

ОПИНИОН

From Prof. Nikolay Stefanov Radulov, D.Sci., lecturer at the New Bulgarian University, Department of National and International Security, research direction 9.1. National security, on scientific works (artistic and creative production) for participation in a competition for the academic position of associate professor by professional direction 9.1. National Security, announced in (SG No. 28/02.04.2024), with candidate ch. assistant Dafinka Vasileva Sidova, PhD.

I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University

From the submitted documents, more specifically from the reference for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), it is clear that the scientific production submitted by the candidate for this competition meets both the requirements of the LDASRB and the requirements of the Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff of the NBU. It is noteworthy that the applicant was not satisfied with meeting the minimum requirements of the RSARB in terms of indicators, and in some cases significantly exceeded them. The activities carried out in accordance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the NBU, defined in Appendix 2 of the Regulation of the development of the academic staff of the NBU, collect a total number of points according to the indicator groups 757.5.

II. Research (creative) activity and results

1. Evaluation of the monographic work and other publications, corresponding in volume and completeness to a monographic work, including an evaluation of the author's scientific and applied scientific contributions.

The candidate participates in the competition with the monograph "Human security through European territorial cooperation – benefits, challenges, prospects". The monograph has been printed. The work is balanced, with a clear structure and idea. It consists of an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. Checking the monograph with the StrikePlagiarism.com plagiarism prevention software clearly shows its originality.

The author uses two research criteria in his work – criterion of constructivism and criterion of functionality, which makes it possible to link the theoretical nature of the monographic work with its practical orientation.

The first direction has a theoretical nature and covers the study of human security, perceived as a criterion of constructivism, and of European Territorial Cooperation, perceived as a criterion of functionality. The concept of human security builds on and links other key concepts such as the concept of "broad security", the concept of national security, the concept of human rights and the concept of human development.

The second direction leads to conclusions of an applied nature. They refer to the participation of the Republic of Bulgaria in the three types of European territorial cooperation, which can be qualified as insufficiently fruitful in the context of the conducted analyzes of three interrelationships: freedom from fear - cross-border cooperation; freedom from scarcity – transnational cooperation; freedom for a dignified life - interregional cooperation.

According to the research, the Republic of Bulgaria does not use the potential of European Territorial Cooperation to ensure human security sufficiently, which leads to limiting the benefits for human

security in the context of the benefits of cross-border and interregional cooperation. The reason for this is an unstable political environment, high levels of corruption (especially at the highest levels of power), weak management capacity (at the national and local level), insufficient financial capacity, low interest on the part of civil society in the possibilities of European Territorial Cooperation and the possibilities of providing human security through it.

The author is of the opinion that one of the most important political decisions should be related to the promotion of the Concept of Human Security. It is necessary for this concept to "come to life" in the political and legal documents of the Republic of Bulgaria, to be adopted as a mandatory element of the democratic and legal functioning of the Bulgarian state and nation. Only then would the usefulness of instruments such as European Territorial Cooperation be properly appreciated and used as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The monograph is a conscientiously conducted, original and in-depth study of an extremely current and important problem, namely the problem of human security and its guarantee through the EU mechanisms. It can serve as a theoretical basis for the development of pan-European security mechanisms.

The results of the research also have an applied nature. Although the applicant does not indicate the potential end-users, by outlining the challenges and formulating specific recommendations, the research can improve decision-making at various levels and thus contribute to increasing the individual dimensions of human security in our country through the mechanisms of the European Territorial Cooperation.

2. Evaluation of the contributions in the other attached publications made after the appointment to the academic position "ch. assistant".

Published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" - Sidova, D. (2022). Cross-border cooperation and "broad" security in the Mediterranean region at the beginning of the XXI century. Sofia: Industry 4.0, SEU of Mechanical Engineering, ISBN 978-619-7383-25-6, as well as nineteen articles and reports published in non-refereed scientific peer-reviewed journals and in edited collective volumes. Nine of these articles and reports are co-authored. Seven are in English. The publications consider different aspects of the problem from the monographic work. The research in them has played a role as a basis for its writing, without necessarily repeating parts of it. They demonstrate the candidate's interest in the field of European politics and geopolitics.

Studies published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes or in classified information specialist publications: one chapter of a collective monograph.

3. Citation

In monographs and collective volumes with scientific review – 6; reviews in non-refereed journals with scientific review – 8.

4. Evaluation of the results of participation in research projects and application of the obtained results in practice

The candidate organizes and implements at a high level: study, analysis, surveying, publication of research results, conducting seminars, study trips, open lectures with students. She develops and publishes educational materials on European, broad and human security topics. The evaluation by observers and participants is high.

III. Educational and teaching activities

The educational and teaching activities, the work with students and PhD students, as well as the Erasmus work exceed the requirements of the NBU, and the student survey scores are close to the maximum - 4.85 out of 5.

IV. Administrative and public activity

The applicant is the director of the Program Council in the department, the head of the annual student forum, the initiator of numerous events at the NBU and beyond. Member of the management of international and national annual conferences such as: International Conference National Security Faculty of War Studies University, Institute of Strategic Studies; member of the Organizing Team and moderator of the Youth Security Discussion Forum; member of the Organizational Team and moderator of the Student Security Seminar; member of the Organizational Team and host of the Student Colloquium "Policies and Management in Times of Crisis", etc.

V. Personal impressions about the applicant

I know the applicant from the time of his doctoral studies at NBU - 2014. Subsequently, I had a view of his activities as a lecturer, author of scientific content, participant and organizer of conferences, member, and subsequently head of the Program Council at the department from 2017 to the moment. Tenacious, competent, dedicated and committed to the department's cause of creating security professionals.

VI. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the applicant's activities and achievements

The applicant's achievements are impressive and worthy of filling the advertised position. I have no notes regarding his work.

In view of the above, I express my positive assessment. I believe that the monographic work and the presented articles meet the requirements of LDASRB for winning the competition for the academic position "associate professor" in professional direction 9.1. "National and International Security", announced in SG no. 28/02/04/2024 I recommend to the scientific jury to propose to the NBU Academic Council to elect chief assistant Dr. Dafinka Vasileva Sidova as an "associate professor" in the indicated professional field.

Date: 11.07.2024

Signature:
Prof. N. Radulov, D.Sci.