

STATEMENT

Prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Iskra Marinova Panteleva, PhD,
D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov,
Field of higher education: 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences;
Professional field 3.8. Economics,
Scientific specialty: Economics and Management (Industry)

Subject: Competitive procedure for electing an Associate Professor in professional field 3.8
Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (industry), at the
Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov

Grounds for submitting the statement: Decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Industry and Commerce (Protocol No. 8/26.04.2023), Order of the Rector of the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov No 365/02.05.2023 for the appointment of the composition of the Scientific Jury, and Decision of the Scientific Jury, taken at the First Meeting, held on 15.05.2023, according to Art. 5, para. 1 and Art. 121, para. 1 and para. 2 of the "Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Academy of Economics".

1. Information about the contest

The competition for electing an Associate Professor has been announced in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Industry), for the needs of the Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Industry and Commerce at the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, according to Decision of the AC No.6, item 2/27.02.2023, announced in State Gazette issue 21/07.03.2023. The only candidate in the competition for Associate Professor is Head Assistant Emil Borislavov Nikolov, PhD.

2. Information about the candidates in the competition

According to the procedure of the announced competition for occupation of the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty Economics and management (industry), documents were submitted by a single candidate – Head Assistant Emil Borislavov Nikolov, PhD. Emil Nikolov was born on February 16.02.1982 in Svishtov.

In 2000, he graduated secondary special education majoring in Business-Administration at SCHS Dimitar Hadjivasilev – Svishtov (diploma Series B-2000, No. 005253, Reg. No. 5361/43 from 03.07.2000). In 2004 he acquired a bachelor's degree in Business Administration in Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov (diploma Series CA - 2004, No. 029926, registration No. 52065/20.10.2004), and in 2005 – a master's degree in the same specialty - Business Administration in D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov (diploma series SA - 2005, No. 035926, reg. No. 56637/30.11.2005). In 2006, he was enrolled as a full-time doctoral student at the Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship department, D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics. After successfully defending a dissertation on the topic of Sustainability of the firm's competitiveness, in 2009 he obtained the Educational and Scientific Degree “doctor” (PhD) (diploma No. 33628 from 14.12.2009).

Emil Nikolov began his working career in 2006, when, as a master's student, he was employed as an economist at Svilozha AD — Svishtov. After obtaining the Educational and Scientific Degree “doctor” (PhD) in 2009, he was appointed as an assistant in the Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, and since 2010 he holds the academic position of head assistant. As of June 2023, the total work experience of Emil Nikolov is 14 years and 4 months, of which 13 years and 7 months as a lecturer (assistant/head assistant) at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics. Since 2016, the candidate has been a departmental Erasmus+ program coordinator.

Emil Nikolov has participated in a number of trainings and specializations, including: “Virtual learning environment Moodle”, “Project management”, “Project management with Microsoft Project”, “Training for trainers – basic course”, “Application of the case method in education of economics students”, “Publication in refereed publications with an impact factor”, “Technology transfer and protection and management of intellectual property”, “Objects of intellectual property – essential aspects and opportunities for generating economic growth”, “Basics of Java Programming” and more.

Emil Nikolov is fluent in English (independent level) and Russian (basic level).

3. Fulfilment of the requirements for occupying the academic position

3.1. Fulfilment of quantitative requirements

The following findings and conclusions can be made based on the documents submitted under the procedure for occupying the academic position of associate professor:

- Emil Nikolov has over 13 years of teaching experience and PhD level; he holds the academic position of head assistant. The results of his lecturing and research activities have been approved and disseminated among the stakeholders. The candidate has published: a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree “doctor” (PhD), an independent habilitation thesis (monograph), an independent academic textbook, 2 joint peer-reviewed textbooks (presented in the competition), 25 articles and reports, including in

scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information, classified by separate sections in the Reference for the implementation of the minimum national requirements for the academic position of associate professor. Quantitatively, their expression covers 276,52 points (with a required minimum of 200 points). There is substantial compliance with the theme of the contest. Emil Nikolov has participated in six research projects funded by the state subsidy for work intrinsic to D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov, Bulgaria (one independent project, one project as a project manager and four – as a team member). His scientific works have been cited a total of 16 times (4 citations in two monographs and 12 citations in 10 publications), and the candidate collects a total of 100 points with a minimum requirement of 50 points. The norm for auditor employment is significantly exceeded.

