

REVIEW

on the competition for the academic position of "Professor"
in the scientific specialty of "Social Policy and Political Science",
professional field 3.4 Social Activities,
Technical University - Varna



Candidate: Assoc. Prof. Dr.Sc. Toshko Hristov Petrov, Head of the Department of Social and Legal Sciences, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Technical University - Varna

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Sc.(Econ) Dimitar Kanev Kanev, VFU "Chernorizets Hrabar"

1. General biographical data of the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Toshko Hristov Petrov was born in 1958. He completed higher education in the field of "Organization and Management of Administrative Activities," with a degree of "Master" and a second specialty in the same field in 1983 at the University of National and World Economy - Sofia. In 1996, he obtained the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in the scientific specialty of "Political Science." From 1985 to 2002, he worked as a lecturer in the Department of Social Sciences at VVMU "N. Y. Vaptsarov" - Varna, progressively holding the academic positions of "Assistant," "Senior Assistant," and "Chief Assistant," and in 2001, he was awarded the academic title (then) "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty of "Political Science" by the Higher Attestation Commission. In this period, I have personal impressions of his long-term work as a lecturer in the department, where he demonstrated high responsibility and erudition in his teaching activities. In 2003, he was elected as an associate professor in the scientific specialty of "Political Science" at the Technical University - Varna, where he currently works. He has served as the head of the Department of Social and Legal Sciences for several terms (2007-2011, 2011-2015, 2019 and currently), and from 2015 to 2019, he held the position of Vice-Rector at the Technical University - Varna. In 2013, he successfully defended his dissertation on the topic "Application of Game Modeling in Situational Political Analysis" in the Department of European Studies at Angel Kanchev Ruse University, and he was awarded the scientific degree of "Doctor of Sciences" in the professional field 3.3 Political Science.

The competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the professional field 3.4 Social Activities and the scientific specialty "Social Policy and Political Science" is supported by the decisions of the Departmental Council of the Department of Social and Legal Sciences and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, and the announcement of the competition was published in issue 29 of March 31, 2023, in the State Gazette.

2. General description of the materials submitted for the competition

Candidate Assoc. Prof. T. Petrov has submitted a total of 32 scientific works for review, including 1 monograph (habilitation work), 27 articles and scientific reports, of which 18 are independent and 9 are co-authored, 3 textbooks and teaching aids, and a list of all 29 scientific developments with abstracts for each of them. The documents for participation in the competition include the following

materials: a list of publications for participation in the competition, as well as those involved in previous procedures for the appointment of an academic position and the acquisition of the scientific degree of "Doctor of Sciences"; a reference to scientific and scientific-applied contributions; protocols for co-authorship; a report on the candidate's teaching workload according to the National Qualifications Framework for the academic year 2022-2023; a list of citations; a list of successfully defended doctoral students; a list of participation in scientific projects; a list of supervision of scientific projects; a declaration of originality; a reference in accordance with the requirements of Art. 2b of the DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA ACT (DASRBA), para. 3 of the REGULATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA ACT (RIDASRBA), and Art. 1 of the Internal Rules for Admission and Career Development (IRACD) at TU - Varna, for meeting the minimum national requirements for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social Economic and Legal Sciences, PF 3.4 Social Activities.

Based on the provided reference in accordance with the requirements of Art. 2b of the DASRBA, para. 3 of the RIDASRBA, and Art. 1 of the IRACD at TU - Varna, for meeting the minimum national requirements for the mentioned position, there is a substantial exceedance of the minimum requirements for indicators D, E, F and G. Furthermore, the presence of four successfully defended doctoral students, which indicates the formation of a school of young scholars and researchers in the field, is noteworthy, considering that one of the successfully defended doctoral students is also a lecturer in the department. Indicator D includes a published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the scientific degree of "Doctor of Sciences," which is not submitted for review.

As a general conclusion for this element of the competition procedure, I can draw the conclusion that the candidate Assoc. Prof. T. Petrov successfully meets the legal requirements for all groups of indicators.

Group of indicators	Content	Professor	Implementation by the applicant
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	-	100
C	Indicator 3	100	100
D	Sum of indicators from 4 to 10	200 (100 for 3.6)	304.9
E	Sum of indicators from 11 to 13	100	245
F	Sum of indicators from 14 to the end	150	310
G	Indicator 22	120	594

From the list of publications submitted by the candidate, divided by types of procedures passed, I can conclude that they do not repeat those of the previous procedures for acquiring a National Assembly "Doctor of Science" and for occupying a previous academic position. Also, the candidate declares that the submitted publications for participation in the competition are original author's works and plagiarism has not been proven against them.

