



UNIVERSITY OF NATIONAL AND WORLD ECONOMY

REVIEW

From: Prof. dr. Maria Georgieva Stoyanova, University of National and World Economy – Sofia, department „Economic Sociology”, scientific specialty „Sociology”.

About: Competition for academic position “Associate Professor” in professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural studies, scientific specialty „Sociology”, for the purposes of department „Public Policies and Social Changes” at Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IPS-BAS).

1. Information about the competition

The competition is announced for the purposes of department „Public Policies and Social Changes” at IPS-BAS, according Protocol №27/10.12.2019 of Scientific Council at IPS-BAS. I am member of the Scientific Jury according to Order RD-09-769 of 18.12.2019 by the Director of IPS-BAS.

2. Information about the applicant

Only one candidate has been submitted documents in this competition – chief assist. prof. dr. Veneta Krasteva Petrunova, department „Public Policies and Social Changes” at IPS-BAS. The applicant has been graduated of Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”, specialty „Sociology” both „bachelor” and „master” degree in the period 2003-2008. Her doctoral research ended in 2009 with successfully defended dissertation thesis with theme: „Economic ethic of Bulgarian Orthodox Church”.

After acquiring doctoral degree, the research, teaching and practical experience of the applicant is as follow:

- **senior assistant profesor** in department „Public Policies and Social Changes” at IPS-BAS since 2010;
- **lecturer** at University of Plovdiv „Paisii Hilendarski”; coordinator to the Memorandum of Cooperation and internship training of IPS-BAS with department “Sociology” at Sofia university and department “Economic sociology” at UNWE;
- **scientific mentor** of students from Sofia University, UNWE and Brown University, USA, who have participated in internship program at IPS-BAS as part of bilateral agreements in program: ”Student Practices - Phase 1”, OP „Science and education for intelligent growth” of Ministry of Education and Science; member of 3 professional organizations – ESPANET, BSA and USB;

- **member of management committees of two COST Actions** (2017-2021 and 2018-2022);
- **participation in 12 international and national projects;**
- **reports presented at 19 scientific conferences;**
- **6 participations in organization activity for scientific conferences** as member of 1 program and 2 scientific committees abroad and of 3 organizing committees in Bulgaria;
- **elaborated** 39 publications, submitted for review in this competition;
- **prestigious prize given in 2019 by Ministry of Education and Science** for managing the most successful project in Program of BAS for supporting young scientists- 2017.

The brief biographical info discloses that in the competition for academic position “associate professor” a perspective young researcher with motivation and serious achievements in research, teaching and practical activity applies.

3. Fulfillment of academic position requirements

I have received for reviewing a full set of documents for participation of chief assist. prof. Veneta Krasteva in the competition for academic position “Associate Professor”. After their evaluation the following **conclusion** can be made:

first, all publications were made after acquiring a PhD degree

second, these publications are in the field of scientific specialty “Sociology”, in the framework of which the competition is announced.

The materials submitted in the competition **fully comply with the requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor at IPS-BAS.**

The reviewer's observation is also confirmed by the overview of applicant`s materials accomplished at IPS-BAS.

4. Evaluation of teaching activities

Chief assist. prof. dr. Veneta Krasteva has reach teaching experience in department „Sociology of law, economy and innovations” at University of Plovdiv „Paisii Hilendarski”, where she has taught “Economic Sociology” in the period 2010-2016 (60 hours lectures and 60 hours exercises). This is a proof for acquired high level of qualification in the field of sociological disciplines that makes her able to teach at Higher education institutions.

In parallel with the teaching activity, she has been a mentor of interns from three universities - Sofia University, UNWE and Brown University (USA), who have participated in internship program at IPS-BAS as part of bilateral agreements in program: ”Student Practices - Phase 1”, OP „Science and education for intelligent growth” of Ministry of Education and Science.

Fluent in English and German.

Member of the Network for European Social Policy Analysis, Bulgarian Sociological Association and Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

She is respected by her colleagues.

5. Characteristics of the submitted for review research works/publications

Thematically the presented by the applicant works cover 4 main research fields. The **first** one is in the field of **Economic sociology** (labour market and youth unemployment and employment, poverty and social exclusion, job insecurity) and of **Social Policy** (public policies for social changes – regulation of unemployment and social inequalities). On these issues 19 works written in the period 2010-2019 are devoted, all after defense of dissertation thesis, namely: 1 monograph (2019) and 5 papers (2017-2019), 5 articles (2010-2018) and 8 chapters in collective monographs (2018-2019). The **second** one is in the field of **Sociology of religion**, presented in 1 monograph (2014), 7 articles published between 2010-2014. The **third research topic** is in the framework of **Sociology of education**, part of which are 3 articles, published between 2012-2014. The **fourth one** is related to the study of the **effects of absorption of EU funds** under the Structural and Cohesion Fund in the period 2007-2013 (9 articles in 2014).

Decisive is the research topic in the field of economic sociology and social policy.

In the competition dr. Krasteva participates with total of 39 publications - 2 monographs, 5 papers, 24 articles, 8 chapters in collective monographs. 28 out of 39 are in English.

One of the presented monographs is a refereed edition. There are 3 international publications that fully cover the normative requirements.

