

REVIEW

by competition for "Associate Professor" in Professional Direction 3.8 "Economics" at
New Bulgarian University

By **Prof. Valentina Ilieva Staneva, PhD**, Professional direction 3.8 "Economics", Scientific Specialty: "Accounting, control and analysis of economic activity", Head of the Department "Economics and accounting in transport", Faculty of "Transport Management" at TU "Todor Kableshkov".

Candidate: **Chief Assistant Plamen Kimonov Iliev, PhD**, Department of Economics, New Bulgarian University (only candidate).

1. Information about the contest

The competition was announced in SG No. 94/10.11.2023. My participation in the composition of the scientific jury for the competition is in compliance with Order No. 3-PK-77/21.12.2023 of the Rector of the New Bulgarian University (NBU). During the preparation of the review, the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB, as well as the Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff of the NBU for Professional Direction 3.8 "Economics" for occupying the Academic Position "Associate Professor".

2. Brief biographical information about the candidate in the competition

Plamen Kimonov Iliev graduated from HEI "Karl Marx" (now UNWE) in 1990, master's degree in "Accounting and Control". In 2015, he was awarded a doctor's degree in Scientific Direction 3.8 "Economics", with a Scientific Specialty Accounting reporting, control and analysis of economic activity (financial control), issued by the University of National and World Economy (UNSS) with reg. No. 184 /12.02.2015 Has a specialization at the same university in business management, as well as as a teacher of economic disciplines. In 2001, he also acquired the Master's degree in Law at the NBU. He was a part-time lecturer at UNSS in the period from 1995 to 2015, as well as at the NBU, Department of Economics, from 2015 to 2017. From 2017 to the present, he is a full-time lecturer - Chief Assistant at the NBU, Department of Economics. He has practical experience in accounting, control, tax, law and consulting business. He held positions as Chief Accountant, Economic director and manager in commercial companies. He is the owner and manager of "Kaviplas Consult Commerce" SPLLC. Long-term licensed appraiser of commercial enterprises and receivables, agricultural lands and perennials, member of the Chamber of Independent Appraisers in Bulgaria. Expert at the Registration Agency, expert and juror at Sofia City Court and Sofia Military Court. Liquidator at the Registration Agency.

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

After reviewing the evidentiary materials provided by Plamen Iliev, PhD, for all groups of indicators regarding the fulfillment of the minimum national and additional requirements of the NBU for holding the position of "Associate Professor", I report that the candidate has a total of 897.5 points, out of the required 570 points. Therefore, the candidate's performance is 157.45% above the minimum national and additional requirements of the NBU for holding the position of "Associate Professor".

A group of metrics		Minimal requirements	From the applicant's reference	
A	Indicator 1	50	50	
Б	Indicator 2	0	0	
B	Indicator 3	100	100	
Г	Sum of indicators from 4 to 10	200	390	
Д	Sum of indicators from 11 to 13	50	87.50	
E	Sum of indicators from 14 to 21	0	40	
Ж	Sum of the indicators from 22 to the end (mandatory for the NBU)	50	95	230
З		70	70	
И		50	65	
In summary			897.50 points	

4. Research activity and results

For participation in the competition for the Academic position "Associate Professor", Ch. Ass. Plamen Iliev, PhD, presented a total of 29 publications and two monographs, which do not repeat the scientific works for the acquisition of the ESD "Doctor". It is about the following Scientific works: habilitation thesis monograph on the topic: "Modern control in the era of digitalization", Publishing house "Bolid Ins., 2022, 294 pages. A monograph was also published, which is not presented as a main habilitation thesis on the topic: "Financial Control, Audit and Supervision", Publishing House Reklamna Agency Ochi, 2016, 159 pages. It is notable that all 29 publications and two monographs presented are independent, of which 8 of the publications are in English and 21 in Bulgarian, which is an excellent certificate for the candidate in the competition. He participated in a number of international conferences in Kosovo, Romania, Macedonia, Serbia, etc.

The directions in which the candidate works and publishes can be summarized as follows - audit in all spheres of the economy - public and non-financial sector; link of audit with marketing; digitization in auditing; ethics in auditing; the subject of controlling in various aspects; nexus between accounting, auditing and finance.

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

Plamen Iliev's habilitation thesis is on "Modern control in the age of digitalization". Structurally, it includes an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion and references in a total volume of 294 pages. It consistently examines the essence and characteristics of control (internal and external), emergence and development, control and audit bodies, as well as digitalization in business and control.

The study is conditionally divided into two parts - theoretical and practical. In the theoretical part, the financial control applied in our country and its varieties are examined based on the current regulations. The exercise of internal control and audit, as well as external control and audit, as evaluative control, is analyzed. In the practical part, new technologies, digitization in accounting and digital transformation in business are explored. In modern conditions, it is impossible to carry out control in accounting without applying new technologies, including digitization and artificial intelligence.

The aim of the monographic study is, based on the current theoretical and normative statements, to determine the possibilities for applicability in accounting and control of digitalization and digital transformation in business models, as an approach to increase their quality and customer satisfaction.