- Research and publication activity, citations, etc. activities cover all groups of indicators and requirements, acc. the requirements of art. 116 (2) item 1 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff in the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics for the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria in Scientific Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences (Groups A+B+G+D). The total quantitative assessment of Emil Nikolov's activity exceeds the required points. The candidate scores a total of 526,52 points.

- The candidate meets all the mandatory requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor, specified in the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Academy of Economics, Rules for implementation of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Academy of Economics and Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Academy of Economics. There are no unfulfilled quantitative indicators and requirements.

3.2. Fulfilment of quality requirements

In the documents submitted for the competition, there is convincing evidence of the professional qualities and the results achieved by head assistant Emil Nikolov. He is a respected lecturer and researcher, with experience in lecturing and methodical work. His research interests and lecturing experience are in the areas of corporate social responsibility, project management in industry, small business management, Human resource management and teams, all within the thematic scope of the competition. The scientific production of Emil Nikolov contains scientific and scientific-applied contributions and is proof of his ability to work independently and in a team. He has experience in the organization and administration of the educational process acquired during his positions in the department. Throughout his career, Emil Nikolov enriched his knowledge and developed his professional qualities and skills. He has expertise in consulting and transferring knowledge to interested parties – students, colleagues, business representatives, specialized institutions/organisations, etc.

Head assistant Emil Nikolov enjoys a good reputation among colleagues from the academic circles and business; loyal to the institution in which he works; he observes academic ethics and good university practices. All this gives me reason to assert that the candidate in the competition has a high economic culture and ethical qualities, theoretical and practical experience as a teacher, fully possesses the necessary qualities, experience and expertise required for the occupation of the academic position “associate professor” at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty Economics and management (industry).

Emil Nikolov fully meets the quantitative and qualitative requirements for occupying the academic position of associate professor at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov. The candidate has no unfulfilled requirements for the position.

4. Evaluation of teaching and learning activity

Head assistant Emil Nikolov is an erudite lecturer with many years of work experience in lecturing and methodical work, accumulated over more than 13 years. His professional interests and lecturing activities are in the field of economics of enterprise, project management in industry, small business management, Human resources and team management, corporate social responsibility, etc. Within the framework of his educational and lecturing activity, he has initiated, developed and jointly and independently led lecture courses in the following disciplines, directly related to the topics of the competition: in Bachelor’s degree – Enterprise Economics, Human Resources Management, Competitiveness Management of the industrial enterprise, Small enterprise management, Project management in industry, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship - Part One, Entrepreneurship - Part Two; in Master’s degree – Management of corporations, Anti-crisis management of the corporation, Management of outsourcing projects, Management of knowledge, Innovative entrepreneurship, Corporate entrepreneurship, etc. His lecture courses are supported by authored or co-authored textbooks and accompanying materials on the subject of the competition, based on independently or jointly developed syllabuses. A well-known name in the field of educational environments, with expertise in consulting and transferring knowledge to interested parties – students, teaching colleagues, representatives of business and specialized institutions, international organizations, etc.

The official note attached to the documentation shows that the applicant has covered the required study load. For the last five years, the average annual number of hours of classroom employment of Emil Nikolov is 611,14 hours at a standard of 500 hours. The workload by academic year is as follows: 2018/2019 – 795 hours, 2019/2020 – 402 hours, 2020/2021 – 535 hours, 2021/2022 – 668.7 hours, 2022/2023 – 655 hours, in Bachelor’s degree (regular, part-time and distance form of education) and Master’s degree (distance form of education).

Head assistant professor Emil Nikolov has experience in the organization and administration of the educational process, as a departmental Alumni and Erasmus+ coordinator during the years of his work experience at the Academy of Economics. The candidate participated in six short-term mobilities for the purpose of teaching under the “Erasmus +” program (Croatia – 2 mobilities, Moldova, the Czech Republic, Montenegro, and North Macedonia) and one under the project BG05M2OP001-2.016-0004-C01 “Economic Education in Bulgaria 2030” of the Science and Education for Smart Growth program, carried out in Romania. Emil Nikolov has participated in a number of trainings and specializations, mobilities under the Erasmus+ program, etc. Since 2021, Emil Nikolov has been a member of the Bulgarian Association of CSR Specialists (BAKSOS) (renamed from May to the Association of Sustainability Specialists (ASU)), and since 2023 – of the Management Board of the association.

