

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Rumen Hristov Yankov

Member of the Scientific Jury in the competition for associate professor in Professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences, academic discipline - Economic and Social Geography, announced by the National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (announced in the State Gazette, issue 51 / 28 June 2019)

Competition data.

This opinion has been prepared in accordance with an Order of the Director of the National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NIGGG-BAS) for selecting a scientific jury in the competition for acquiring the academic position of "Associate Professor", and the decisions of the first meeting of the Scientific Jury. The opinion assesses the scientific contributions of the sole candidate – Assist. Prof. Poli Nikolova Roukova, PhD.

The competition was announced following a Resolution of the Scientific Council of the NIGGG - BAS for the needs of the Department of Geography in compliance with the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and the Regulations for its implementation, the relevant Regulations of the BAS and the Regulations for DASRBA implementation in the National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography.

The necessary complete documentation has been submitted for the competition. After a documentation check-up and the subsequent clarification it becomes clear that the candidate has fulfilled the minimum requirements for acquiring the academic position of "associate professor" defined in the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring of Academic Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Candidate data.

The candidate Poli Nikolova Roukova has worked in the "Economic and Social Geography" Division of the Institute of Geography – BAS (since 2010 – the Department of Geography at the NIGGG), since 1983 (as assistant professor since 1991) till present day. In 2019 the candidate acquired a PhD degree in Economic and Social Geography after a successful defense of a dissertation thesis on "Impact of the International Division of Labour on the Localisation of Apparel Industry in South Western and South Central Bulgaria".

Scientific works and scientific contributions of the candidate.

Dr. Poli Roukova's scientific work includes a total of more than 80 publications - book chapters, scientific papers, reports, and research projects. About 40 of them are described in the applicant's

resume. A significant number of the scientific works of the candidate have been published abroad, in English and other languages.

A total of 29 titles have been provided for the current competition, including 10 papers published in peer-reviewed editions indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (group C of the scientometric indicators), 19 scientific publications in group D - papers, reports and chapters of collective monographs. The habilitation reference also lists other publications of the candidate related to the main topics of research.

The scientific production of Dr. Poli Roukova shows long-term research interests in the regional aspects of socio-economic development and social geography of health. The publications which are equivalent to a habilitation thesis - scientific papers published in SCOPUS and WoS - are the result of participation in international research projects, in two of which, Poli Roukova is the national coordinator for Bulgaria.

The research work addresses the issues of restructuring of the economies in the former socialist countries in the context of their participation in the international markets and integration into international production networks. The impact of industrial restructuring on regional development and regional competitiveness has been assessed. As examples, the information services and the apparel industry are given. For the periods of these studies (2001-2007, 2010-2013), the research topics and the research approaches are novel to the economic geography of Bulgaria.

In the field of social geography, the candidate's studies supplement and enrich the scientific knowledge in the field of geography of health in Bulgaria. The impact of the social environment (apart from health services) on the ability of chronically ill people to manage their long-term lifestyle has been analyzed and evaluated. In the project research (2012-2015), contemporary geography of health is regarded as inextricably linked to the geography of quality of life.

The publications show a significant scientific presence of the applicant in the above-mentioned research areas. Three of Dr. Roukova's papers have more than 120 citations (as of July 2019) in a total of 24 publications in the SCOPUS database.

I accept the provided contributions from the other publications as well. I consider the candidate's research and applied contributions to be proven. Those contributions affect the regional development and are divided by the author into the following groups: 1) Regional changes in the economic activity of the population; 2) Socio-economic restructuring and regional development; 3) Socio-economic effects of environmental pollution.

A structural analysis of some of the regional labor markets in Bulgaria has been made, as well as a critical analysis of the national policies and legislation concerning the regional development. The influence of socio-economic transformations on the living environment of the population has been investigated in terms of labour, habitation and recreation, thus coming up with significant conclusions of a scientific-applied nature.

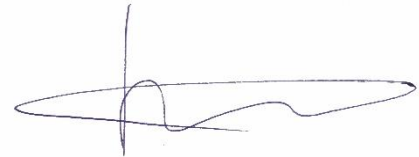
The same can be said also about the assessment of the health status of the population in areas with environmental problems. The incidence rates in some of the urban-industrial areas have been analyzed by major groups of diseases and their relation to environmental pollution has been examined.

Conclusion.

The scientific publications of Assist.Prof. Poli Roukova, her activities in the "Economic and Social Geography" Division of the NIGGG - BAS, as well as her participation in international scientific projects, reveal the profile of an erudite researcher with significant scientific and applied experience.

The research activity and the results achieved by Assist.Prof. Poli Nikolova Roukova fully comply with the legislative requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor", stated in the DASRBA, the Regulations for its implementation and the ensuing Regulations of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography.

The foregoing gives me reason to vote "IN FAVOUR" of the election of Poli Roukova as an "Associate Professor" in Professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences (Economic and Social Geography), advising the members of the distinguished Scientific Jury to support the candidacy of Poli Nikolova Roukova.



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8 Oct. 2019

(Prof. Dr. Rumen Yankov)

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