The research provides an answer to the set tasks by enriching the theoretical and practical aspects of applying digitization in accounting and control.

I fully accept the theoretical, methodological and practical contributions that are summarized as a result of the research as follows:

- the theoretical and practical accounting knowledge and understanding of control and audit in their various aspects of manifestation is enriched;
- the relationship between accounting and control was studied, justifying the need to use accounting information for management and control in the conditions of its digitalization;
- the influence of digitization and digital transformation on business processes was studied, taking into account the requirements of the normative regulation in accounting and control;
- different business models were studied, taking into account the impact of digitization on accounting and control, with a focus on the possibilities of assisting the management in preparing forecast results, thereby bringing additional value to enterprises and customers;
- a critical analysis of the possible negative influences and consequences of the implementation of digitization and digital transformation in accounting and control as professions is explored and presented, alongside all the positive impacts.

My conclusion is that the monograph contains important directions for the further development of theory and practice in the application of digitization in accounting and auditing.

4.2. Evaluation of the contributions in the other attached publications made after the appointment of the academic position "Chief assistant".

Provided by Chief assistant Plamen Iliev, PhD, in his publications for participation in the competition, in my opinion, meet the requirements for holding the academic position "Associate Professor" in Professional Direction 3.8 "Economics" at the NBU. I would also like to point out that the actual number of publications indicated in his self-evaluation is greater than those submitted for the current competition.

The monograph "Financial control, audit and supervision" (2016) traces the development of financial control, financial audit and financial supervision in Bulgaria. In the scientific study, an attempt was made to answer most of the questions related to the origin, development and current state of financial control, financial audit and financial supervision in our country, as well as their legal regulation (in the past and now), for the subjects and objects of control, their objectives, tasks and functions.

Financial control, financial audit and financial supervision as essence, methodology, principles, etc. were examined separately, emphasizing their application and use including as types and above all as internal and external controls, incl. and state, through the institutions or bodies that exercise or apply them.

With regard to financial control, the origin, essence, subject and object, methods and principles, types and forms of social control, as the basis of the other controls, are considered.

A place is devoted to internal control, the COSO model (as a Concept of Internal Control) and the elements of internal control.

With regard to the financial audit, its nature and origin, types and stages of conducting the audit, the International Auditing Standards/IAS/ applied in the financial audit, audit risk, audit evidence, audit samples, reporting and bodies in the person of the Audit Chamber and Independent audit

For financial supervision, the need for regulation and supervision, the activities and tasks of the Financial Supervision Commission and the banking supervision exercised by the BNB are monitored.

In the monograph "Financial control, audit and supervision" (2016), which is not presented as the main habilitation thesis, I could highlight the following contributing points:

- the possible consequences, as well as the benefits or losses of exercised control, audit or supervision, have been studied and analyzed;
- systematized and summarized the place, meaning and role of control, audit and supervision applied in Bulgaria, for uniform understanding of essence, methodology, controlled, controlling and the realization of the results, as a result of their exercise.

The contributions in the other publications correspond to the professional direction of the competition of Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD. In my opinion, they contain significant scientific and scientific-applied results, such as:

Scientific - applied contributions:

- numerous achievements and opportunities for the development of new technologies, generated by Industry 4.0 in business and, respectively, in accounting and control, have been studied and analyzed;
- the need for internal control in credit institutions is substantiated, as well as the creation of a corresponding normative regulation;
- necessity and opportunities for implementation of digitization and digital technologies in audit and control.

Scientific and methodological contributions:

- ideas and concepts for application and implementation of control and audit in marketing activity are systematized;
- the achievements and possibilities of the controlling concept as a new system for managing enterprises and its practical application in the conditions of the financial and economic crisis caused by the Covid pandemic are analyzed;
- the methodological features of accounting in the tourism sector were analyzed and systematized, considering the possible options from the point of view of taxation with different rates of VAT for accommodation, meals, transport and tour operator activity.

Scientific and theoretical contributions:

- ideas and concepts are systematized about the role and contribution of internal control and internal audit to risk management and to prevent fraud and irregularities;
- the requirements and rules for the need for ethical norms for auditing behavior are summarized;
- the requirements and conditions for the application of fiscal control on goods with a high fiscal risk are systematized and summarized;
- the possibilities and methods for management, control and audit of funds under European programs and funds are analyzed and summarized;
- the possibilities for application of audit and control in the selection, training and management of personnel in the organization have been studied and analyzed through the prism of the control environment of the FSMC, as an element of internal control.

5. Quotations from other authors

Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD, presented a reference with evidentiary material for a total of 5 citations by Bulgarian economists according to indicator 12 "Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review", of which 3 citations were cited in independent publications, and 2 citations in a publication with one co-author. According to indicator 13 "Citations or reviews in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals" presented a total of 10 citations, distributed equally with and without one co-author. This convinces me that he meets the legal requirements and is a recognizable researcher in Bulgaria.

