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Subject: Competition for an **associate professor** in a **professional field 3.7. Administration and management, announced in SG No. 8 / 28.01.2022, with candidate Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Mariya Aleksandrova Ivanova**

Grounds for presenting the opinion: participation in the composition of the Scientific Jury of the competition according to Order № 3-PK-151 / 01.03.2022 of the Rector of NBU and decision of the first meeting of the Scientific Jury of 11.04.2022.

The opinion has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (RASRB), the Regulations for its implementation (PPZRASRB) and the Ordinance on the Development of Academic Staff at NBU.

Structurally, the opinion consists of VI parts and a conclusion in accordance with the model for the preparation of an opinion for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" at NBU.

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

One candidate participates in the announced competition - Chief Assistant. Dr. Maria Alexandrova Ivanova. The submitted documentation for the competition meets the requirements of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (art. 2b) and the Regulations for its implementation (art. 1a, para 1), as well as the Ordinance for development of the academic staff in NBU 2, Edition 21 / 29.11.2021 in force from 23.12.2021).

The available self-assessment report shows that it meets the necessary minimum requirements for scientific, teaching and research activities to hold the academic position of "**Associate Professor**". The total number of points of the candidate (**1652.5 points**) on the evaluation indicators is significantly higher than the required minimum (**570 points**) in accordance with the PPZRASRB, as follows:

Part I: Minimum requirements to the scientific, teaching and/or artistic and creative activity of the candidates for the academic positions in professional fields, compliant with PPZRASRB (**groups of indicators A-E**) and the corresponding number of points above the required minimum:

Group D (collected 100 points from the required minimum number of 50 points)

Group E (collected 325 points from 0 points - not required for associate professor)

Group G (collected 150 points from the required minimum number of 50 points)

Group H (collected 120 points from the required minimum number of 70 points)

Group I (collected 90 points from the required minimum number of 50 points)

Part II: Fulfillment of criteria and indicators for long-term certification for announcing a competition for a higher academic position, according to the current ordinance of the NBU - academic work, organizational and social work (**groups of indicators G-I): G 150 of 50 points, H 120 of 70 points And I 90 of 50 points.**

II. Research (creative) activity and results

Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Mariya Ivanova participates in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and management in the NBU with:

- one monograph (habilitation thesis);
- a book published on the basis of a defended dissertation;
- 5 studies, one of which was published in a referenced and indexed scientific journal;
- 48 articles and reports, of which 34 are independent publications; and 2 articles have been published in refereed and indexed editions.
- 7 participations in collective monographs (developed individual chapters and topics).

Two articles and one study by Chief Assistant Dr. M. Ivanova are published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information.

1. Evaluation of the monographic work, creative performances or other publications, corresponding in volume and integrity of the monographic work, including evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the author.

The monographic work is developed in nine topics, systematized in three chapters in a volume of 111 pages and used literature. The work has a scientific and educational focus.

Here, the employer brand is mainly considered in order to effectively "search" and find the best job candidates. Along with the classical understanding of the employer brand, many modern factors are integrated - globalization, competitiveness, aging, free movement of people, the digital age, attitudes and values of new generations and more. In fact, the research thesis finds answers to questions related to its adequate management, taking into account the new realities, which is the main research goal.

Using several research approaches, the candidate holistically achieves the issues related to the employer brand - the evolutionary development of the concept and models for it; identifying the multi-layered connectivity of people from the company and stakeholders outside it; the existing company culture, the value system and their influence on its public image.

The diverse interpretation and understanding of the nature of the employer brand influences the attitudes of the participants in the processes from different organizational levels and is essential for different organizations - large, medium or small; in different countries with different living standards, a phenomenon that is also the subject of research.

As mentioned, the monograph is structured in three chapters, following logically the course of the presentation of reflections and formulated goals and objectives and their achievement. In my opinion, the main emphasis is relevant on the relationship between the management of the employer brand and the management of people in the company.

In the context of the above, a comprehensive study should take into account the views of employers, employees and jobseekers on the existing employer brand and its adequate management. The author adequately applies a rational approach (structured interviews), focusing on experts from human resources departments, referring to their high expertise and

their constant contact, especially with candidates for jobs in relevant organizations.

The monographic work has two significant scientific and applied contributions. One refers to the objective analysis of the labor market in the country, where there are significant differences in the understanding of the nature of the employer brand in different business entities - large, with foreign management; large and medium with Bulgarian management and small, where the remuneration of the staff is considered to be the main influencing the motivation and commitment. The second contribution is related to the definition and introduction of the term "generalized employer brand". The meaning is to define a set of desired characteristics specific to some organizations and these characteristics are associated with any other company belonging to the relevant category. The use of this phenomenon has a stronger effect among not very highly educated candidates for work with average emotional intelligence.

