

Opinion
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Member of the Scientific Jury in the competition for the occupation of the academic position "Associate Professor" in the specialty Sociology, professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences for the needs of the The Center for Empirical Social Research of IFS-BAS, announced in the State Gazette No. 63 of July 30, 2021 by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS

1. General description of the materials submitted by the applicant

Chief Assistant Dr. Petya Ivanova Ilieva-Trichkova is the only candidate in the competition, she is a senior assistant at IFS at BAS. Trichkova has been a doctor of philosophy since 2016 from Adam Mickiewicz University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Poznan, Poland. The topic of her dissertation is "In search of social justice: current trends in higher education and the labor market in Bulgaria". She has conducted two specializations: - in London, Great Britain, Institute of Education, for the period 27. 09. 2011 - 21.12.2011; - in Brussels, Belgium, International Education, for the period 01.2.2012 - 30.04.2012. The candidate has a master's degree in sociology from the University of National and World Economy, Faculty of General Economics.

In the course of her research work, the candidate has received 3 awards for:

- Team leader of the most successful project funded by the "Program for Support of Young Scientists and Doctoral Students at BAS - 2017"
- The best publication of a young sociologist 2010-2017 of BAS, 2018;
- Young researcher "Prof. Marin Drinov" 2017.

Petya Ilieva-Trichkova has been a deputy member of the National Coordination Group for LLL since 2015. until now.

The candidate participates in the competition with 17 out of a total of 46 publications, of which she is the author or co-author and which are specified in:

- a collective monograph in English, published by the prestigious publishing house Palgrave Macmillan;
- 10 studies published in scientific journals, peer-reviewed and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information;
- 5 articles and reports published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes;
- 1 study published in a non-peer-reviewed journal with scientific review or published in an edited collective volume

Trichkova has a rich project activity, she has participated as a researcher in 3 projects - international and national.

The candidate has participated with presentations at 9 international scientific forums.

Chief Assist. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova exceeds almost double the points indicators presented as requirements established by the Rules of the National Council for academic positions at IFS - BAS; **for the required 430 points, she showed 832,5 points**

2. General characteristics of the applicant's scientific and applied activities

The research fields in which the candidate's works are developed are:

- Lifelong learning and higher education;
- Social justice and educational inequalities;
- Stratification and gender differences;
- Donation for education;
- Transition from education to work.

I especially emphasize the tracking of the comparative perspective, the use of data from international comparative studies in the analysis of various topics such as: LLL, educational opportunities for different age communities, social inequalities and the transition from education to employment.

In terms of content, I want to emphasize the desire to make summaries and show systematizations in the publications of Dr. Ilieva-Trichkova, as well as the use of various empirical methods as a basis for verification of theses and enrichment of analyzes.

3. A thorough analysis of the applicant's scientific achievements, a clear description of the scientific contributions.

The contributions of Chief Assistant Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova can be summarized as follows:

A. Contributing moments enriching the theory and methodology:

In research in the field of LLL and higher education:

- The complex potential of the theory of capability approach the study of adult education is revealed. The advantages of the approach to the Theory of Human Capital are shown.
- Models of activity (differentiated into "stimulating" and "restrictive") as well as of empowerment (differentiated into "realized" and "unrealized") through adult education have been developed.
- New methodological tools have been constructed to measure inequalities in adult education: "index of inclusion in adult education", "index of equality", "index of adult education as a common good".
- Various advantages and problems of international comparative research used in the field of adult education are defined. The need for combining different types of data - quantitative and

qualitative, primary and secondary, representative and non-representative studies, longitudinal and regularly repeated studies is justified.

In the field of educational inequalities

- It is argued that educational inequalities are an important indicator of human capital, as they capture losses in human development in two aspects: absolute and relative.
- Educational inequalities are addressed through the prism of social justice in access to and participation in higher education and with a focus on the relation "social origin - prestige of professional fields" within higher education.
- Two groups of characteristics of the education system that affect job insecurity in the transition of young people from school to work have been identified: institutional and structural.

In the field of gender differences

- The mechanism through which the educational system contributes to the regional segregation by sex in the vocational education in the country is revealed.

