

OPINION

by Professor Atanas Haralampiev Dermendzhiev, D. Sc.,

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Re: Competition for the academic position of "Professor" in a professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences, scientific specialty "Economic and Social Geography", announced in SG, issue 93 / 30.10.2020, for the needs of the Department of Geography at NIGGG - BAS, and according to Art. 59 (4) of the Regulations for implementation of ZRASRB in NIGGG – BAS

Candidate: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boian Yordanov Koulov

This opinion was prepared on the basis of an order of the Director of NIGGG - BAS № 01-266 / 29.12.2020, according to a decision of the Supervisory Board of NIGGG - BAS (Minutes № 29 / 29.12.2020) - for the composition of the scientific jury and the first meeting of the same, held on 05.01.2021.

The documentation submitted for the competition meets the requirements of both the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for its implementation, and the Regulations for implementation of ZRASRB in NIGGG - BAS.

The attached report on the implementation of the minimum national requirements and the additional requirements of NIGGG - BAS fully meets the required number of points, and, in some of the groups, it exceeds the required minimum. No data on plagiarism and use of foreign scientific achievements are established. Boian Yordanov Koulov was born in 1957 in the city of Plovdiv. He graduated with a master's degree in tourism resources from the Faculty of Geology and Geography at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 1983 with a medal for excellency (first in his class). In 1988, he defended his dissertation and obtained the educational and scientific degree of "candidate of geographical sciences" (doctor of geography).

He has successively held the following positions: specialist at the Institute of Geography at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (1987), research associate at the Faculty of Geology and Geography at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (1987-1990), visiting professor at a number of universities in the USA (1990-2007), associate professor at NIGGG - BAS (2008).

Additionally, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boian Koulov has held elected positions as: Director of the Bulgarian Educational Center "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", Washington, USA; President of the Association of Bulgarian Schools in the United States; Chairman of the Association of Bulgarian Schools Abroad; Scientific Secretary of GI - BAS (2008-2010); Scientific Secretary of NIGGG - BAS (2010-2014) and others.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boian Koulov participated in the current competition with a monograph and 36 scientific papers of various volumes and nature (published after his election as an associate professor in 2008), correctly reflected in the attached documents. Eighteen of the presented publications are referenced and indexed in world-famous Web of science and Scopus databases. The rest are published in journals and collections with scientific review or in edited collective volumes.

The total number of citations of the candidate's works is 186 (in Bulgarian and foreign scientific publications). Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boian Koulov has participated in 37 research projects, 16 of which he was or is a research leader. Over 1/3 of them have an international rank and character.

The scientific profile of the candidate is supplemented with his positions as a consultant, compiler and reviewer of academic publications and events; with membership and activity in many editorial boards and professional organizations.

The teaching work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boian Koulov has a very diverse thematic and geographical spectrum. It includes a lecture activity at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" at the universities "George Washington" in Washington, D.C.; St. Andrews, Potomac; George Mason, Virginia; American University in Washington, D.C.; West Virginia University and others - on various issues of regional development, political geography, geopolitics, economy, culture, ecology.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boian Koulov has been a guest lecturer at universities and research institutions in the Czech Republic, Austria, USA, Greece and other countries.

I accept the contributions in the candidate's scientific publications. Most of them are original, complement, enrich existing knowledge and outline new fields for further research. The contributions are of theoretical and practical significance.

The successful attempt to identify and map the boundaries of the geospatial core and periphery of the European socio-economic system and their dynamics over a 10-year period at five taxonomic levels is essential. Of particular value is the research related to the development of a concept for ecosystem services, as well as geoinformation technologies, in particular the development of GIS-based approaches to help reduce the risk of hazardous natural phenomena. The research achievements of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boian Koulov, combined with his teaching experience and work at home and abroad, are a natural reason for awarding the scientific title "Professor". Based on the submitted competition materials and my personal impressions, and considering that all scientometric indicators and documents are in accordance with the legal and regulatory requirements, I give a positive assessment and suggest that the scientific jury vote "FOR" assigning the scientific title "Professor" in the field of higher education 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences (Economic and Social Geography) to Boian Yordanov Koulov.

Veliko Tarnovo, 20.01.2020

Prof. Atanas Dermendzhiev, D.Sc.