

OPINION

The opinion was prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Lyubka Mincheva Ilieva, PhD,
D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics - Svishtov, Department of Tourism Economics and Management, professional direction: 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)"

Regarding: competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction: 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (agricultural economy)", for the needs of the Department of "Agricultural Economics" at the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics – Svishtov, announced in the State Gazette no. 92/0.11.2023

1. Presentation of the candidate

The only participant in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional direction 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (agricultural economy)", announced for the needs of the Department of "Agricultural Economics" at the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics - Svishtov, is **Head Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova Shopova, PhD** – full-time teacher in the same department.

2. Grounds for writing the opinion

This opinion was prepared on the basis of the Decision of the Faculty of Industry and Commerce (Protocol No. 4/13.12.2023), Order No. 1189/15.12.2023 of the Rector of the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics - Svishtov, the Regulations for the implementation of the Law on the development of the academic staff in the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics and Decision from the first meeting of the Scientific jury (Protocol No. 1/10.01.2024).

3. Personal characteristic of the candidate

Elena Yordanova Shopova was born in 1973 in Svishtov. In 1991, she completed his secondary education at "Aleko Konstantinov" Secondary School - Svishtov, and in 1996 she completed the "Master's" in Bulgarian Philology at VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" - Veliko Tarnovo. In 2001, she graduated from the Master's degree in "Financial Management" at the "Dimitar A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics - Svishtov.

Elena Yordanova Shopova began her career as an academic teacher as an assistant in the Department "Management" from 04.03.2008, subsequently rose to the position of senior assistant (21.04.2010-31.03.2011) and head assistant (from 04.01.2011). In 2014, she defended his PhD degree in the scientific specialty "Social Management" (diploma no. 2014001/13.01.2014). Her scientific interests are mainly in

the field of economics and management, which is why from 18.10.2022 she will join the Department of Agricultural Economics.

From the presented documents and Autobiography, it can be seen that Elena Yordanova Shopova has been a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria - Svishtov branch since 2016. The candidate shows public commitment by holding the elected position of Municipal Councilor in the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Svishtov (term 2023-2027). Elena Shopova was elected to two committees of the Municipal Council, being the chairman of the Standing Committee on the "Law on Combating Corruption and Confiscation of Illegally Acquired Property" and deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee on "Regulation, Civil Rights, Public Order and Security".

4. General (quantitative and qualitative) assessment of teaching and learning work

For occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" under Art. 116, para. 2 and 3 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff in the "Dimitar A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics minimum experience of 5 years is required from the candidate. Head Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova Shopova has 15 years, 10 months of experience as an academic teacher at the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics, of which she has held the position of "head assistant professor" for the past 12 years, which is proof of sufficiently accumulated teaching experience.

According to the Information on academic employment, in the last five years the required classroom and extra-auditory employment of the candidate has been significantly exceeded, and for the academic year 2023/2024 the planned academic employment is also above the current norm for the Academy of Economics.

From the submitted documents: a copy of the diploma for the PhD degree, Reference for academic employment as a chief assistant for the last 5 (five) academic years and Certificate of internship in the specialty, it can be seen that there is a candidate for the academic position "associate professor" ", meeting the requirements of Art. 24., para. 1, para. 1 and 2 of LDASRB, art. 53, para. 2 of the RALDASRB and Art. 116, para. 2 and 3 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff in the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics.

The guided lecture courses and seminars on the disciplines "Agrarian Management, Ecological and Sustainable Development of the Agribusiness, Small and Family Agribusiness, Agrarian Ecology, Strategic Solutions in Agribusiness, Rural and Agrarian Tourism, Introduction to Agribusiness, Ecological Tourism, Agrarian Policy, Agrarian Entrepreneurship, Agrarian Economics and Agrarian Policy, Alternative Sources of Income in Rural Areas, Rural Development, Prices, Markets and Regulation in Agribusiness, Strategic Decisions in Agribusiness, Environmental and Sustainable Business Development for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Students testify that the candidate's educational activity is related to the subject of the competition.

At the Department of Agricultural Economics, the candidate participated in the development and teaching of 15 lecture courses - 12 lecture courses in the Bachelor's degree and 3 in the Master's degree. To ensure the learning process, she co-authored the writing of 5 textbooks and teaching aids, 1 of which is an independent textbook.

