

OPINION

By: Assoc. Prof. Sergey Naydenov, PhD,
D. A. Tsenov of Economics – Svishtov
Field of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences
Professional direction: 3.8. Economics
Scientific specialty: "Economics and Management (Industry)"

Subject: Competition for the academic position "docent" in professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agricultural Economics) in SA "D. A. Tsenov" - Svishtov, publ. in SG 6p.92/03.11.2023 for the needs of the department "Agricultural Economics".

1. Information about the contest

The competition for the occupation of the academic position "docent" in the field of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction: 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agricultural Economics)", for the needs of the Department of "Agricultural Economics" in SA "D. A. Tsenov", Faculty of "Manufacturing and Commercial Business". The competition was promulgated in the Official Gazette 6p.92/03.11.2023. For participation in the competition, documents were submitted by a single candidate **ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Yordanova Shopova.**

2. Basis for writing an opinion

The basis for writing this Opinion is Order No. 1189 of 15.12.2023. of the Rector of SA "D. A. Tsenov", based on Art. 5, Paragraph 1 and Art. 121., para. 1. and para. 2. by PRASSA, decision of the Faculty of "Manufacturing and Commercial Business", Protocol No. 4/13.12.2023. and in connection with an announced competition for the academic position "docent" - one by field of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty: Economics and management (Agricultural Economics) for the needs of the Department of "Agricultural Economics" in the SA "D. A. Tsenov", Faculty of "Manufacturing and Commercial Business". The competition was promulgated in the Official Gazette 6p.92/03.11.2023.

3. Personal characteristics of the candidate

According to the procedure for the "docent" competition, I will present a short professional biography of the candidate **ch. Elena Yordanova Shopova**, assistant professor, born in 1973. in the town of Svishtov.

Elena Yordanova Shopova during the period 1991-1996. graduated from VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", Veliko Tarnovo, Educational degree: Master's degree in Bulgarian philology.

The period 1996 - 2008 started working at: Secondary School "Nikolay Katranov", Svishtov, as a teacher of Bulgarian language and literature. Working in this position, the participant in the competition managed the years from 1998 to 2001. to acquire Educational degree: Higher, master economist-financial manager at the Academy of Economics "D. A. Tsenov", Svishtov.

In 2008 started working at the Economic Academy "DA Tsenov", Svishtov, as an assistant. In 2010 held the position of senior assistant, and in 2011 until now he holds the position of chief assistant.

In 2014 defends a dissertation and is awarded the scientific and educational degree "doctor" in economics.

From May 2016 is a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, for which she also presented a Diploma of Membership.

Since 2017 until now: Departmental Alumni Coordinator, initially at the "Management" department at the "Management and Marketing" faculty and subsequently at the "Agricultural Economics" department at the "Manufacturing and Commercial Business" faculty.

For the 2023-2027 mandate. was elected as a Municipal Councilor in Obs, Svishtov Municipality in the position of: Chairman of the Standing Committee on the "Law on Combating Corruption and Confiscation of Illegally Acquired Property" and as Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee on "Regulations, Civil Rights, Public order and security" He speaks Russian, English and Slovak languages.

4. General (quantitative and qualitative) evaluation of the educational work

From the official reference for the academic employment of ch. assistant professor Elena Yordanova Shopova for the education of students in the "Bachelor's College" during the last five academic years, it was found that it was above the norm established for the higher school.

The candidate participated in the development and teaching of 16 lecture courses - 12 lecture courses in the Bachelor's degree program and 4 in the Master's program. More specifically, these are: OCS "Bachelor": Agricultural Management, Agrarian Ecology, Rural and Agrarian Tourism, Development of Rural Areas, Ecological and Sustainable Development of the Agribusiness, Agricultural Entrepreneurship, Regulations and Standardization of Agrarian Production, Ecological and Sustainable Business Development , Ecological tourism, Introduction to agribusiness, Strategic solutions in agribusiness, Small and family agribusiness.