The applicant has been participated in **7 international and 5 national projects**, covering her research interests. She has been taken part with **reports in 19 scientific conferences** - 3 abroad (2 in Slovenia and 1 in Serbia) and 16 in the country;

Manager of 1 project – awarded by MES.

Her works find repercussion in Bulgarian and foreign literature. Indication for this statement are the citations presented – 19 out of **22 citations** are in referee editions with scientific reviewing and 3 are in non-refereed editions but also with scientific review.

The reviewer defines all submitted works and citations as corresponding to the theme of the competition and eligible to be reviewed.

6. Evaluation of the main scientific and scientifically applied contributions

The main contributions of the applicant are in the research fields summarized above. They are comprehensively described in a separate annex to the submitted materials.

Krasteva's **contributions** can be summarized into three groups – scientific, methodological and applied-practical.

On first place are the **scientific achievements** related to enrichment of sociological knowledge, namely:

- **identification of real problems of vulnerable young people in the labour market**, such as subjective and social insecurity, low jobs quality, labor rights violations, insufficient (in some cases lacking) state support, based on the concept of precarious jobs. These observations were derived empirically;

- drawing on empirical study are **summarized the changed characteristics of young people in the contemporary societies**, using the sociological conception for youth as separate period in the personal development;

- **identification and analysis of macro-level factors** (globalization, technological changes, declining role of the welfare state, changes in labor regulations etc.) **causing changes** in the Bulgarian society in regard to the institutional, economic, cultural and social context, including **increasing fragmentation among young people** and unequal access to resources and opportunities for realization in the labour market;

- **consequences** of job insecurity and unemployment are identified: **at individual level** (for the labor market “drop-outs” and „poorly integrated participants”), **at group level** (disadvantaged in the labour market young people), at a **societal level**;

- empirically are **discovered and analyzed the positive and negative interactions** between different participants in the labour market – workers, employers, state institutions, NGOs. The focus is on the **negative practices and recommendations for overcoming them** are proposed, stressing the focus on the need of activating the dialog between all stakeholders;

- empirically are identified **main strategies** that vulnerable young people in Bulgaria adopt to deal with labor insecurity and unemployment and to accomplish what they value most in their lives. **Factors** contributing to the success (or failure) of the young Bulgarians are discovered, using the main tools of capability approach.

On second place, achievements related to enrichment of the methodological tools in the empirical sociological studies, namely:

- using methodologically appropriate approach – applying various sociological methods (desk research, in-depth interview, experts opinion) aiming to collect reliable empirical information for analysis;

- drawing upon quantitative and qualitative data allows the author to create a multilayer and more detailed picture of the research problem that couldn't be possible using only quantitative or qualitative research methods;

- the methodological tools developed can be used in future research on the dynamic and trends of the issues analyzed by the applicant.

On third place, applied-practical contributions related to public policies in the field of labour market, namely:

- **conclusions are drawn** that labour market and social policies applied in the socio-economic context in Bulgaria **made the situation for the most vulnerable groups even worse**, deepening social inequalities and expanding poverty rates in the society and create conditions for social exclusion of large groups of people;
- **assessment of programs and measures** part of the active labour market policies in 9 European states is conducted. Good practices among youth labour market interventions are selected and main factors contributing to their success are discovered. These conclusions can be very helpful for decision-makers when creating new youth labour market interventions. The comparative analysis is with very high quality performed;
- **recommendations are proposed** for improving the economic and social situation of vulnerable young people in Bulgaria that can be a basis for more effective knowledge-based policies for youth employment;
- **by the means of an empirical research problems** in the work of Bulgarian Orthodox Church in conditions of market economy are identified. **Recommendations** for adaptation of the religious institution to the new conditions are proposed;
- **gaps in the education of Bulgarian pupils are identified** and recommendations that stress the need of school programs for developing emotional and social intelligence are discussed.

The reviewer expresses agreement with the candidate's self-assessment of the scientific contributions. The contributions correspond to the content of the scientific publications submitted for review and reflect Krasteva's research work and achievements.

7. Critical notes and recommendations

Chief assist. prof. dr. Veneta Krasteva Petrunova has very serious and in-depth research, teaching and publishing activity, as well participation in sufficient number research projects. Her main research interest is targeted more to the social issues in Bulgaria that is a good basis for future studies. Recommendations can be directed to implementation of more comparative European and regional researches in the fields where she is an innovator. More extensive research is likely to be required, of an interdisciplinary nature. The promotion to academic position "Associate Professor" in department „Public Policies and Social Changes" at IPS-BAS will require in future more active work with students, PhD students and young researchers, participation in international projects and scientific manifestations, including supervision of PhD students.

8. Conclusion

The applicant in this competition – chief assist. prof. dr. Veneta Krasteva Petrunova,

meets all national and inner for BAS and IPS requirements for occupying the academic position of “Associate Professor”. Her works address significant sociological issues and are developed at a high-quality level. Her scientific, methodological and applied-practical contributions deserve high assessment. I know the applicant in person and I have high evaluation about her abilities as researcher and scientific worker.

The above said allows me to recommend to the members of the scientific jury to vote **in favor of awarding** chief assistant professor Veneta Krasteva Petrunova the academic position of **Associate Professor** in professional degree 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences”, discipline of “Sociology ” in department „Public Policies and Social Changes” at IPS-BAS.

11.02.2020
Sofia

Signature:
(Prof. Dr. Maria Stoyanova)