groups of districts. Additionally, she has formulated a number of recommendations for implementing healthcare policies on a national and district level.
- The author has put forward reasoned proposals for the collection of additional statistical data necessary for even more reliable assessment of the health status of the Bulgarian population to be obtained.

### 2. *Evaluation of contributions in the other attached publications (creative accomplishments) made after the appointment to the academic position of “Chief Assistant Professor” or “Associate Professor (for the Professorship candidates). It shall also include evaluation of the peer-review requirement.*

In her self-appraisal and evidentiary materials, Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, has submitted publications after her appointment to the position of Chief Assistant Professor, the total of which amounts to 246.13 points for Indicator group D, whereas the required total is 200 points, as follows:

- ✓ Articles and reports in non-refereed publications with scientific peer review or editing of scientific volumes: 26 items;

- ✓ Studies published in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in globally recognized databases of scientific information: 2 items;
- ✓ Studies in non-refereed publications with scientific peer review: 2 items.

These publications do not overlap with the ones submitted by the applicant for obtaining her PhD degree and for holding the academic position of Chief Assistant Professor. I am not aware of any proof of plagiarism in the scientific work of the candidate to have been legally established.

The publications Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva submitted for the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor are aligned with the professional field of the announced competition 3.7 Administration and Management, with emphasis on quantitative methods in management.

The review of the scientific output gives me grounds to draw a few more general evaluative conclusions:

- The publications presented show consistency in the scientific development of the candidate in the competition and her ability to delve deeper into the subject of research;
- The issues analyzed by the author are up-to-date and debatable, thus providing opportunities to argue the case;
- Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva's publications are based on representative literature, and formulate and prove the author's theses;
- In addition to scientific and theoretical contributions, the publications of the candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor also feature significant practical and applied results.

Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva has presented her research outcomes at a number of national and international conferences, and scientific and practical forums: 7 national and 11 international over the last 5 years.

### 3. Citations by other authors

Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva's publications submitted for the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor have been cited in the works of other researchers. I consider the citations of her scientific works as proof of the high evaluation her studies receive from other researchers of the same issues in the field of application of quantitative methods in management. The total number of citations amounts to 19, with one article being cited in scholarly journals refereed and indexed in internationally recognized databases of scholarly information or in monographs and collective volumes; 3 articles are cited in monographs or collective volumes with scholarly peer review, and 15 citations are in non-refereed journals with scholarly peer review.

## III. Educational and teaching activity

### 1. Teaching and extracurricular workload, engagement in "MOODLE – NBU" e-learning module, ensuring student internships and placements, work with students and doctoral candidates

According to the evidence provided by Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, her teaching and extracurricular workload includes courses both in the Bachelor's degree and the Master's degree programs, full-time as well as distance learning modes. The courses she teaches are in the field of corporate risk management, quantitative methods in management, economic foundations of management, fundamentals of microeconomics, and modern economics. She is also actively involved in teaching in the joint program between NBU and York University: *Business Statistics* (Bachelor's degree) and *Econometrics for Finance* (Master's degree).

All courses taught by Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva are provided with teaching content in accordance with NBU's Standard for e-learning. It includes study texts, presentations, case studies, databases, exercises, links to online resources, which are updated annually based on development of the academic discipline, student feedback and participation, as well as departmental publications and projects.

In the last five years, the applicant has supervised the work of 20 graduands who successfully defended their degree theses, reviewed 26 degree theses, and participated in state examination boards and/or theses defenses for 101 students.

Dr. Tsvetanova is actively involved in creating opportunities for student internships, both by organizing practical trainings for students that are not part of the curriculum, and in her administrative capacity at NBU, by organizing events like the Sofia Business School and the Management Academy, involving students in NBU projects, etc. She has also been instrumental in organizing forums aimed at the practical training of NBU students, such as the Vienna Economic Forum and All About Economy Film Days.

## *2. Student feedback ratings*

The candidate's teaching performance has been rated Excellent 4.56, the maximum rating being 5.00, which according to data provided by the Center for quality assurance and assessment constitutes an improvement compared to the data submitted during the procedure for Chief Assistant Professor.

## **IV. Administrative and public service**

### *1. Participation in collective governing bodies at NBU*

From 2017 until now Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva has held the following positions in the collective governing bodies at NBU:

- Until June, 2021, she was program consultant for Business Management and Entrepreneurship Bachelor's degree program;
- From July 2021 until September 2024, she was director of the School for Professional and Continuing Education at NBU;
- Since 1 July 2024, she has served as Dean of the School of General Studies (SGS) at NBU and chair of the Faculty Council of SGS.

She has served as member of the Program Council and is currently serving as Department Council member of the Administration and Management Department, as well as member of the Rector's Council and the Academic Council of NBU.

### *2. Public service*

Throughout her career development, the candidate has served as a macroeconomic analyst (2014) and consultant at ASTOR BG—a company for management consulting (2015-2017). Dr. Tsvetanova's membership in the Center for Risk Analysis and Management at NBU (2013-2019) enabled her to further broaden her experience in applying quantitative methods in management both at company level and at the sector and state level. As part of her project activity, aimed at applying quantitative methods in agribusiness management, she is currently a member of EGU—European Geoscience Union (2024).

## **V. Personal impressions of the candidate**

My personal impressions of the scientific research, teaching activities and public service of Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, are entirely positive. She is a thorough researcher, knowledgeable lecturer, actively connected to professional practice.

## **VI. Opinions, recommendations, and comments on the candidate's activities and accomplishments**

I would like to make the following recommendations for the future work of Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva:

1. To work actively and purposefully on the implementation of the goals set in her research program, focusing on:
  - the development of a model for evaluation of the credibility of surveys on electoral attitudes conducted by polling agencies, and to continue to systematically publish the analyses on this topic.
  - the extension of her research on health status evaluation, for instance producing annual reports, broadening the scope of the variables included, working with different institutions for the purpose of enrichment of the statistical information collected at national and district level in line with good practices in other countries;
  - the development of a platform where the results of the health status index and the evaluation of the reliability of surveys will be published in a timely manner.
  
2. To continue to successfully combine her academic duties with those of an expert on innovation in digital agriculture by enhancing collaboration with colleagues from universities and research institutes from different countries, launching and participating in new projects supported by national and international entities.

## **Conclusion**

The application of Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Tsvetanova-Georgieva fully complies with the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulation on the Implementation thereof, as well as the Regulation on the Development of Academic Staff at NBU. Dr. Tsvetanova-Georgieva undoubtedly excels as a lecturer and researcher, whose contribution as an author has been repeatedly proven.

The arguments presented above provide sufficient grounds for me to give a positive evaluation of the candidate's scientific, research, academic, and administrative activities. It is therefore my firm conviction that Chief Assistant Professor Ekaterina Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, be selected for the academic position of Associate Professor in scientific field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods in Management).

Dated 10 February, 2025

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