In addition, the candidate of the competition is also engaged in the training of students in the Master's College of Education by teaching the disciplines: Alternative sources of income in rural areas, Small and family agribusiness, Rural development.

A mandatory element of the general assessment of the educational and teaching work of each candidate for the academic position of "associate professor" is his participation in providing the educational process with quality lecture courses, teaching aids and academic textbooks. In this aspect, taught by Ch. assistant professor, Dr. Elena Yordanova Shopova, academic disciplines are provided with up-to-date authored and co-authored texts, which are printed in renowned publishing houses.

Reference from the Professional Training Center at SA "D. A. Tsenov" Svishtov specifies the developed educational content and curricula for the disciplines:

1. "Management of behavior in the classroom", studied in a qualification course for awarding qualification credits to pedagogical specialists under Regulation No. 15/2019. of the Ministry of Education and Culture "Management of behavior in the classroom", in the period 02.11.2018 - 15.11.2018;

2. "Attestation of the activities of pedagogical specialists", studied in a qualification course for awarding qualification credits to pedagogical specialists under Ordinance No. 15/2019. of the Ministry of Education and Culture "Attestation of the activity of pedagogical specialists", in the period 31.10.2019 - 2.11.2019;

3. "Organization of business meetings and events", studied in qualification training in part of the profession "Office secretary", specialty "Administrative service", in the period 17.06.2022 - 11.08.2022, Project "Success together from the National Action Plan on employment", under a contract between CA "D. A. Tsenov" and AIKB Sofia;

4. "Increasing personal responsibility and discipline through time management", studied in qualification training "Increasing personal responsibility and discipline through time management", in the period 13.06.2022 - 16.06.2022, Project "Successful together from the National Action Plan on employment", under a contract between CA "D. A. Tsenov" and AIKB Sofia;

5. "Communication in Bulgarian language", studied in Key Competence training: Communication in native language, course "Communication in Bulgarian language" under contract between "SA D. A. Tsenov" and Municipality of Svishtov, Project No. BG05M9OP001-2.056.0015 -C01 "Social - economic integration of vulnerable groups. Integrated measures to improve access to education in the municipality of Svishtov", financed by OP "Human Resources Development" 2014-2020. and OP "Science and Education for Smart Growth" 2014-2020. co-financed by the EU through the European Social Fund (ESF).

In 2016 the participant in the competition publishes, after review, an independent textbook "Environmental policy and social responsibility".

In co-authorship, he presents 3 textbooks as follows:

1. Kamenov, K., Yordanova, E. (2014). Administration in management and public administration. V. Tarnovo: Faber. ISBN: 978-619-00-0107-2.

The participation of Ch. Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova in writing the textbook is Part Two - Chapters VI, VII, VIII, IX and X.

2. Sirashki, H., Yordanova, E. and others. (2016). Quality management. Svishtov: AI Tsenov. ISBN: 978-954-23-1128-7

The participation of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Yordanova in writing the textbook is topic 4; theme 5; test 4 and test 5.

3. Asenov, A., Dilkov, Ts., Emilova, I., Panayotov, V., Aleksieva, D., Yordanova, E. and others. (2020). Management aspects of the organization. Svishtov: AI Tsenov, ISBN: 978-954-23-1795-1.

The participation of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Yordanova in writing the textbook is topic 3.

Tutorials and Guides (1)

1. Yordanova, E. (2016). Environmental policy and social responsibility. Guide for seminar classes, V. Tarnovo: VESTA, 100 pages, ISBN: 978-954-543-059-6

It is also worth noting the Curriculum developed by her for the discipline "Management of conflicts" in the 2020 Bachelor's College.

According to the issued annex to the tender documentation, a certificate from the management of SA "D. A. Tsenov" it is established that as of 20.11.23 the candidate has a total work experience of more than 27 (twenty-seven) years, including more than 15 (fifteen) years in higher education.