3. Assessment of the candidate's research and applied scientific activities

The candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Toshko Hristov Petrov is an active and productive scholar with a wide range of scientific interests. The submitted works demonstrate the presence of specific areas of scientific interest in which the candidate works in-depth, analytically, and competently, achieving tangible scientific results.

The first area I would like to highlight and evaluate is the scientific field related to the application of quantitative, expert methods, and optimization models in political analysis. It includes four separate publications (III.3, III.4, III.7, and III.8 from the List of Publications) that present the conditions under which expert methods can be used for political decision-making, methods for group selection of the most preferred alternative, and the possibilities of applying the method of discrete multicriteria decision-making through matrix dichotomy. A mathematical model for optimal solving of a specific type of multicriteria problems is proposed, involving the choice among a finite number of available alternatives, as well as the application of methods in political practice, where political decision-making occurs after the evaluation of a group of alternatives presented and assessed sequentially over time by a group of experts. Additionally, an algorithm for decision-making based on incomplete information has been developed. These developments demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the subject matter by the candidate and the ability to generate new knowledge.

The second area I would like to mention is the developed system of mathematically linked multifactor regression models, which can be used to identify and quantitatively assess the main factors that significantly influence the electoral choice of Bulgarian voters and to prepare midterm forecasts of electoral behavior. The ability to operationalize data from conducted survey research in a logically correct manner is impressive. This approach can be applied in other areas of scientific knowledge as well.

Thirdly, I would highlight the fact that a large part of the developments has not only theoretical value but also immediate practical relevance. In the development of the issues related to the efficiency of social services, a methodology for assessing comparative efficiency using econometric methods (DEA-Delphi methods and regression analysis - III.20, III.21, III.22, and III.24) has been proposed, based on which a methodology has been developed and an evaluation of the quality and efficiency of social services provided to specific target groups in Northeastern Bulgaria has been conducted. Similarly, I would assess the group of publications related to the improvement of the system for standardization of social services (III.16, III.17, III.18, III.19, and III.23), as well as the newly developed system of standards aiming to ensure the quality of social services provided to adults. I would also evaluate the idea of a new electoral system that largely overcomes the shortcomings of the existing electoral system in our country (III.11, III.12, III.13, III.14, and III.15) as innovative and well-founded.

4. Assessment of the candidate's pedagogical training and activities

The candidate for participation in the competition possesses in-depth pedagogical and methodological competence and extensive pedagogical experience. Without a doubt, Assoc. Prof.

Dr.Sc. Toshko Petrov has extensive pedagogical experience and training fully corresponding to the requirements for the position of "Professor" - 38 years of academic experience in two higher education institutions in our country, having gone through all academic positions (assistant, senior assistant, chief assistant, and as an associate professor for more than 20 years). He has taught numerous courses as a qualified lecturer in disciplines corresponding to his professional competence in bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs at the Technical University - Varna. He has specialized in leading European universities. He is proficient in two foreign languages (Spanish and Russian) and possesses the necessary managerial and social competencies, having held leadership positions at TU-Varna for several mandates.

5. Main scientific, scientific-applied, and methodological contributions

The scientific, scientific-applied, and methodological contributions included in the candidate's scientific works can be classified as follows:

5.1. Scientific contributions:

5.1.1. Development of the theoretical foundations of electoral behavior of Bulgarian voters - forms of participation in shaping political power, characteristics of voting, ways of forming political orientations, etc.

5.1.2. Development of methods for applying quantitative and expert methods in making political decisions and using the principle of optimality in solving multi-criteria problems with incomplete information.

5.1.3. Development of theoretical and methodological problems of electoral systems, possibilities for improving the electoral system in our country through the implementation of a new electoral system different from the existing one, with the aim of improving the electoral process.

5.1.4. Development of issues related to the effectiveness of social services and new methods for measuring and evaluating it, using econometric and expert methods.

5.1.5. Development of problems related to the quality and standardization of social services, guidelines for improving the existing system for standardization of social services in the country, and the development of a new system for standardization of social services for adults.

5.2. Main applied contributions:

5.2.1. A system of mathematically interconnected multifactor regression models has been developed, which can determine the main factors that have a significant influence on the electoral choice of Bulgarian voters; those factors that have a significant influence have been selected; their regression coefficients have been determined; their statistical significance has been assessed; the adequacy of the regression models has been tested.