The candidate in the competition enjoys a good name among his colleagues and observes academic ethics. All this gives me grounds to claim that the candidate for the competition has high economic culture and ethical qualities, enviable theoretical and practical experience as a lecturer, researcher, scientific supervisor, consultant, and administrator, fully possesses the necessary qualities, experience and expertise required for the occupation of the academic position of Associate Professor at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov.

5. Brief description of the presented scientific works/publications

Head Assistant Professor Emil Nikolov participated in the competition with a total of 34 (21 independent and 13 joint) publications, including: 1 independent monograph; 8 studies, 6 articles, 19 reports. The candidate’s publications are mainly focused on the areas of corporate social responsibility and non-financial reporting, entrepreneurship, knowledge management and staff training. The total number of pages of the approved and disseminated scientific production amounts to 714 pages (in monographs – 184 pages, in studies – 275 pages, in articles – 95 pages and in reports – 160 pages). Its number and structural distribution by types of production and place of publication (monographs, studies, articles, reports from conferences in the country and abroad, textbooks and teaching aids) covers several thematic areas, with a theoretical and practical-applied contribution to the scientific cognition and the learning process. There is substantial correspondence with the theme of the competition.

The documents presented in the competition provide grounds for distinguishing the following main areas of research activity and publication activity of head assistant professor Emil Nikolov, PhD, which are directly related to the subject of the competition for the academic position of associate professor:

Scientific contributions:

1. Scientific contributions with a theoretical nature

- The theory of corporate social responsibility has been systematized and further developed regarding its essence and historical development, characteristics, effects, principles, basic theories, directions, taxonomy, initiatives and tools, and approaches to its assessment. An author's definition of the essence of corporate social responsibility and an integrated model for its main and secondary directions for realization are proposed. A classification of the positive effects of CSR was developed, including twenty-three possible effects grouped into five directions (marketing, human resources, finance, risk, and management). [Monograph, Group D publications 7.5., 7.6., 7.7., 7.8., 7.9.].

- Basic aspects related to the nature, motives, and forms of manifestation of corporate social irresponsibility have been clarified. The candidate reaches the conclusion that, by its very nature, it cannot be considered as a lack of corporate social responsibility, which is why an enterprise can be both socially responsible and socially irresponsible. Thirty main forms of manifestation of corporate social irresponsibility are systematized, depending on the interested parties affected by their manifestation. [Group D publication 7.1.].

- The scientific knowledge dedicated to the reporting of non-financial information has been further developed by critically analysing the research dedicated to its nature, development, effects and barriers, structures, quality characteristics and auditing. The trend of transformation of non-financial reporting from a voluntary to a normatively regulated process has been identified. [Monograph, Group D publications 7.8., 7.11., 7.14., 7.15., 7.17., 9.2.].

- The theory dedicated to company knowledge - its essence, meaning, types, processes, and models - has been developed. [Group D publications 7.22., 7.23., 9.5., 9.6., 9.8.].

Scientific and applied contributions:

1. Scientific and applied contributions of a methodological nature

- A methodology has been developed for evaluation and analysis of the integration of non-financial reporting in business organizations. The methodology is based on publicly available data and information and is implemented as a sequence of six main stages [Monograph, Group D publications 9.2., and 7.11.].

- A sector-oriented methodological toolkit for evaluating corporate social responsibility has been developed, reflecting the characteristics of enterprises producing bicycles. [Group D publication 9.4.].

- A conceptual visual model for the management of company knowledge in business organizations has been developed, including the following six main processes: diagnosis of available knowledge and knowledge needs; acquisition of knowledge; extracting and formalizing hidden knowledge; knowledge mapping; knowledge storage; dissemination of knowledge. [Group D publications 9.5., 9.6., 9.8., 7.22., 7.23.].

2. Scientific and applied contributions of an empirical nature

- The extent of distribution and the quality of non-financial reporting among Bulgarian business organizations were assessed. The process was studied in different sections - among the largest Bulgarian enterprises, among the largest state-owned companies, among the member companies of the UN Global Compact, among the most traded companies on the BSE, according to the reporting structure used. On this basis, problem areas were identified, and recommendations and solutions were defined. [Monograph, Group D publications 6.1., 7.3., 7.11, 7.12., 7.15., 7.17., 9.2.].