The indicated quantitative and qualitative parameters of the educational and teaching work of the candidate for the academic position "docent" give reason to express a very good assessment of her professional level within the classroom and outside the classroom employment.

5. General (quantitative and qualitative) assessment of research and research activities

The quantitative characteristics of the scientific studies and the research activity of ch. Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova Shopova was prepared on the basis of data from the lists of publications submitted by the candidate for the academic position "associate professor".

Total number of publications 28, of which independent – 23. Joint publications are 5 (3 studies and 2 articles).

In structural and numerical terms, it is as follows: monograph - 1 piece, studies - 5 pieces, scientific articles - 10 pieces, reports - 12 pieces. For the listed titles and bibliographic data for the monographic work and equivalent publications in specialized scientific publications, and for the reports, chap. Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova Shopova has certified in writing with the relevant references that they do not repeat the "doctor" submitted for acquisition of the ONS.

In the publications developed by a collective of authors, the candidate's participation is correctly distinguished.

Papers have been presented at national and international forums.

The candidate in the competition has publications in Scopus and Web of Science: 1 Articles - 1 (Group D 6.1., joint) and Publications in English: 1 Articles - 1 (Group D 6.1., joint).

The total number of pages of the approved and disseminated scientific production amounts to 506 pages (of which independent publications – 405 pages, of which 200 pages are an independent textbook, and co-authored – 101 pages). Distributed by type of scientific production (in monographs – 200 pages, in studies – 143 pages, in articles – 95 pages and in reports – 68 pages).

From the submitted Reference for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "associate professor" by field of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty: Economics and management (Agricultural Economics), and the additional requirements specified in PRASSA show that ch. assistant professor Elena Yordanova Shopova, PhD, meets the requirements. So, for example, the candidate has the required 50 points for indicator group "A" (defended dissertation work). An independent monograph, published in 2023, is presented for group "B" indicators. (100 points), according to group of indicators "D" with the required 200 points, Dr. Shopova declares 259 points, according to group of indicators "D" (citations) with a minimum of 50 points, the candidate declares 85 points.

After the defense of the ONS doctor, Elena Yordanova Shopova participated in three research projects financed by the state grant for scientific activity, including one project as a supervisor and two as a team member. She also participated in the project "Economic Education in Bulgaria 2030", financed by the Operational Program "Science and Education for Smart Growth".

From the presented data it is clear that, in quantitative terms, the total result when adding up the points from the individual groups is 494 points, a result that exceeds the minimum requirements. But no less important are the qualitative characteristics of the conducted research.

Publications are mainly focused in the areas of human factor management, ecological-ethical behavior change, management and greening of modern agriculture, training and management skills for sustainability and efficiency of the management process. It is important to note that the candidate's publications are closely related to the scientific specialty for which the current competition is announced. In this regard, I will emphasize the qualities of the monographic study "Management aspects in modern agriculture", Publisher: Veriga Domino EOOD, V. Tarnovo, 200 pages, ISBN 978-619-04-0026-4, because for me this publication is a thorough economic outlook of the author's scientific creative activity to date. Through this independent research, she presents herself as a knowledgeable, able and prepared researcher to carry out an in-depth study of a theoretical-applied nature and with reasoned derivation of working practical solutions.

The topicality of the analyzed issues stems from the realized need to study the management aspects in modern agriculture in connection with its adaptation to dynamic changes in the organizational and environmental environment and ensuring the effectiveness of management activities and sustainability of agricultural practices. The innovative approach in the management of agricultural organizations, proposed and researched in the monographic work, combines traditional management approaches, styles and practices, focusing primarily on the human factor in agricultural holdings in the conditions of an economy transforming towards sustainability.

The remaining scientific publications from the attached list of the competition, published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information emphasize the leading role of the human factor, with priorities aimed at stimulating continuity between generations and passing on the experience and skills leading to the success of agricultural holdings.

