

OPINION

By: Assoc. Prof. Andrei Ivanov Nonchev, UNWE

Regarding: competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at the New Bulgarian University (NBU), professional field 3.3. Political sciences, Published in SG No. 41 of 18.05.2021

1. Information about the competition

I participate as a member of the scientific jury of the competition as per Order №Z-RK 194 from 24.06.2021 of the Rector of NBU on the basis of Decision of the AC 10 / 22.06.2021.

2. Brief information about the candidate

Only one candidate has submitted documents for participation in the competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at NBU - Dr. Evelina Radoslavova Staykova-Mileva. She has graduated in 2007 as a bachelor in political sociology and in 2009 as a master in political management at NBU. After successfully defending her dissertation in 2013 on the topic "Migration and the New Borders of the Citizenship: Bulgaria in the Contemporary European Context" at NBU, the candidate was awarded the degree of PhD in political sciences. She worked at NBU, Department of political sciences as an administrative secretary (2008-2009) and Programme Director (2010-2018). Since 2012 Dr. Staikova-Mileva has been a member of the Department of political sciences at the NBU, and since October 1, 2020 she has been elected Department head. Since 2008 Dr. Staykova-Mileva has worked as researcher and coordinator at CERMES (Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies).

3. Fulfilment of the requirements for acquisition of the academic position

The documents submitted by the candidate for participation in the announced competition comply with the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB) and the Regulations for its implementation, adopted by the

Council of Ministers. The obligatory conditions under ADASRB (Art. 24) have been fulfilled. The minimum requirements of NBU (total and by groups of indicators) for holding the academic position of “associate professor” have been met – Dr. Staykova-Mileva reports achieved 1565 points. As required, originals or copies of documents accompany the completed summary reference as evidence to the relevant sections.

The candidacy of Dr. Staykova-Mileva meets all of the mandatory requirements set in the announced competition for academic position “associate professor” at NBU, professional field 3.3 Political sciences.

4. Brief description of the presented scientific publications

A total of 22 publications of the candidate were presented for the competition – dissertation defended, monograph – habilitation study (E. Staykova. 2020. *Urban policies and local democracy in the early 21st century: global trends, European perspectives, Bulgarian realities*. Sofia: NBU); chapter in a collective monograph; five articles and reports (two of them co-authored), published in scientific journals, referenced, and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information; 12 articles and reports (seven of them co-authored), published in unrefereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes; two studies published in unrefereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes. The content of the author's publications is diverse, corresponds to the thematic area of the competition, and refers to three main scientific fields:

First, modern globalization, migration and integration processes and policies, with special emphasis on the problems of citizenship.

Second, urban policies and local democracy in a global, European, and national perspective.

Third, human rights, civic activism, and political participation.

Dr. Staykova-Mileva presented a reference for the citations of her scientific publications. Identified are five citations in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes, one citation in monograph with scientific review, as well as seven citations in unrefereed journals with

scientific review. The citations testify the candidate's recognisability in the Bulgarian and international academic and scientific community.

The publications of Dr. Staykova-Mileva meet the high academic scientific standards and have received not only national but also international recognition, which gives indisputable arguments for her to take the academic position of "associate professor".

5. Assessment of the candidate's research activity

Dr. Staykova-Mileva has participated in 11 national and 15 international research and educational projects. She has been the leader of three national research and educational projects, coordinator of a national scientific project and co-coordinator of an international educational project.

Dr. Staykova-Mileva has been an organizer of three international scientific conferences. Since 2017 she has organising regularly public events in the framework of the university-wide seminar "Human Rights" together with colleagues from the departments of "Law" and "Social Work", and after 2012 – the seminar "Migration Policy". She has been co-coordinator of the Winter University "Diversity in the city: social policy of inclusion" of the CERMES (Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies), ERASUMIP programme (2011 - 2012).

The active research activity of Dr. Staykova-Mileva, materialized in original author's publications, further supports her candidacy for the academic position of "associate professor".

6. Teaching experience

As a programme consultant, programme director, and member of the board of the Department of Political Science in the period 2008-2018, Dr. Staykova-Mileva took an active part in the creation of the bachelor's programme "International Politics" (in French) and the master's programme "International Relations and Comparative Policies" (in French). At the same time, she participated in the improvement of the bachelor's programme in "Political

Science” and the master's programmes in “Diplomacy and International Relations” and “Political Management and Public Policies”, as well as in the development of new courses, including “Human Rights”, “Equality Policies”, "European citizenship", "Digital policy", "European migration policy", "International citizenship policies", "Migration policy" (in English), "E-government", "Management and analysis of urban policies" and others. The thematic content of the programmes and courses, in the development and improvement of which the candidate in the competition has participated, directly corresponds to her research interests. It also worth noting the nine public lectures held by Dr. Staykova-Mileva on behalf of NBU at the invitation of universities or prestigious national and international organizations.

Dr. Staykova-Mileva has extensive teaching experience and professional competence, which fully qualify her for the academic position of "associate professor".