- The author's sector-oriented methodology for assessing corporate social responsibility in enterprises producing bicycles in Bulgaria has been approved (in six out of nine operating enterprises). Their corporate social responsibility has been assessed and their strengths and weaknesses in this area have been identified. [Group D publication 9.4.].

- The manifestation of corporate social responsibility among enterprises from various sectors and branches of the Bulgarian economy – agricultural cooperatives, tourist enterprises, mobile operators – has been studied and analysed. [Group D publications 6.1., 7.3., 7.4., 7.5., 7.10., 9.2.].

- The evolution over time of corporate social responsibility at the European and national level has been studied, identifying the main stages, initiatives, authors, and author's studies. [Group D publications 7.6 and 7.8].

- The degree of use of the Communication on Progress, as a tool for disclosing non-financial information, by Bulgarian enterprises that are members of the UN Global Compact was evaluated and analysed. Existing problems are identified, and possible solutions are proposed. [Monograph, Group D publications 7.11., 7.12., 9.2.].

- The entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviour of students from three higher schools in Bulgaria were established, and the obstacles and opportunities for stimulating entrepreneurship among these individuals were identified. [Group D publications 9.1. and 9.3.].

- Important problems for Bulgarian enterprises in the field of staff training were revealed and conclusions and recommendations were formulated that could serve to improve the training process. [Group D publications 7.19., 7.21., 7.21. and 9.5.].

Those presented by Head Associate Professor Emil Nikolov's publications contain theoretical and empirical knowledge that can be classified into other thematic areas, which only confirms the clear focus and at the same time – the balanced expansion of the scope of his scientific, educational and pedagogical research.

6. Synthesised evaluation of the main scientific and scientific-applied contributions

The comprehensive evaluation of the subject matter and content of the presented scientific and educational production is a reason to claim that in the thematic-subject context

there is a focus within the scope of the competition and a balance between theoretical knowledge and empirical research, a synergy that contributed to the realization of the following contributions:

- **Scientific** – related to the enrichment and expansion of theoretical knowledge as a result of research, systematisation, analysis and evaluation of basic theories, concepts, principles, theoretical constructs, methodical-methodological tools for research in the field of corporate social responsibility and non-financial reporting, entrepreneurship, knowledge management and staff training.

- **Scientific-applied** – they are related to deepening and supplementing the thematic focus of the empirical projections of theoretical knowledge in the field of corporate social responsibility and non-financial reporting, entrepreneurship, knowledge management and staff training.

7. Key critical notes and recommendations

The candidate for the academic position of associate professor has presented a large number of scientific publications, and in terms of content; there is balance, focus and at the same time – a coverage of the key areas within the thematic scope of the competition. The theses and conceptual statements asserted by the candidate are based on a rich literature review and demonstrate a broad view of the current scientific knowledge. I do not find fundamentally contradictory, unfounded theses or conclusions, wrongly systematised or applied methodological constructions and findings of a misleading nature, therefore I have no specific critical remarks. I can make a recommendation as a direction for future research and development to focus on deepening its studies on issues having multi-element, interdisciplinary (from a theoretical point of view) and probabilistic, problematic nature (from an empirical point of view) nature, given the complex, dynamic and risky parameters of the economic, market and geopolitical environment.

8. Conclusion

Based on the submitted documents for the competition for professor and the evaluation of the activity and the results of the teaching, research, publication, etc. activities of head assistant professor Emil Nikolov, PhD, I can conclude that he is an erudite lecturer and researcher, with extensive experience and a responsible attitude to his professional commitments, possessing qualities, expertise and personal-team skills that are valued in university circles and among researchers in the field of his interests, as evidenced by his participation in a number of projects and joint publications. My personal impressions for more than 18 years confirm the general assessment given above. The candidate for the academic position of associate professor has fulfilled the necessary requirements of LDASRB and RALDASRB, as well as the additional requirements of the D. A. Tsenov

Academy of Economics. I state my positive assessment and with conviction I recommend to the respected Scientific Jury, appointed by Order No. 364/02.05.2023 of the Rector of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, to propose head assistant professor Emil Borislavov Nikolov, PhD, to award the academic position of Associate Professor in professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty Economics and management (industry), in the department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship, faculty of Industry and Commerce, D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov.

18.05.2023 г.
Svishtov

Signature: