

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. dr. Daniela Ventsislavova Georgieva

3.8 "Economics" (Accounting).

International Business School

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition
to hold the academic position of 'associate professor'
of the VUZF University

Field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences;
3.8 "Economics" (Audit, accounting and economic crime counteraction).

In the competition for "associate professor", announced in the State Gazette, no. 93 from 22.11.2022 and on the website of the VUZF University, a participating candidate is Dr. Diana Bankova Nedelcheva.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order No. 120 from 13.03.2023 of the Rector of the VUZF, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at VUZF in the field of 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, 3.8 "Economics" (Audit, accounting, and economic crime counteraction).

For participation in the announced competition, documents were submitted by Dr. Diyana Bankova Nedelcheva. Dr. Nedelcheva is the only candidate, and in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of VUZF, she submitted the following documents:

- autobiography;
- diploma for Doctorate degree;
- habilitation work and summary of it;
- a book based on the candidate's defended dissertation;
- list of publications after the defense of the doctoral dissertation and copies of them;

- summaries in Bulgarian and English of the publications;
- copies of civil contracts for lectures held;
- evidence of performed expert activity;
- evidence of membership in scientific organizations;
- reference to the fulfillment of the national minimum requirements laid down in the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) and the Regulations for its implementation;
- a reference to the citations of scientific works in publications by other authors;
- a reference to contributions in the scientific publications;
- other administrative documents.

Dr. Diyana Bankova Nedelcheva obtained a Bachelor's degree, majoring in "Accounting and Control"; Master's degree majoring in "Audit and risk management"; and Doctor degree in 3.8 "Economics" (Accounting, Control, and Analysis) at VUZF. In her professional career, the candidate held positions such as assistant auditor, accountant, part-time lecturer, and senior inspector in the Commission for public supervision of registered auditors. She is a member of two scientific organizations, including The Union of Scientists in Bulgaria. The professional profile and career development of the candidate is indicative that Dr. Diyana Bankova Nedelcheva is primarily focused on the field of accounting, auditing, and economic crime. The paper's reviews of other authors' manuscripts prepared by the candidate and the participation in the Scientific Board of a project are indicative that the candidate is recognized among the scientific circles in Bulgaria and abroad.

Dr. Nedelcheva provided 19 scientific works for review, including an independent monograph, a book on the dissertation of the candidate, articles, and reports. 18 of them are accepted for review (the book based on the candidate's defended dissertation is not subject to review). The number and type of documents and materials provided by the candidate meet all the requirements of the LDASRB, the Regulations for its implementation, and the relevant Regulations of the VUZF. The presented works and materials correspond to the specialty of the competition.

2. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

2.1 Assessment of educational and pedagogical activity and preparation of the candidate (study materials, lecture courses, work with students, graduates, and doctoral students)

Dr. Diana Bankova Nedelcheva presented documents for her engagement as a part-time lecturer at the VUZF, University of National and world economy, Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the International Business School. The candidate has taught in the disciplines "Operational-investigative activities for combating economic crime"; "European Police Cooperation"; "Reporting of intra-trade transactions"; "Corporate social responsibility"; "Principles of accounting II" and "Intellectual Property and Cyber Security". The disciplines in which Dr. Nedelcheva held lectures are directly related to the specialty of the competition.

2.2 Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and scientific-applied activity

For the announced competition, Dr. Diyana Bankova Nedelcheva has submitted a sufficient number and type of scientific publications, including 1 monograph; 1 book based on the dissertation defended by the candidate; 1 study; 8 reports (of which 2 are in Scopus and WoS databases); 8 articles. Three of the presented works are prepared with another author, and separation protocols were presented for them, showing that the participation of the two co-authors was 50/50. There are no textbooks or teaching aids in the materials presented by the candidate.

RECAPITULATION

at the time of the opinion's preparation the amount of scientific production of the candidate for the position of "associate professor" is as follows

Type of publication	In Bulgaria		Abroad		Overall
	Independent	In co-authorship	Independent	In co-authorship	
Habilitation work	1				1
A book based on the candidate's defended dissertation	1				1
Studies	1				1

Articles	8				8
Reports	5			3	8
Of these: published in Scopus				2	2
Overall	16			3	19

Based on the previous table, it can be stated that the main core of the candidate's work is the articles and reports, representing each type a2% of the total presented works. Among the publications, those indexed and referenced, in the Scopus and WoS databases stand out. At the time of writing the current opinion, there are a total of 2 reports in the Scopus database. I believe that the main directions in the research activity of Dr. Diyana Bankova Nedelcheva can be summarized in the following aspects:

1. Exploring the meaning, functions, and role of the auditor, as well as the challenges facing the auditing profession. In the specified direction, the following works from the materials submitted for review under the competition can be included: (1) On the implementation of the Regulation on the protection of personal data in auditing practice; (2) Problems in determining auditor fees in Bulgaria; (3) Changes in the audit function; (4) On the reasons for the introduction of supervision over the auditing profession and the modifications in auditing; (5) Regarding the participation of the auditors in the transformation of the legal form of the companies; (6) Hybrid audit as an innovative approach in the audit.

2. Research on the role and importance of internal control, the control environment, supervision, and audit in the management, including the following works of the candidate: (1) Control in the management of insurance companies; (2) Methodological problems of the quality control system in audit firms; (3) For some peculiarities of audit committees.

3. Countermeasures against economic crime, security, cyber security, cyber audit, and criminal audit, including the papers: (1) On some peculiarities in the auditing of electronic money companies; (2) Significance of digitization in eliminating asymmetric information in the economy; (3) For certain aspects of the financial audit related to countering economic crime; (4) The financial audit, as a means of countering economic crimes; (5) Regarding cyber security in enterprises; (6)

Financial Aspects Of Crimes In The Game Of Football; (7) About the Challenges of Cybercrime in the Digital Age; (8) Security and safety of tourists as a factor for sustainable tourism, based on the example of Bulgarian black sea resorts.

4. Research of the financial condition of the entities and the reliability of the financial and accounting information of enterprises based on the information in the audit reports. The following works from the competition materials submitted for review can be included here: (1) Sustainability of forest-based industries in the global economy.

I believe that the presented works meet the mandatory conditions in Art. 24 of LDASRB.

2.3 Contributions (scientific, scientific-applied, applied) and citations

The scientific contributions can be sought in the monographic work presented by the candidate, and in the articles and scientific reports of Dr. Nedelcheva.

Dr. Diyana Nedelcheva presented for her habilitation thesis an independent monograph entitled "Control in the management of insurance companies", Avangard prima, ISBN: ISBN 978-619-239-584-1, pp. 1- 159.

The monographic work is dedicated to the control function in the management of insurance companies in the Republic of Bulgaria. The research is a finished author's work, focusing on the current problems in the sector, related to the aggravated regulatory framework and over-regulation of the activity. In addition to the extensive literature research on the subject, the author pays special attention to issues such as cybercrime, cyber audit and criminal audit.

The main contribution to the monographic work of Dr. Diyana Nedelcheva are:

Contributions of a theoretical and theoretical-methodological nature:

- A comprehensive theoretical analysis of the scientific literature was made regarding the weaknesses, risks, gaps, and new challenges in the management of insurance companies, and rational guidelines for improvements were proposed.

- The thesis about the necessity of modifying the control functions in insurance companies is clearly defended, and new forms of audit - criminal and cyber audits - are justified.

Contributions of an applied nature:

- An empirical author's study of the opinions in the audit reports of insurance companies was conducted, proving the usefulness of the independent financial audit for the control environment.

In the other scientific papers presented by Dr. Nedelcheva, I accept the following contributions of the candidate:

- An in-depth theoretical study was made on the role and importance of internal control, as well as the risks arising from weaknesses in the control environment.

- Innovative methods and approaches related to combating economic crime and minimizing financial fraud have been successfully investigated.

- The problem areas in the selection of audit teams and the lack of regulations regarding the hourly rates for the audit services in the various sectors in Bulgaria have been analyzed. It is done in the context of deep analysis of the normative challenges to the auditing profession identified by the candidate and systematized recommendations for improvements.

- The financial and economic condition of enterprises and the reliability of the data disclosed in the reports were investigated based on the information in the audit reports of registered auditors.

The candidate presents a reference for 16 citations of scientific works developed and published by other authors. One of the presented citations is in a paper published in a publication referenced and indexed in SCOPUS. This testifies to the recognition of the candidate in scientific circles.

The materials presented by Dr. Nedelcheva (including a reference to citations and scientific works) meet and even exceed the required scientometric indicators for the position of associate professor.

4. Personal impressions

I have known Dr. Nedelchava since she was a doctoral student at VUZF. I have had the pleasure of working with her on joint papers, audits, and educational activities. In a personal and professional aspect, Diyana Bankova Nedelcheva is responsible, ambitious, and hardworking. She has innovative ideas and correctly uses scientific approaches to prove them.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical comments on the presented scientific works of the candidate. However, I would like to address to Dr. Nedelcheva the following recommendations:

- 1) To deepen and expand her research on accounting topics and issues.

- 2) I believe that the candidate has the extensive practical-applied experience, which will be extremely valuable to convey in the form of examples, assignments, and tasks in the educational and pedagogical activity of Dr. Nedelcheva. Therefore, I encourage Dr. Nedelcheva to focus on publishing textbooks and teaching aids for the courses she will lead.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, I give my positive assessment of the materials provided for consideration in connection with the present procedure and vote " yes" to Dr. Diyana Bankova Nedelcheva to be chosen for the academic position of "associate professor" at VUZF in professional direction 3.8 "Economics" (Audit, accounting and economic crime counteraction).

12.04.2023

Prepared the opinion:(S).....

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