

STATEMENT

By: *prof. Dr. Zornitsa Dimova Stoyanova,*
professional field Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agricultural and environmental Management)
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Regarding: *competition for Associate professor in scientific field 3.8. Economics, Agricultural Economics*

1. Information about the competition

The competition has been announced for the needs of the section "Regional and Sectoral Economy" at the Economic Research Institute at the BAS according to the Decision of the National Assembly of the Economic Research Institute at the BAS № 10/15.06.2022. I participate in the scientific jury for the competition in accordance with Order № 282/27.06.2022 of the Director of the ERI at the BAS.

2. Brief information about the candidate in the competition

The only candidate for the position Associate professor under the competition announced in SG № 33/ 29.04.2022 in scientific field 3.8. Economics, Agricultural Economics is chief assist. prof. dr. Petia Hristomirova Branzova.

Petia Branzova was born on 20 August 1985. She received her bachelor's degree in "Agricultural Economics" in 2008, and in 2009 she received her master's degree in "Agribusiness" at UNWE. During the period 2010-2014, chief assist. prof. Branzova is a full-time PhD student at the Natural Resource Economics Department at the UNWE, as a result of which she successfully defended her PhD thesis on the topic of Economic Impacts of Climate Change on Bulgarian Agriculture in the South-Eastern Planning Region. During this period, dr. Branzova taught as a part-time lecturer in the discipline "Ecology and Sustainable Development" to the students of the Faculty of Finance and Accounting at UNWE and participated as a researcher in a scientific project: "Climate changes and Bulgarian agriculture - economic impact and vulnerability". This shows the purposeful scientific searches of the candidate and her desire to build herself as a researcher still at the beginning of her scientific career. Chief. Assist. professor dr. Branzova held the position assistant in 2013 at the Economic Research Institute at the BAS in the section "Regional and Sectoral Economy". In 2019, she was elected to the position of chief assistant professor at the same institute.

Petia Branzova is a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, the Union of Economists in Bulgaria and the Union of Agricultural Economists in Bulgaria. She also participated in a significant number of national and international scientific conferences and forums (International Scientific Conference "Economic Development and Policies: Realities and Prospects", National Scientific Conference with International Participation "Innovative Development of Agrarian Business and Rural Areas", Third International Conference on Public administration on the topic: "30 years of public administration reforms in Central and Eastern Europe: the next horizon", Jubilee international scientific conference in honor of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the University of Economics - Varna on the topic "Economic science, education and real economy: development and interactions in the digital age", etc.)

3. Brief description of the presented scientific publications

Four main thematic directions could be distinguished in the scientific production of Petia Branzova. The first of them is dedicated to climate changes and their impact on Bulgarian agriculture. Significant research has been done on the impact of climate change on fruit crops, wheat, corn, barley, etc. In the publications of chief assist. prof. Branzova is also examined the topic related to organic production, its role for Bulgaria and organic production in the context of the new CAP. Of great interest is a group of publications exploring the development and challenges of the bioeconomy. High evaluation deserve dr. Branzova's works, which are dedicated to the development of producer markets, sources of financing in agriculture, young farmers etc.

For participation in the competition chief assist. prof. Petia Hristomirova Branzova presents a list of nineteen scientific papers. Under item B, one monographic work is included, dedicated to the influence of climate changes on the development of main fruit crops in the South-Eastern region of Bulgaria. Under item G, 18 publications are presented, one of which is a published book based on a defended PhD thesis for the award of the educational and scientific degree doctor and one article published in the scientific journal Economic Studies, which is a refereed and indexed publication in world-renowned databases with scientific information. Sixteen of dr. Branzova's publications are articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes. According to this indicator, Petia Branzova reaches 253 points out of 230 minimum required. The publishing activity of chief. assist. prof. Branzova fully meets the requirements for the growth of the academic staff.

With regard to dr. Branzova's citations, it should be noted that they significantly exceed the required minimum. Petia Branzova reported 105 points for this indicator, out of the required 70 points.

The presented documentation reveals that the scientific production of dr. Branzova is on the subject of the competition and fulfills the minimum national requirements for occupying the

academic position Associate professor in the field of Economics, Agricultural Economics, specified in the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application and the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at the BAS.

4. Synthesized evaluation of the main scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the candidate

The theoretical and methodological contributions in the scientific production of chief assistant dr. Branzova can be summarized as: 1) clarification of the essence of the theoretical and methodological basis of climate models; 2) further development and enrichment of the theoretical and methodological foundations of organic agriculture and its role; 3) further development and clarification of the literature views on the bioeconomy; 4) the theoretical foundations of green architecture in the context of CAP have been enriched.

The methodological contributions can be outlined by indicating that: 1) a methodology for researching the impact of climate change on the development of agriculture was created and tested; 2) the methodical steps for evaluating the influence of the choice of climate model on the result of forecasting the yields of different agricultural crops are described; 3) the estimation of the error from the forecast of yields in the determination of the final results was introduced.

The practical-applied contributions that can be found in the production of dr. Branzova are associated with: 1) the developed forecast options of the average yields and of the investments for the realization of the production; 2) finding new technical and technological solutions for efficient production, taking into account climate changes; 3) detailed and constructive proposals for overcoming the challenges facing organic production in Bulgaria.

These and other achievements and contributions give the reason to be made the conclusion that chief assist. prof. Petia Branzova has all the necessary qualities of an approved scientist and researcher who is part of the Bulgarian and European scientific community.

5. Main critical remarks and recommendations to the candidate

I don't have critical remarks. I have a recommendation for chief. assist. prof. dr. Branzova to continue with the same purposefulness and research responsibility to enrich her research activities and to study actual and significant problems for science and practice in the field of her competence.

6. Personal impressions of the reviewer about the candidate

I know Dr. Branzova, her publication activity and her scientific interests from our joint work on projects and as a reviewer of her PhD thesis. My impressions of her are that she is organized and consistent in her work, approaches it responsibly and competently, and has established long-term scientific interests. Through her research activity, Dr. Branzova reached results significant for science and practice, which gave her the opportunity to establish herself as an authoritative researcher and scientist.

7. Conclusion

Based on the evaluation of the scientific production, the candidate's presented competencies, scientific and scientific-applied contributions, I consider that chief assist. prof. Petia Branzova fully meets the requirements for holding the scientific position "Associate professor", set out in the LDASRB and the Regulations for its application at the BAS. The candidate chief assist. prof. dr. Petia Branzova, meets the legal requirements and exceeds the minimum scientometric criteria of the ERI at the BAS for occupying the academic position of "Associate professor". The scientific production is according to the scientific profile of the competition, is up-to-date and presents her as an established scientist. All this gives me the reason to evaluate positively the overall activity of dr. Petya Branzova.

I propose to the Scientific Jury to vote positively chief assist. Prof. Petia Hristomirova Branzova to be selected for the academic position of "Associate professor" in the scientific direction Economics, Agrarian Economics.

15.08.2022 / Sofia

Reviewer:

prof. dr. Zornitsa Stoyanova