



OPINION

Bx. № PA20-569/30.03.2026r

From: Prof. Dr. **Valentina Lyubenova Nikolova-Alexieva**,
University of Food Technology - Plovdiv,
Professional field 3.8. Economics
Scientific specialty "Economics and Management"
(Business economics, corporate governance)

Subject: competition for **Associate Professor** in a district on higher Education 3.
Social, economic and legal sciences, professionally direction 3. 8. Economics,
scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and
Project Management)", announced from University of Economics - Varna

1. Competition information

The competition was announced for the needs of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Economics (UE) - Varna in the State Gazette, issue 104/05.12.2025. I participate in the scientific jury of the competition, in accordance with Order No. RD 06-20/26.01.2026 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's research and applied scientific activities

Candidate **Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov** has applied a total of **28 scientific papers**, in addition to those used for the EDS "Doctor". Their structure is as follows:

- ✓ Monograph - **1** (independent in Bulgarian);
- ✓ Book based on dissertation work – **1** (standalone in Bulgarian);
- ✓ Chapter from a collective monograph – **1 issue** (Bulgarian language)
- ✓ Studios – **2 pcs.** (in English)
- ✓ Articles – **8** (5 of which are in English);
- ✓ Scientific reports – **15** (in Bulgarian, published in non-refereed journals with scientific review);

19 of the publications are independent and 9 are co-authored. Two of the publications are indexed in Scopus, with the share of indexed publications being 7.1%.

The following are also presented for participation in the competition:

- ✓ Citations in publications referenced and indexed in the global databases Scopus and WoS – **5 pcs.**
- ✓ Citations in monographs – **3 pcs.**
- ✓ Citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review – **19 pcs.**

According to the attached report with scientometric indicators, the scientific output of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov meets the national minimum requirements for holding the academic position "Associate Professor" in Scientific Area 3.



Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Field 3.8. Economics.

| No. | Indicator group | Number of points | | Difference |
|-----|-----------------|---|----------------------------|-------------|
| | | Required points for Associate Professor | Points scored V. Kurshumov | |
| 1 | A | 50 | 50 | - |
| 2 | B | - | - | - |
| 3 | In | 100 | 100 | 0 |
| 4 | G | 200 | 305 | +105 |
| 5 | D | 50 | 200 | +150 |
| 6 | E | - | - | - |
| | TOTAL: | 400 | 655 | +255 |

2.1. Fulfillment of quantitative requirements

The candidate meets all mandatory conditions under Art. 24 of the ZRASRB and the additional requirements of the University of Varna, pursuant to Art. 15, para. 1 of the ZRASRB and Art. 53 of the PPRZSRB.

Regarding the requirement for acquired ONS "Doctor" (Art. 53, para. 1 of PPZRASRB) - in 2015, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov defended a dissertation on the topic: " Problems of Outsourcing in the Bulgarian Industry " and acquired EDS "Doctor" in the doctoral program "Industrial Business" in professional field 3.8 Economics (Diploma "№ 067/06.10.2015, issued by the University of Varna) .

Regarding the requirement for minimum academic experience (Art. 53, para. 2 of the PPZRASRB) - the total work experience of Dr. Vladi Kurshumov is about 14 years. After winning a competition in 2016, he was appointed as a Senior Assistant at the University of Varna. Apparently, the candidate fully meets the legal requirement for a minimum academic experience of two years.

Regarding the requirement for a published monographic work (Art. 53, para. 3 of the PPZRASRB) – the candidate has presented a habilitation thesis on the topic " Financing of enterprises in Bulgaria through European funds ". The thesis was reviewed by two highly respected reviewers in scientific circles and was published in 2025 in the monographic library "Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev " of the publishing house "Science and Economics" – Varna. The topic of the monographic thesis, the object, subject and time period to which it refers, do not imply overlap with the candidate's dissertation thesis, which meets the legal requirement of Art. 24, para. 1, item 3 of the PPZRASRB=

With regard to the requirement to meet the relevant minimum national criteria and the requirements under Art. 1a, para. 2; (Art. 53, para. 4 of the PPZRASRB) - the candidate has achieved a total of 470 points (from indicators: A- 50 points; B-100 points; D-305 points; D-200 points), which exceeds the required threshold of 400 points.

Regarding the requirement that there be no plagiarism proven in accordance with the statutory procedure in scientific works (Art. 53, para. 5 of the PPZRASRB) - none has been established.

With regard to the additional requirements of the University of Varna, Dr. Vladi Kurshumov meets all additional quantitative requirements, as evident from the attached references.



2.2. Fulfillment of quality requirements

Vladi Kurshumov is also a *recognizable researcher* with contributions in the field of business diagnostics; project management; urban logistics; outsourcing and sustainable development. He also has an *established image* in the country and abroad. His repeated participation in national and international forums is proof of his potential to develop and his desire to affirm his qualities. It is important to note that Dr. Vladi Kurshumov also has *proven practical experience*, which strengthens the connection "research - business - university".

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov reports participation in two research projects. In addition, he actively participates in various educational projects as a coordinator, team member or expert (BG05M2OP001-2.013-0001 "Student Internships - Phase 2", project BG05M2OP001-2.009-0036 "Investments in the education of students, doctoral students, postdoctoral students and teachers - a guarantor of a better future", implemented within the framework of the OP "Science and Education for Smart Growth" 2014-2020, and Project "99 out of 100 - academic traditions in the future" (D19000477BH/ 27.03.2019), implemented under the "Culture" fund of the Municipality of Varna), etc. This testifies to his serious expertise in the field of project activity.