7. Summary assessment of the main candidate’s research and scientific contributions

Based on the presented publications and the participation in international and national research and educational projects and scientific forums, several interrelated main areas of the candidate's scientific contributions could be distinguished:

- 1. First, contributions to the systematic theoretical and empirical study of the relationship between intensified migration processes in the context of globalization and evolution in the content of the concept of citizenship** (Staykova, E. 2013. Migration and new borders of citizenship: Bulgaria in the contemporary European context. Doctoral dissertation). New non-national forms of citizenship have been thematized, caused mostly by the growing international mobility of people - post-national, transnational, cosmopolitan, European citizenship, denizenship. In the context of these new non-national forms of citizenship, Dr. Staykova-Mileva has developed an original concept for the so-called “glocal citizenship”, inspired by the observed synchronous processes of globalization and urbanization, in which the internationalization of cities becomes a strong identifying factor. The connection between glocal citizenship and the unfolding global civic activism, the granting of a wide range of rights to foreigners,

comparable to those of the citizens of the nation state, as well as opportunities for their supranational protection have also been argued. Based on empirical data, an original typology, which takes into account the individual perception of citizenship and distinguishes several ideal-typical models of a mobile citizen, has been proposed.

2. **Second, contributions to the conceptualization of the city in a political perspective**

through the prism of policies, principles of local democracy and models of local self-government (Staykova, E. 2020. Urban policies and local democracy in the early 21st century: global trends, European perspectives, Bulgarian realities, Sofia: NBU, habilitation study). Basic concepts and approaches for understanding the modern city are systematized, and a significant array of theoretical developments and empirical research, statistical data, national and international strategies and policies, normative and programme documents have been analysed. A definite conclusion has been made that "democratic governance is an absolute imperative for the functioning of the modern city", which, however, must be accompanied by building management capacity, understood as "a set of motivated political leaders, expert teams, working administrative apparatus." Civic participation in urban governance is extremely important, for which both the developed institutional mechanisms of local democracy and motivated, interested, and competent civic activity are a prerequisite. Innovative governance models in the "cities of the future" have been analysed, which take advantage of the globalized world, high technology, the green idea, and civic activism. The study of the role of cities during crises is also topical, with an emphasis on the effect and reactions of local authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic (E. Staykova. 2020. Cities and global crises: COVID-19 and the role of local self-government. In: The scientific papers, Volume 2. Cybersecurity, Economic, Social and Cultural Security, pp. 488-495).

3. **Third, contributions to the thematization of the political and civic participation in the**

context of the quality and problems of modern democracy (E. Staykova (2014) Political participation: normative and institutional frameworks. In: Todorov, A. and D. Kanev (ed.). Quality of Democracy in Bulgaria, Sofia: East-West, pp. 113-140). Special attention in Dr. Staykova-Mileva's publications has been paid to the Eurosceptic and anti-elitist discourse, as a main characteristic of populism in all its forms and reflecting broad

public attitudes, feeding populist parties and movements, including in EU member states. (E. Staykova and K. Aitamurto (2017). Countering Populist Othering Online: Strategies of Anti-racist Movements. In: Mojca Pajnik, Birgit Sauer (ed.) Populism and the Web: Communicative Practices of Parties and Movements in Europe, New York: Routledge, pp.172-188, E. Staykova, I. Otova, V. Ivanova (2020) Anti-elitism as populist strategy of defending 'the people' In: Ranieri, M. (ed.) Populism, Media and Education. Challenging discrimination in contemporary digital societies, New York: Routledge, pp. 105-123).

Current aspects of e-democracy, e-citizenship, the digital citizen have been analysed in an innovative way (E. Staykova (2013) E-citizenship - (r) Evolution, In: Krasteva, A. (ed.) The digital citizen, Sofia: NBU, p. 138 E. Staykova (2013) (e) Citoyennete - (r) Evolution, In: Krasteva, A. (dir.) E-citoyennetés, Paris: L'Harmattan. pp. 81-93)

4. **Fourth, contribution to the study of the European and national dimensions of migration and integration processes** (E. Staykova. Emigration and immigration: Bulgarian dilemmas. In: South East Europe Review (SEER); 2013, Vol. 16 Issue 4, pp.403 -415; E. Staykova, T. Trifonova (2010). Immigrants in Bulgaria. In: Trends in cross-border labour migration and free movement of people - effects for Bulgaria. Sofia, OSI, pp. 87-107; E. Staykova (2009). Study of the Integration Policy in five EU Member States. In: "Methodological Guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation of Integration Policies and Measures", pp. 166-193).

The scientific contributions of Dr. Staykova-Mileva give sound arguments and fully support the decision she to be awarded the academic position of "associate professor".

8. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks on I have no critical remarks on the substance of the publications, research and educational activities of Dr. Staykova-Mileva, but I would like to make a recommendation to the candidate - to direct most of her publications to journals included in the bibliographic systems Web of Science (Thomson Reuters) and Scopus (Elsevier), in order to increase visibility and recognition of her research in the Bulgarian and international scientific community.

9. Personal impressions

I know Dr. Staykova-Mileva as an in-depth and conscientious researcher respected by the academic and professional community for her correctness, goodwill, integrity, and civil activism.

10. Conclusion

Based on the indicated qualities of the research and teaching activity of Dr. Evelina Radoslavova Staykova-Mileva, I hereby express my firm conviction that she meets all legal and professional requirements for being awarded the academic position of "associate professor" at the New Bulgarian University in the professional field 3.3. Political Science. I recommend the members of the scientific jury to vote for the selection of the candidate in this competition.

13.09.2021

Signature:

Sofia