6. Educational and teaching activities

6.1 Academic work of the candidate

The candidate's teaching work includes courses in BP "Accounting and Controlling", BP "Finance", MP "Accounting and Auditing", FSMZ - RO, in BP "Accounting and Controlling" and "Finance" - DL of FDENO, as well as in BP of AU Department. Chief Assistant Plamen Iliev, PhD, leads the following lecture courses: "Public Finances", "Accounting Document Flow", "Frauds and Abuses in Financial Management", "Financial Audit", "Raising Funds for Financing Projects in the Field of Culture", "Process Analysis and Reengineering", "Controlling", "National Accounting Standards", "Controlling in the Financial Sector", "Internal Control", "Financial Statements", "Public Finance Management", "Financial Statement Auditing", "Auditing standards", "Forensic accounting expertise", "Fundamentals of control", "Budget accounting", "Fundamentals of controlling" and others.

During all these years, the candidate also had extracurricular employment for between 600 and 900 hours (665 hours in the 2022/2023 academic year). In the period from 2017 to the end of the academic year 2021/2022 Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD, was the supervisor of 35 bachelor's and master's theses of students at the department. During the same period, he prepared 88 reviews and participated in 201 committees (committees for thesis defenses, internship defense committees, written material defense committees).

The average annual classroom and non-auditory employment of the candidate exceeds the required hours at the NBU. The candidate has published materials in the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU", and his extracurricular employment is related to providing student practices, internships and work with students. Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD, has two unpublished studies that are available in the NBU electronic archive with the participation of students, which helps to strengthen the interest of students in the studied disciplines.

The candidate is highly rated by students. According to a report prepared in the NBU, it is visible that this rating is an excellent 4.6 out of a maximum rating of 5.

6.2 Published Study Materials

Chief Assistant Plamen Iliev, PhD, is the author of the textbook "Internal Control and Audit", published by Advertising Agency Eyes, published in 2019.

6.3 Participation in curriculum development

Chief Assistant Plamen Iliev, PhD, participated as part of the team of the Department of Economics of the NBU in the development of the Bachelor's program "Accounting and Controlling", as well as the Master's program "Financial Accounting Management" (FSM), Master's program "Accounting, Auditing" and sustainability" (to be launched in October 2024). He also participated in the modernization of the doctoral program "Accounting, control and analysis of economic activity (accounting and auditing)".

7. Administrative and public activity

Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD, participated as a co-organizer and co-moderator with Yu. Khadzhichoneva, PhD, at the Interdepartmental Webinar "The Future of the Euro Given the Instability of the Banking System" with the guest speaker the investment banker from London Gordon Kerr, 02.06.2022, in cooperation with the "Economy" Department and the "AU" Department - part of the Annual plans and reports of the two departments.

Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD, is a licensed appraiser (expert) of financial receivables, entire enterprises and agricultural lands, an expert in the Registry Agency and Liquidator, an expert in the Sofia City Court and the Sofia Military Court in judicial-economic and judicial - accounting expertise. He is a member of the Chamber of Independent Appraisers in Bulgaria (CIAB) and the Association of Economic Fraud Examiners.

Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD, regularly participates in the work of the departmental/programme council. There are no penalties imposed under the Labor Code.

8. Personal impressions of the candidate

I know the candidate from various academic initiatives and have had the opportunity to work with him. During the current academic year 2023/2024 in the winter semester Chief Assistant Plamen Iliev, PhD, was a part-time lecturer in the department I lead in the discipline "Risk Management and Internal Control". I believe that he is a serious scientist, with exceptional professional and practical experience, as well as a very good theoretical training. The basis for this statement is the positive assessment of his colleagues for his work in the department, as well as the positive feedback of the students he taught. He can work in a team and dedicate himself to a common cause. Chief Assistant Iliev, PhD, has a marked interest in various international appearances and conferences in which he actively participates, which further strengthens my opinion that he is an outstanding scientist in his scientific field.

9. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate

I have no special recommendations. I also think that it is time to start working with doctoral students in order to convey his experience in the relevant scientific direction, not only in NBU, but also in Bulgaria. He has the necessary qualities.

10. Conclusion

The scientific works presented in the competition are of a high scientific level and contain significant contributions, which I fully accept. The minimum national requirements for the assessment of the academic staff have been fulfilled in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Application of the LDASRB and the Regulations for the Terms and Procedures for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic and Teaching Positions at the NBU.

I give a positive assessment of the teaching and research activities of Chief Assistant Plamen Iliev, PhD, and based on my personal impressions of the candidate's scientific works, as well as the scientific-applied, scientific-methodological and scientific-theoretical contributions contained in them, I strongly suggest to the respected scientific jury to vote positively. and to the academic bodies of the NBU to elect Chief Assistant Plamen Kimonov Iliev Ph.D., to the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Professional direction 3.8 "Economics" (Accounting, Controlling and Auditing), Department of "Economics" of New Bulgarian University - Sofia.

08 February 2024

Sofia

Member of the Scientific Jury:

/prof. Valentina Ilieva Staneva, PhD/