The trend related to the advanced age of most agricultural producers and the lack of sufficiently educated and competent entrepreneurs to use the advantages of technology in agriculture stands out as a problem.

The publications in non-refereed journals with scientific review follow the main trends in the development of the agrarian sector, its financing, its environmental friendliness, as well as the sustainable use of natural resources in our country and in the EU, taking into account the economic efficiency and the relevant risks.

All this shows that the research activity in the field of modern agriculture, its organizational and environmental environment, the effectiveness of management activity and the sustainability of agricultural practices of ch. assistant professor Elena Shopova has a versatile character and a marked desire to cover the significant economic problems of the agrarian sector both in theoretical and in practical-applied aspects.

Special attention should also be paid to the positive qualities of Dr. Shopova's author's texts in the submitted textbooks for the competition, since in them the author was able, based on generally accepted economic principles, to outline the peculiarities of administration in management and public administration, the management of the quality and management aspects of the organization.

This was achieved thanks to individual professional training. These publications present the author not only as a capable university teacher but also as a researcher.

6. Characterization of scientific contributions

When carefully analyzing the thematic focus in the content of the publications presented for participation in the announced competition for the academic position of "associate professor" by Dr. Elena Shopova, one guiding

star stands out, namely the study of management aspects in modern agriculture and the need to adapt it to the dynamic organizational and environmental changes. In this regard, various solutions, ways and means for practical implementation are offered. therefore, and in the outlined guidelines, the candidate's scientific contributions should be sought, which can be summarized as follows:

A) Scientific contributions:

1. Scientific contributions of a theoretical nature

✓ The theory of management aspects in modern agriculture has been systematized and further developed in connection with adaptation to dynamic changes in the organizational and environmental environment and ensuring the effectiveness of management activities and sustainability of agricultural practices. The author's point of view and analysis of management aspects and the role of the human factor for the sustainability of modern agricultural organizations and its significance for the overall development of the agrarian sector are offered. [Monograph, Group D publications 6.1., 7.1., 7.2., 7.4., 7.5., 7.6., 7.7.].

✓ The chronology of evolution in social and organizational development was examined and an emphasis was placed on the importance of the human factor in the management of organizations, justifying its leading importance for achieving a sustainable management process. [Monograph, Group D publications 7.8., 7.9., 7.10., 7.15., 7.17., 7.20., 7.21.].

✓ The theory of the role of the human factor has been systematized and further developed from the point of view of its essence, characteristics, basic theories, approaches. Historically, the development of human relations within the management process in the conditions of national specificity, European social environment and globalizing world economy has been studied. [Monograph, Group D publications 7.13., 7.21., 9.3., 9.5.]

B) Scientific and applied contributions:

1. Scientific and applied contributions of a methodological nature

✓ The research is structured in two main aspects - the first, management aspect of reasoning, includes highlighted and analyzed management skills, a methodology for building and applying management skills suitable for the new social and natural conditions, and a proposed new innovative approach that affirms the principles of sustainable development. The second, ecological aspect, examines the essence, principles and meaning of social and environmental responsibility. The conclusion has been confirmed that a basic prerequisite for the ethics and effectiveness of the management process in modern agriculture is the development of adequate management skills and the adoption of an appropriate management approach, uniting individual needs and organizational goals, as well as the goals of the agricultural holding for economic development and growth with the principles of sustainable development. [Monograph, Group D publications 6.1., 7.1., 7.2., 7.4., 7.5., 7.6., 7.7., 7.8, 7.9, 7.13, 7.15, 9.1]

✓ The need for further development, enrichment and improvement of management in modern agriculture is substantiated and proven, as a result of the

research and reasoning, analysis and generalization of theoretical propositions, through proposed author's: ecological-ethical value approach to achieve management sustainability, model for an environmentally friendly management process in agricultural holdings, a methodology for reconciling and applying managerial skills, a methodology for the sustainable development of modern agriculture. [Monograph, Group D publications 7.17, 7.18., 7.21., 9.5].