5.2.2. The thesis about the possibility of constructing medium-term electoral forecasts through multifactor regression models has been substantiated, and possibilities for expanding their heuristic and predictive potential have been presented.

5.2.3. Development and analysis of alternative electoral systems with possibilities for improving the existing electoral system for different types of elections in the country.

5.2.4. Creation and testing of a methodology for assessing the quality and effectiveness of social services for children deprived of parental care.

5.2.5. Development and testing of a system of standards and criteria for evaluating the quality of social services for adults.

5.3. Main methodological contributions of the candidate:

5.3.1. Implementation of the results of the candidate's scientific and applied research and publications in the education of students in bachelor's and master's programs, as well as doctoral students in the doctoral program in Social Activities at the Technical University - Varna, through the inclusion of relevant elements from them in the developed curriculum of the courses taught by the candidate, such as "Social Policy," "Organization and Management of Social Activities," "Conflict Resolution," and "Methodology of Scientific Research and Development of Dissertation Work in Social Sciences."

5.3.2. The achieved results of the scientific and applied research have a significant contribution to integrating contemporary achievements, innovative theories, and practices into the education of students and doctoral students in the specialties and doctoral program in Social Activities at the Technical University - Varna.

5.3.3. The achieved results of the scientific and applied research are used for the scientific, professional, and pedagogical growth and development of the academic staff in the Department of Social and Legal Sciences and for the formation of a scientific-teaching school of young scholars and researchers in the department.

5.4. Citations of the candidate's scientific works and representation of publications:

The candidate has provided in the documentation for the competition 42 citations of 13 own and 3 co-authored scientific publications (monographs, scientific articles and reports, textbooks and teaching materials) in scientific journals, yearbooks, and conference proceedings of universities in the country, as well as one publication in a conference proceedings abroad (Greece).

6. Significance of contributions to science and practice

The presented contributions in the candidate's scientific works indicate their significance in the following scientific areas:

6.1. Electoral behavior, electoral communities, modeling of electoral behavior.

6.2. Electoral systems, methodology of electoral systems, comparative electoral systems.

6.3. Efficiency of social services, methods for measuring the effectiveness of social services for different target groups.

6.4. Application of quantitative, expert methods, and optimization models in political analysis.

6.5. Quality standards for social services, standardization systems for social services, improvement of the existing system for standardization of social services.

The results of the scientific and scientific-applied research are incorporated in the formation of a scientific and teaching school at the Technical University - Varna and are used for the scientific and pedagogical development of the faculty in the Department of Social and Legal Sciences.

7. Critical remarks and recommendations

7.1. Regarding the candidate's presented scientific production, I do not have specific critical remarks.

7.2. I believe that continuing research in the aforementioned directions, in which the candidate has achieved certain results and made scientific and applied contributions, would be promising and would enrich and further develop the already achieved results.

8. Personal impressions and opinion of the reviewer

My personal impressions of the candidate, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Toshko Hristov Petrov, are that he is a competent, thorough, and analytical researcher, as well as a collegial, experienced, and erudite university lecturer in his scientific field.

9. Conclusion

I consider candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr.Sc. Toshko Hristov Petrov to be an authoritative and recognized researcher and lecturer in his professional field and scientific specialty, both in academic circles in Bulgaria and abroad. Evidence of this is his academic production, citations by representatives of the academic community in the country and abroad, trained students and doctoral students, completed specializations, and lectures delivered at foreign universities.

The scientific production presented by the candidate for participation in the competition fully meets the required quantitative indicators and criteria for the academic position of "Professor" in accordance with the requirements of Article 2b of the DASRBA, Article 3 of the DASRBA, and Article 1 of the IRACD at TU-Varna for meeting the minimum national requirements for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences," Professional field 3.4 "Social Activities."

The documents presented by the candidate for participation in the competition provide me with grounds to make a well-founded conclusion that the legal requirements are met and to propose Assoc. Prof. Dr.Sc. Toshko Hristov Petrov for the academic position of "Professor" in the scientific specialty "Social Policy and Political Science," Professional field 3.4 "Social Activities" in the Department of Social Activities, Technical University - Varna.

 Незавиден подпис

**Заличена информация
по Регламент (ЕС)
2016/679**

Подписано от: Dimitar Kanev Kanev

June 22, 2023

Reviewer:

**Заличена информация
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(Prof. D. Econ.Sc. Dimitar Kanev)