

Opinion

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Regarding: competition for the academic position of Associate Professor at New Bulgarian University (NBU), in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods in Management), announced in the State Gazette, issue 95, dated 8 November, 2024, with applicant Chief Assistant Professor Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD.

Grounds: Member of the scientific jury for the competition, pursuant to Order 3-PK-91/02.01.2025 of the Rector of NBU.

This opinion has been produced in compliance with the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulation on the Implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, as well as the NBU's Regulation on the Development of Academic Staff.

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

The competition for Associate Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods in Management) has been announced in line with the established legal procedures, for the needs of the Administration and Management Department at New Bulgarian University.

Only one candidate has applied for the position announced in the competition, namely Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD.

The documentation submitted for the competition meets the requirements stipulated in the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (Article 2b) and 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 defined in the Regulation for the Development of Academic staff at NBU.

The summary report for compliance with the minimum national requirements submitted by Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, indicates that the applicant has achieved the total mandatory score for obtaining the position of "Associate Professor" across all indicator groups in each chapter. The evidence submitted by the applicant for all indicator groups confirms 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).

Additionally, the requirements for internal NBU candidates, as defined in Annex 2 of the Regulation for the Development of Academic staff at NBU, have also been met, as follows:

- 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

For the purpose of the competition for Associate Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management, the applicant Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, has submitted a habilitation work entitled “Health Status Indices of the Population in Bulgaria: Can Social Progress Preserve More Lives than Medicine?”, *Sofia, NBU, 2024, ISBN 978-619-233-320-1*. The monograph constitutes an up-to-date, homogeneous, and consistent scientific and applied research, that assumes a general problem-oriented and thematic approach. The structural coherence of the monograph analyzes the conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and applied dimensions of the process of developing the first index for assessment of the health status of the population in Bulgaria across administrative districts. The latter are ranked and divided into groups, on the basis of which recommendations for the improvement of the health status on a national and district level have been put forward. In the exposition, the applicant employs holistic methodological approaches and statistical instruments, which demonstrates a high degree of rationalization and creative capabilities to formulate new theoretical and applied dimensions of the problems being researched.

All structural elements of the monograph have been successfully unified, and a uniform algorithm for presenting information in tables, figures, as well as citations, has been devised.

The volume of the book is 224 pages and the applicant has used a large volume of literature (333 titles) that has been appropriately cited in the text, in accordance with academic standards.

A number of *scientific and applied contributions* stand out in the monograph “Health Status Indices of the Population in Bulgaria: Can Social Progress Preserve More Lives than Medicine?”, such as: the **first systematic**, precise, detailed, and complex research of the health status of the Bulgarian population, as well as the factors (evaluation of the determinants) which affect it. At this stage, there is no assessment model for the health status of the Bulgarian population which is based on the statistical analysis of empirical data. Moreover, there is no empirical research to evaluate the effect of the factors that impact the health status, such as the health behavior, clinical care, genetic makeup of the individual, and the socio-economic and



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physical environment. The results obtained are statistically significant which is one of the key accomplishments of the methodology that was applied. This warrants for reliable assertions and recommendations for the development of public governance to be made.

It can therefore be concluded that the applicant's contributions are significant in theoretical, applied, scientific and academic respect, and the methodology developed for assessment of the health status indices on national and district level unequivocally allows for the unbiased evaluation of the impact of public health policies.

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 Professorship candidates). It shall also include evaluation of the peer review requirement.*

In addition to the habilitation work for participation in the competition for Associate Professor, Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, has also submitted the following publications:

- Articles and reports in non-refereed publications with scientific peer review or editing of scientific volumes (Indicator D-7) – 26 items;
- Studies published in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in globally recognized databases of scientific information (Indicator D-8) – 2 items;
- Studies in non-refereed publications with scientific peer review (Indicator D-9) – 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.

Two of the publications in the list submitted by the applicant, indexed in the **Scopus** and **Web of Science** databases, stand out as possessing substantial scientific and applied significance, which only serves to highlight the undisputable research capacity and scientific contribution of Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD. The publications in Scopus and Web of Science witness to the veracity of the research conducted, further emphasizing their role and impact in current scientific discussions in the field of quantitative aspects in management. The research is entirely empirically-oriented and encompasses various aspects of management of the business environment. The highlights of the applicant's research include the development of models and application of quantitative methods for solving problems not only at an organization's administrative level, but also at a macroeconomic level.

All publications submitted for the "Associate Professor" competition demonstrate profound knowledge and substantial scientific and applied contribution in the area of professional field 3.7 Administration and Management. The author's scientific activity stands out with its competence, professionalism, and scientific precision in research, which provides sufficient grounds to praise her work.