✓ An author's concept for building an ecological-ethical structure (EES) of management in modern agriculture was proposed and developed. [Monograph, Group D publications 7.17, 7.18., 7.21., 9.5]

✓ A methodology for sustainable development of modern agriculture has been developed. [Monograph].

A sector-oriented methodological toolkit has been developed, reflecting the characteristics of agricultural holdings from the Veliko Tarnovo region, which proves the need to adopt environmentally friendly practices, tailored to the specific characteristics of the specific agricultural holding [Monograph].

2. Scientific and applied contributions of an empirical nature

✓ The degree of spread, the possibilities and the importance of the author's holistic management approach and innovative sustainable management model, the necessity of which has been proven through personal surveys and direct observations in agricultural holdings from the Veliko Tarnovo region, have been assessed, the main conclusions have been summarized and recommendations have been defined and decisions on their adoption and implementation. The possibilities to influence the behavior of the human factor in an ecological and ethical direction, which would contribute to the efficiency and sustainability of the management process, have been studied and analyzed. [Monograph].

✓ The proposed methodology for sustainable development of modern agriculture establishes the need to strengthen the ecological-ethical component in the organizational strategy through environmentally friendly practices, ecological initiatives and socially responsible activities. [Monograph, Group D publications 7.19].

✓ Problems important for agricultural holdings in the field of employee training were revealed and conclusions and recommendations were formulated. The degree of investment in the education of agricultural producers and workers was evaluated and analyzed. [Monograph, Group D publications 6.1., 7.9., 7.10., 7.11., 7.15., 9.2.].

✓ It has been established that the growing requirements in the field of modern agriculture and the introduction of new European standards related to the agrarian sector necessitate the adoption and application of new management approaches that combine traditional practice with innovations in the changing environment. [Monograph, Group D publications 6.1., 7.1., 7.2., 7.3., 7.4., 7.5., 7.6., 7.7., 7.8., 7.9., 7.10., 7.11., 7.12., 7.13., 7.14., 7.15., 7.16., 7.17., 7.18., 7.19., 7.20., 7.21., 9.1., 9.2., 9.3., 9.4., 9.5.].

7. Academic reputation

It is clear from the attached Report on the implementation of the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "associate professor" that a significant part of Dr. Shopova's scientific publications are cited by other authors, and according to group of indicators "D" with the collected 85 points she exceeds her required 50 points. This is sufficient reason to conclude that Dr. Shopova is known in scientific circles and her scientific results regarding management aspects in modern agriculture, the efficiency and sustainability of agricultural practices, the ecological management process are recognized by her colleagues as well as by SA "D. A. Tsenov", as well as from other Bulgarian universities.

8. Admitted weaknesses, critical remarks, recommendations

I do not find any significant weaknesses in the candidate's scientific output. Some repetition of texts and settings in different publications is found, but this is understandable and to some extent inevitable. I kindly make the following recommendations:

- the future to publish his scientific works in foreign refereed editions;
- to use his accumulated experience and knowledge in the initiation and management of research and international projects;
- to engage in scientific supervision of doctoral students.

9. Summary assessment

Based on the presented information and documentation, it can be confirmed that the requirements of the current regulations have been met. The submitted materials for the competition faithfully reflect the activity of the candidate. They are validated by the relevant officials.

All this gives me reason to declare my support for the candidacy of Ch. assistant professor Elena Yordanova Shopova, according to the announced competition for the academic position "associate professor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and management" (Agricultural Economics) and to recommend to the respected members of the Scientific Jury, appointed by Order No. 1189 of 15.12.2023 . of the Rector of SA "D. A. Tsenov" and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of "Manufacturing and Commercial Business" at the SA "D. A. Tsenov" - Svishtov to support the present application.

Svishtov
18.01.2024

The opinion was written by:.....
/Assoc. Prof. Sergey Naydenov D/