The development is relevant because the issue of the employer brand is woven into the complex set of human resources management activities and reveals adequate opportunities to influence the motivation and commitment of existing staff, reduce turnover, attract and retain suitable employees, and why not the talents.

2. Evaluation of the contributions in the other attached publications (creative performances) made after the appointment of the academic position "Chief Assistant" or the academic position "Associate Professor" (for candidates for professor). It also includes an assessment of the peer review requirement.

The presented publications outside the habilitation work can be divided into several groups.

- **Management of the employer brand (group D, indicator 7 - № 6, № 7, № 11, № 27)**
In this group of publications the emphasis is on the management of the employer brand. The systematized restrictions arising from the modern factors influencing the employer brand can be defined as contributions; comparative analysis of good practices in the use of the employer brand to attract talent; the identified stages in the process of creating an employer brand and the proposed indicators for measuring investment in an employer brand.
- **Human resource Management.** Publications in this group (**group D, indicator 7** - № 1, № 3, № 5, № 9, №12, 15, № 16, № 17, №25, № 28, № 36, № 45; **group D, indicator 10** - № 1) are dedicated to current and significant issues in the field of human capital development; human resources management in the organization, building motivation systems, systems for selection and certification of human resources; management of knowledge and information in the process of human resources training, systematization of the stages in the implementation of the competence model in human resources management. Emphasis in the research work in this field, the candidate has placed on the specifics of talent management in the organization. In her publications (group D, indicator 7 -№13, № 14) she has substantiated the connection between a strong organizational culture and the attraction and retention of talents in the organization; identified the specifics of developing a strategy for talent management in the organization.
- **Digitalization and leadership (group D, indicator 7 -№ 2, № 18, № 20, № 21, № 26, № 30, № 32; group D, indicator 10 - № 6, № 7).** In this group of publications, the

main contributions are related to assessing the readiness of the organization for **digital transformation** and the role of the leader in this process; the proposed model of leadership competencies; the proposed methods for effective training of managers; the application of transformational learning in people with experience in achieving organizational leadership; the use of portfolio as a tool for managerial development; identified differences in leadership styles by gender.

- **Corporate social responsibility.** In many of its publications (**group D, indicator 6** - № 1, **group D, indicator 7** - № 8 № 10, № 19, № 24, № 35, Group D, indicator 9 - № 1, № 2, № 3, № 4, № 5) Dr. Mariya Ivanova examines current issues of modern organizations related to their social responsiveness, responsibilities and obligations. Some results of these studies can be assessed as contributions of theoretical and practical nature: the retrospective analysis of the development of the quadruple spiral concept, the definition and specific characteristics of the quadruple spiral approach and the presented possibilities for using the transfer acceleration approach the innovative solutions in the field of social care in the regional chains in Bulgaria; guidelines for the implementation of EU policies and practices on ethnic tolerance in job selection; the identified guidelines for building a sustainable workplace with shared tolerance for the differences and diversity of people; effective methods of training men and women aged 65, the distinct advantages and disadvantages of communicating between men and women through virtual social networks; opportunities for socio-economic integration of Roma.

Conclusion: All publications are relevant and relate to the topic of the announced competition - 3.7. Administration and Management. In the presented scientific production there are own scientific and scientific-applied contributions, evaluated by the practice and in the expert activity of the candidate. The presented scientific production does not repeat that for the acquisition of ONS "Doctor" and the academic position "Chief Assistant".

3. Citation from other authors

The required number of citations are certified by a reference from the Book Center, NBU Library. Among the verified sources are 20 references to publications by Dr. Maria Ivanova, of which 14 are self-citations. One of her publications is cited in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases (Group E, indicator 11 № 1). The candidate meets the requirements.

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

The candidate Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Maria Ivanova reports participation in 5 national projects (Group E, indicator 16) and 3 international projects (Group E, indicator 17). He is the leader of one of the international projects (group E, indicator 17 - № 6).

She participated in the preparation of the Memorandum of Development (the positive concept). The memorandum was prepared on the basis of academic events, forums, seminars and conferences held in 2018/2019 and dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the first BA / MBA programs in Bulgaria.

My general assessment of the research activity of Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova is positive.

III. Teaching and learning activities

The candidate Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Maria Ivanova in the competition is a full-time lecturer at NBU. Based on the reference for long-term attestation (for the period 2013/14/2019/2020) it can be seen that Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova repeatedly fulfills the standards for classroom and extracurricular employment. As a senior assistant in the Department of Administration and Management, Dr. Maria Ivanova has developed and improved the content of courses (indicator 31 of the self-assessment) mainly in two master's programs:

- Master's program Management and development of human resources in Bulgarian and English in full-time and distance learning;
- Master's program in Management for organizational excellence in full-time and distance learning;
- Master's program Business Administration DO;
- Bachelor's program Business and Entrepreneurship Management;
- Bachelor's program Applied foreign languages for administration and management (in English and a second foreign language).