Her active work with students can be judged by the fact that she has been the Alumni Coordinator since 2017. Within the framework of the "Student Practices" project, Elena Yordanova Shopova was involved in the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics as an academic mentor (in 2014 and between 2016 and 2023)

This activity implies the accumulation of teaching experience and **increases the quality of the candidate's academic activity.**

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

Quantitative assessment: The scientific production and research activity of Head Assistant Professor Elena Shopova, presented for review in the competition covers 28 scientific publications, 23 of which are independent. They include 1 independent monograph; 5 studies - two independent and three co-authored; 10 scientific articles, one of which was published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information and 12 scientific reports.

The specified scientific studies, articles and reports have been published in refereed and non-refereed journals and collective volumes with scientific peer review, which certifies their qualitative characteristics as scientific research publications.

The candidate for the academic position "Associate Professor" Head Assistant Elena Shopova, took part in three successfully defended research projects funded by the Institute for Scientific Research at the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics - Svishtov, being the head of one of them. She also participated as an expert in the project "Economic Education in Bulgaria 2030", financed by the Operational Program "Science and Education for Smart Growth".

Qualitative assessment: The scientific interests of Head Assistant Elena Yordanova Shopova, PhD are primarily focused on issues related to management aspects in the agrarian sector. This thematic direction includes: the presented independent monographic work of the candidate "Management aspects in modern agriculture", 1 independent studies, 6 articles and 4 reports. Current problems for economic theory and practice are studied, presenting the specifics of agricultural management, the ecological-ethical components of modern agriculture management, and the opportunities that provide sustainable solutions for the development of the organization.

The second significant direction in the candidate's scientific interests is related to aspects of organization management. This thematic direction includes: 4 studies and 4 articles and 8 scientific reports. Important issues related to changes in the concepts of

management of organizations based on interests, ethics and development of personnel competencies are explored.

The candidate in the competition for "Associate Professor" has not proven, according to the law, plagiarism in scientific works. A statement of originality is submitted stating that all sources have been used in good faith and copyright requirements have been met (Declaration of Originality).

General assessment: The publications proposed by the candidate for participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" Head Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova Shopova fully correspond in terms of scientific content and thematic focus to the scientific specialty of the "Economics and Management (Agricultural Economics)" competition. The careful review of the scientific publications proposed by the candidate for participation in the competition established that the minimum national and additional requirements specified in the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its Application and the Rules for the Application of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff at the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics have been fulfilled.

6. Characterization of scientific contributions

In the candidate's scientific production provided under the competition, Head Assistant Elena Shopova, PhD contains scientific and scientific-applied results that contribute to the expansion of existing theoretical knowledge and practice in the field of management in the agrarian sector, which are correctly reflected in the attached Reference for Scientific and Scientific-Applied Contributions.

The more significant of them can be systematized as follows:

- As contributions of a scientific-applied nature, the systematization and addition of the theory of management aspects in modern agriculture can be outlined.
- The existing scientific knowledge about the management of agricultural organizations is enriched, related to the effective management of people to comply with environmentally friendly production, requiring a balance between economic, social and environmental problems, the point of contact of which is presented by analyzing research related to social and environmental responsibility.
- At the theoretical level, the ethical and ecological aspects in management are combined for research purposes, and concepts regarding the behavioral change of the human factor in the management process are studied. The theory of the management of agricultural organizations has been analyzed and further developed from the point of view of the factors training, as a leading priority, performance management for sustainability and environmentalization of the management process and achieving rational behavior of the human factor, as a result of the improvement of the organizational long-term and effective strategy of the management team.

7. Academic reputation

The attached reference for the citations of the candidate for the academic position "Associate Professor" Head Assistant Professor Elena Shopova certifies that she is a well-known author among the scientific community. The candidate provided a list of 16 citations distributed in 1 monograph and 11 publications in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals.

8. Admitted weaknesses, critical remarks, recommendations

My recommendation to the candidate is to increase his publication activity in renowned, refereed scientific publications at home and abroad.

9. Summary assessment

The scientific output and teaching experience of Head Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova Shopova, PhD give me reason to express a definite opinion that she fully fulfills the minimum requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor", according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application and the Regulations for the application of the law on the development of the academic staff in the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics.

The above gives me reason, with conviction, to propose to the respected Scientific Jury to support the candidacy of **Head Assistant Professor Elena Yordanova Shopova, PhD**, for take over the academic position "**Associate Professor**" in professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agricultural Economics)" at the Department of "Agricultural Economics" at the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics, Svishtov.

Svishtov,
19.01.2024

Prepared the opinion:
(Assoc. Prof. Ly , PhD)