In the field of education donations

- Education donation is defined as a kind of expression of activity for the benefit of others.

B. Achievements serving social governance and practice:

- The developed theoretical formulations and the made empirical analyzes are used as a basis for the formulation of policies in the field of education.
- Recommendations have been formulated to stimulate the participation of vulnerable groups in adult education.

4. Reflection of the scientific publications of the candidate in our and foreign literature

The candidate presented 29 citations of publications, such as:

- 18 of the citations are in scientific journals, peer reviewed and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes.
- 11 citations are in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review.

5. Analysis of the publications

I will focus on the main work with which Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova participated in the competition for academic position "Associate Professor" in Sociology, published in 2021 in co-authorship with P. Boyadzhieva.

„Adult Education as Empowerment: Re-imagining Lifelong Learning through the Capability Approach, Recognition Theory and Common Goods Perspective“ Palgrave Macmillan.

The monograph is a synthesis of Petya Ilieva's many years of work on LLL and adult education, which has an instrumental role in gaining positions in the labor market and mobility, at the same time, adult education is a prerequisite for personal self-improvement and spiritual

growth. Thanks to education, empowerment is achieved, associated with increased activity and realization, leading to greater control over the environment and increase welfare. The analysis takes into account the action of factors acting at different levels (macro, meso, micro) and in different contexts - socio-economic, institutional and cultural, which at the same time interact. Special attention is required to the analysis of the value of adult education, which puts education in a broader perspective on the meaning of learning and the personal desire to educate oneself not only for instrumental purposes. Another very significant topic in the monograph is the contribution of adult education to increasing social justice. It is important to consider adult education as a common good that reflects access to it, the availability of sufficient learning opportunities, its affordability and the social commitment to its functioning. A complex index has also been developed, which measures the extent to which adult education has been realized as a public good in a given country..

The monograph as a whole is an in-depth understanding and reflection of various concepts, including the development of own author models on the studied topics and their various manifestations, as well as the use of rich empirical information from previous research, emphasizing the comparative perspective; use of data from qualitative methods, as well as a series of own researches using different methods.

The methodological analyzes made, emphasizing the need for complex use of different approaches in the study of empirical reality are essential. I appreciate the development of various indices: "inclusion", "equality of participation" and "index of adult education as a common good" as an important tool for assessing adult education and its place in practice, taking into account the following details: accessibility, availability of sufficient training opportunities, ability of people to cover the costs of their training and social commitment to this type of education. The indices take into account the temporal and spatial aspect of adult education and are based on data from various international studies.

The monograph has been developed at a high academic level and represents a significant achievement in the research field. I highly appreciate the expressed authorial presence and the erudition shown, the fact that both the societal and the community and personal level are traced; the institutional perspective is shown and empirical verification is clearly expressed.

In view of the future work of Dr. Petya Ilieva, I propose to trace the role of the non-governmental sector as a significant resource and important subject in adult education and in the gender aspect, while maintaining the established approach and structuring the analysis at macro, meso and micro level, applied to different European contexts and communities.

In connection with the publications aimed at educational inequalities by gender, I ask the following question to P. Ilieva: How do you assess the introduction of a quota principle by gender in university education from the time of socialism and is it necessary to introduce any approach today, in order to balance gender intake in different professional fields, as far as in the pedagogical specialties 85-90% of the students are women, and in the sciences and engineering specialties men dominate?

6. Personal impressions

I have known Petya Ilieva since her first years at the Institute of Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. My impressions are of an ambitious, persistent, purposeful researcher, with potential and critical reflection, with a serious and responsible attitude to work.

I believe that Dr. Petya Ilieva possesses erudition and high professionalism, which define her as a well-established researcher in the field of sociology.

7. Conclusion

Relying on the research activity of the Chief Assistant Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova and her contributions, taking into account her rich publishing activity, her participation in conferences, projects and forums, I highly appreciate her complex work and results presented during her participation in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor", in the specialty "Sociology", professional field 3.1. Sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences, for the needs of the Center for Empirical Social Research of IFS-BAS - Sofia.

I am voting completely convinced **for** the acquisition of the academic position "Associate Professor" by Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova

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Sofia

Prof.D.Sc. Valentina Milenkova.