For the purposes of the training she has published in textbook and electronic form independently one textbook and two textbooks (resource book). In co-authorship, Dr. Maria Ivanova has published three textbooks and one manual (group E indicator 20, 21). In Moodle the platform of NBU, Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova has published her own teaching materials for basic courses "Human Capital and Talent Management"; Labor relations management (labor valuation and remuneration); "Business Context and Human Resource Management". He teaches in many foreign language courses (reference in the Electronic Catalog of Curricula of NBU).

For the analyzed period Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova has been the research supervisor of 23 students, has prepared 53 reviews and participated in 14 examination commissions. (**Group 3, indicator 38**).

Her teaching activity is evaluated positively by the students. For the last 5 years the average assessment of the students for the satisfaction with the courses of the chief assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova is 4.35 out of a maximum of 5 (according to a Report from the Center for Quality and Evaluation and a Report from an e-lecturer: Monitoring - surveyed students).

In his teaching activity, Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova actively participates in providing practical training for students (**Group H, Indicator 39** № 1, № 2, № 3, № 4, № 5) and other creative events - "Training companies" (**Group H, Indicator 40** - № 2, № 3, № 4, № 5, № 6). Together with the students she conducts a number of researches, the results of which she presents at national and international conferences (**Group H, Indicator 37** - № 1, № 2, № 3).

Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova has given public lectures to international students Rovaniemi, Finland (2017); before the academic community of NBU (2021) she was a moderator and methodologist); she was a lecturer on ERASMUS + TEACHING ACTIVITIES (2018, 2019); She participated as a moderator and methodologist in the WP2 conference "Survey of the main renewable energy sources in RES in the cross-border region Constanta-Dobrich", Kranevo, under the project Green Energy Cluster "Constanta - Dobrich" 47313 / 26-06.2014, MIS ETC 328 2014/15 Autumn.

To improve and expand his teaching skills and knowledge, Chief Assistant Dr. Maria Ivanova is actively involved in the training programs of the teaching and administrative staff of NBU (**Group I, indicator 42**; Information from the Center for Career Development and Training Resources).

All this gives grounds to evaluate Chief Assistant. Dr. Mariya Ivanova as a very good lecturer and highly motivated lecturer. Her teaching and teaching activities are related to the subject of the competition, and the accumulated teaching experience is completely satisfactory for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional field 3.7. Administration and Management.

IV. Administrative and public activities

Administratively, the candidate is engaged as a Program Consultant of the master's program "Management and Development of Human Resources - in Bulgarian and English RO and DO and MP Management for Organizational Excellence - RO and DO; tobacco to BF. Actively participates in candidate-student campaigns and commissions for admission of candidate-students. Participates in the regular meetings of departmental / program councils, observes the reception time as a lecturer and conducts his / her classes regularly. Actively participates in organizing and conducting scientific events, workshops, scientific seminars, training seminars, practical and applied seminars, student discussion forums, public lectures at NBU.

Chief Assistant Dr. Mariya Ivanova has been a member of a number of national and international organizations - the European Society for Research on Adult Education (ESREA) since 2009; ESREA Network on Gender and Adult Learning; ESREA Network on Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development; European Distance and E-learning Network (EDEN) from 2006 to the present; Bulgarian Association for People Management and Development (BFSA); Bulgarian Association for Development of Society, Culture and Education (BAROCCO) since 2010; Balkan Association for Regional Initiatives (B.A.R.I.) since 2012; Early Childhood Development Association since 2011.

With the administrative and public activity ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Maria Ivanova contributes to the development and improvement of the educational process in various master's and bachelor's programs at NBU.

V. Personal impressions of the candidate (if any)

My personal impressions of Maria Ivanova are that she is responsible, innovative, precise and proactive in her work. In his teaching activity he widely uses interactive teaching aids, and in his research - the system-integrated approach. He enjoys authority among his colleagues and a good reputation among students, maintains good contacts with business experts.

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

The scientific publications of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Maria Ivanova are developed on a fundamental theoretical and empirical basis. The practical recommendations contained in them are well-argued. I have no specific critical remarks on the content of the candidate's scientific papers.

The following recommendations can be addressed to her future research and teaching activities:

- continue to combine her research and teaching work with that of an expert and consultant;
- to continue publishing textbooks on the subjects she teaches;

Conclusion

The candidate in the competition Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Mariya Ivanova meets the requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", according to ZRASBRB, the regulations for its implementation (PPZRASRB) and the Ordinance on the development of academic staff at NBU.

I propose to the members of the Scientific Jury the candidate for the competition Ch. Assistant Professor Maria Alexandrova Ivanova, PhD, to be elected to hold the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the professional field 3.7 Administration and Management at NBU.

Date 4.05.2022

Signature