

## REVIEW

by prof. Antoaneta Hristova, Ph.D.  
from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences  
of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
for occupying the academic position of professor  
in VUZF University-Sofia  
in the field of higher education: 3.7. Administration and Management  
professional area: Human resource management, leadership and organizational change

In the competition for “professor”, announced in the State Gazette, no. 52 of 07/05/2022, as the only candidate participates assoc.prof. Teodora Milcheva Lazarova, Ph.D. from VUZF.

### **1. General presentation of the received materials**

By order No. 368 of 10.11.2022. of the Rector of VUZF, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of competition for the appointment to the academic position of “professor” at VUZF in the field of higher education 3.7. "Administration and management", professional area “Management of human resources, leadership, and organizational change”.

Associate professor Teodora Milcheva Lazarova submitted documents for participation in the announced competition at VUZF.

The paper/electronic set of materials presented by the candidate is in accordance with the Regulations specifying the terms and conditions for holding academic positions at VUZF and includes the following documents:

- Autobiography;
- Diploma for acquired educational and scientific degree “Ph.D.”;
- Document for the occupation of the academic position “associate professor” at VUZF;
- Habilitation thesis on the topic of the announced competition;
- Other publications related to the competition and their summaries – a total of 23 articles and reports in scientific publications developed independently, two textbooks and one study aid;
- Report on the fulfillment of the national minimum requirements, enshrined in the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) and the Regulations for its implementation;
- Reference for contributions in scientific publications;
- Reference for the citations of scientific works in publications of other scientists – a total of 27 citations, some of which in publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information;
- Employment certificate;
- Reference of the applicant's participation in various projects;
- Other administrative documents accompanying the procedure.

The documents are in accordance with the requirements for the present competition.

## **2. Fulfillment of the national minimum requirements, laid down in the LDASRB and the Regulations for its implementation**

The minimum required points by group of indicators for the academic position “professor” correspond to the required scientometric indicators. Their number is accumulated in 4 groups of indicators, namely:

- availability of published monographs,
- articles and reports published in non-refereed databases,
- citations and
- published textbooks and teaching aids.

The collected points match exactly the required ones, with a difference in the citations, where 65 are more than the specified minimum, i.e. the type of scientific publications of the candidate, the textbooks and study guide, the available citations of her works in the publications of other authors are sufficient for fulfilling the minimum national requirements laid down in the LDASRB and the Regulations for its implementation.

## **3. General characteristics of the applicant's activity**

The experience of assoc. prof. Teodora Lazarova leaves a strong impression.

She began her education in the field of psychology at Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”.

She acquired the educational and scientific degree “Doctor of Psychology” after studying at the Institute for Population and Human Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Her experience continues in two directions - business practice and academic career. She works for Anthill as Director of Human Resources, in the past as well as in Montway Inc/Ship.Cars, Blue Bear Technologies, NaXex Technological Development Invesus Group, Blackboard Inc. / Ballistic cell Ltd., D Commerce Bank and Eurobank EFG Bulgaria. Assoc. prof. Lazarova has been part of the VUZF team since 2012, when she participated as a lecturer in the joint program of VUZF with the University of Sheffield, and in parallel, she has taught in a number of other universities in Bulgaria - the University of National and World Economy, New Bulgarian University, National Sports Academy. In this way over the years assoc. prof. Lazarova has accumulated significant teaching and pedagogical experience and knowledge that she imparts to students in the field of business psychology and human resource management. The reference for assoc. prof. Lazarova’s workload indicates over 1,000 teaching hours, realized for the last 4 years after holding the academic position of “associate professor” especially considering the variety of classes on a range of disciplines in both Bulgarian and English language. Her strong motivation for work and efficiency in the realization of goals, planning and ability to work in a highly complex environment makes assoc. prof. Lazarova a specialist with versatile knowledge and experience, which is especially valuable for the university where she teaches, for its undergraduate and graduate students.

## **4. General characteristics of the candidate's publications**

The monograph “Leadership and Management of Organizational Change” consists of 240 pages with 411 scientific sources cited, from of which 15 in Bulgarian, the rest in English.

Based on the challenges of the Covid pandemic and the observed overlapping crises in the last two years, the candidate discusses the problem of the development and change of organizations in the context of the leadership factor. The monograph outlines the picture of the new dynamics of the global labor market requiring organizations to be innovative, not just campaign and episodic, but also focusing on the overall workflow of the various processes within them. Analyzing the issues related t leadership styles and their importance for human resource management and organizational change, the monograph dwells on the

main challenges facing modern times leaders. The main hypothesis of the presented work is that the challenges before the effective management of human resources and organizational change, are related to: the criticality of effective leadership in organizations in relation to short-term goals versus long-term strategy and rigidity versus flexibility. The other two components which are presented in assoc. prof. Lazarova's work are the innovative approaches at human resource management to achieve higher levels of employee motivation, satisfaction and retention, as well as the need to use organizational management techniques in the context of increasing automation. The main purpose of the subsequent analysis is to explore the impact of COVID-19 on contemporary organizations and leadership, and to identify the main challenges and opportunities for organizational change. In the monograph qualitative and comparative analysis are applied. The first part is devoted to fundamental and contemporary leadership theories. The second part - to the stages of human resource management by analyzing the key factors in long-term employee motivation and attachment to the company. The third part brings out the main interactions related to the higher effectiveness of certain leadership styles in different business contexts.

The main contributions of the author in the presented monograph cover the good systematization of the theories in the two first parts and the derivation of the interrelationships between the leadership style and the organizational environment. Important emphasis is placed on the concept of self-leadership, which has been expanded and upgraded. These contributions make the work practically oriented by presenting rich information for the purpose of the teaching process of students and doctoral students on the topics, related to leadership and human resource management.

The presented additional works of assoc. prof. Lazarova all have a thematic focus on leadership, management, human resources, recruitment, team management and modern methods of teaching.

Assoc. prof. Lazarova is an accomplished specialist and lecturer on the subject of the announced competition, with a clear profile in the field of human resources management resources, leadership, and organizational behavior.

## **5. Personal impressions**

I know associate professor Todora Lazarova from the period in which she was a doctoral student at the Institute for Population and Human Research at the BAS. My impression is for a goal-oriented, motivated, organized person who can work on many and different tasks at the same time. Her performance is clearly reflected at work in the business and at VUZF, teaching and participating in the development of new disciplines in the field of business psychology and human resources management. This makes her a valuable lecturer and researcher in higher education.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the materials presented by associate professor Lazarova, I give a positive assessment of her application and I recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Academic Council for the election of assoc. prof. Teodora Lazarova to the academic position of "professor" at VUZF under the professional field "3.7. Administration and Management (Human Resource Management, Leadership and Organizational Change)"

01.12.2022  
Sofia

Reviewer: (s)

/prof. Antoaneta Hristova, Ph.D./