3. *Citations by other authors*

The publications of Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, have been cited in the research conducted by other researchers (19 citations), which attests to the positive reception of her theses and scientific research results.



One article has been cited in scientific publications, refereed and indexed in internationally recognized databases featuring scientific information or in monographic works and collective volumes. Three articles have been cited in monographs or collective volumes with scientific peer review, while 15 others in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review.

The required number of citations is verified by a summary report provided by the applicant for the competition. The candidate meets all requirements.

Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva's research interests focus on the field of applying quantitative methods in management. The candidate for this competition has presented the results of her research at various national and international conferences and scientific and practical forums—7 national and 11 international within the last five years.

III. Educational and teaching activity

The candidate Dr. Tsvetanova was awarded a doctoral degree in Business Administration in 2018 for constructing the first model for evaluating the risk of insolvency of Bulgarian privately held companies. She was appointed as Chief Assistant Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Qualitative methods in management) at New Bulgarian University in 2019, a post she has held since then. She began her teaching career back in 2015 when she was a full-time doctoral student on a scholarship at NBU.

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

Dr. Tsvetanova's teaching and extracurricular workload encompasses courses, not only for Bachelor's degree programs, but also for Master's degree programs, both in full-time and distance learning modes. The disciplines that she teaches involve management of corporate risks, quantitative methods in management, economic foundations of management, fundamentals of microeconomics, and modern economics. She is also actively involved in teaching in the joint programs between NBU and York University: *Business Statistics* (Bachelor's degree) and *Econometrics for Finance* (Master's degree).

The 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 the development of the academic discipline, student feedback and participation, as well as departmental publications and projects.

Dr. Tsvetanova is actively involved in creating opportunities for student internships, both by organizing practical trainings for students that is 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 such as video production, creation of online textbooks, 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.

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

2. Student feedback ratings



The candidate's teaching performance has been rated Excellent 4.56, the maximum rating being 5.00, which constitutes an improvement compared to the data submitted during the procedure for Chief Assistant Professor. The contribution of Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, to teaching and the academic environment has been highly appreciated by her students and colleagues at NBU.

IV. Administrative and public service

1. Participation in collective governing bodies at NBU

The candidate has gained administrative and managerial experience at NBU since 2017. 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 where she was in charge of organizing continuing education at the university. Since 1 July 2024, she has served as Dean of the School of General Studies and member of the Faculty Council of the Law department. 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.

The candidate's administrative and public activities, as well as her involvement in the collective governing bodies of NBU, can be highly appreciated in the context of the current competition for Associate Professor.

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—Europea Geoscience Union (2024).

V. Personal impression of the candidate (if any)

I got to know Dr. Tsvetanova while working together on a variety of activities and initiatives at NBU. Her commitment and professionalism have always been extraordinary. She has demonstrated an incredible ability to inspire students and colleagues, while her expertise in the field of quantitative research is invaluable to the academic community. Chief Assist. Prof. Tsvetanova, PhD, is not only an excellent teacher, but also an exceptional mentor. Her work with graduands and students attests to her commitment to education and her desire to impart knowledge and experience. She possesses the ability to identify talents and to guide young researchers in the academic career. Her capacity for teamwork and effective communication with colleagues across various fields is an invaluable quality. As a person, she comes across as sincere and respectful individual. She is always willing to listen to others' opinion and consider different points of view, a quality which is extremely important in academia. She is a remarkably positive and adaptive person in the course of performing her work duties.

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



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As far as the scientific research submitted by Chief Assist. Prof. Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, is concerned, I do not have any critical remarks to offer. She has proved herself to be an excellent scholar and teacher, who combines high academic and research standards with practical application of knowledge. I firmly believe that the candidate undoubtedly possesses the potential to participate in research projects in the European scientific space and the knowledge to expand her research in the field of management.

I recommend that she continues to develop her teaching and research initiatives by encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge exchange among colleagues and students.

Conclusion

Based on the information in this opinion, I declare that the candidate Chief Assistant Professor Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva, PhD, fully aligns with the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulation on the Implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, as well as the requirements of the NBU's Regulation on the Implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act to hold the academic position of Associate Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative methods in management). The candidate's scientific publications for this competition contain significant *theoretical, methodological, practical, and applied contributions*, which are the product of her personal scholarly endeavors and further the development of science.

In conclusion, I give positive evaluation of the scientific and academic work of the candidate and support Chief Assistant Professor Ekaterina Rumenova Tsvetanova-Georgieva's application for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative methods in management) at New Bulgarian University and recommend that she be selected by the Academic Council.

Sofia,
Dated 15 January, 2025

Signature
/Prof. Kristiyan Hadzhiev, PhD/