The candidate in the competition also demonstrates active consulting and expert activity. A total of 8 consulting services to health, public and business organizations are reported, and it is striking that they are directly related to the topic of the competition, as they mainly concern the development of project proposals and the performance of financial and economic analyses. This shows that Dr. Vladi Kurshumov has significant practical knowledge and expertise in the field of the announced competition.

Based on all of the above, regarding the diverse and in-depth teaching and research work of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Kurshumov, I believe that **he meets the quantitative and qualitative requirements** for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University of Varna.

3. Evaluation of teaching and learning activities

Dr. Vladi Kurshumov has a teaching workload that meets the accepted annual standard of the University of Varna. The candidate fulfills the standard for teaching employment at the University of Varna, and for the last 2 academic years has spent a total of 577 hours, including 232 hours of lectures and 345 hours of exercises in the Bachelor's degree program, full-time and distance learning, in the disciplines: "Economic Analysis of the Enterprise", "Business Diagnostics", "Urban Logistics", "Project Management", "Academic Research", "European and National Programs and Projects" and "Organization of Forwarding Activities".

Senior Assistant Professor Kurshumov teaches students in the Master's Degree Program, part-time and distance learning, and for the same period he has conducted a total of 117 hours, including 36 lectures and 81 hours of exercises in the disciplines: "Resource Management and Project Budgeting", "Competitiveness and Growth Management", "Sustainable Development and Green Logistics", "Fundamentals of Project Management", "Forwarding Management" and "Master's Seminar".

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov actively participated in the development of 19 curricula in the Bachelor's and 12 in the Master's degree programs. The candidate in the competition has also provided teaching materials for 12 disciplines in the



Bachelor's and 6 in the Master's degree programs. Dr. Kurshumov has also demonstrated high activity in his work with students, and over the last 5 academic years has carried out 23 scientific supervisions and reviewed 14 diploma theses of students in both educational qualification levels.

In addition to his teaching work at the University of Varna, Vladi Kurshumov regularly participates as a lecturer in various training courses at the Center for Professional Training of the Bulgarian Industrial Chamber - Union of Bulgarian Business.

Everything up to this point gives reason to conclude that Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov has acquired sufficient experience and routine and evidence of professionalism in his teaching work. *It should be noted that he has accumulated practical experience, which reflects on his teaching style and creates additional applied attractiveness of his knowledge.*

4. Main Contributions

The publications contain a number of scientific, scientific-methodological and scientific-applied contributions of varying degrees of significance for economic science and business practice:

➤ Scientific contributions include :

- Theoretical knowledge related to project management has been enriched in the direction of exploring the importance of teams in project activities in the organization. (Publication 26.9)
- A theoretical overview and justification of the relationship between operational programs and European funds as a whole and the achievement of sustainable development of the country has been carried out. (Publication 16.7)
- The general characteristics of European funds and programs directly aimed at business in Bulgaria are defined and their role in the development of business organizations in Bulgaria is clarified. (Publications 5.1, 15.6, 27.10 and 29.12)
- The concept of "urban logistics" and the possibilities for comprehensive optimization of the urban logistics system with the aim of achieving economic growth and economic, social and ecological balance are explored. (Publications 12.3, 21.4, 23.6, 22.5, 24.7 and 11.2)
- Possibilities for implementing outsourcing of processes and activities in industrial enterprises in Bulgaria as a way to achieve a high level of competitiveness and sustainable development have been analyzed (Publications 8.3; 9.4; 17.8; 30.13; 31.14 and 32.15)
- The main characteristics of the manifestation of the Cohesion Policy of the European Union through the operational programs in Bulgaria and the changes that occur in its scope, structure and objectives are synthesized. The features of the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism and the National Recovery and Resilience Plans in some European countries are outlined. (Publications 28.11, 10.1. and 13.4)



- **Scientific and methodological contributions include:**
- It has been developed system from indicators for diagnostics on the project activity on the Bulgarians enterprises in the area on improvement the conditions on labor through European financing and couriers companies in Bulgaria . (Publications 15.6 and 29.12)
 - It is designed complete methodical toolkit for diagnostics the degree on participation on the Bulgarians enterprises by programs for European funding and level on project activity on the enterprises through integrated system from indicators . (Publication 5.1.)
 - It is proposed on methodology for establishment on the appropriate ones for outsourcing activities and processes in industrial enterprises as road for the successful his application. (Publications 8.3; 9.4; 31.14 and 32.15)
- **Scientific and applied contributions include:**
- A conceptual model with specific practical steps for effective project management by enterprises is proposed, with the possibility of optimizing the level of project activity. (Publications 5.1; 27.10; 29.12 and 15.6)
 - The degree of participation of Bulgarian enterprises in European programs for supporting innovation and competitiveness and human resources development at national, regional and organizational levels was studied and the problem areas in the absorption of project funding were identified. (Publication 5.1)
 - Recommendations to municipalities in Bulgaria for optimizing urban logistics processes and the transport system in order to achieve sustainable development, economic growth and better living conditions have been systematized. (Publications 11.2; 12.3; 21.4; 22.5 and 23.6)
 - Recommendations are made to enterprises regarding the formation, motivation and management of teams when working on projects with different characteristics. (Publications 5.1 and 26.9)
 - Guidelines have been formulated for Bulgarian enterprises for the effective integration of process outsourcing into their business activities in order to maintain a high level of competitiveness. (Publications 8.3; 9.4; 30.13; 31.14 and 32.15)
 - Practical recommendations to the responsible institutions have been derived, based on the results of a study of the process of developing operational programs in Bulgaria and the degree of implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. (Publications 5.1; 13.4; 10.1; 15.6 and 27.10).

I accept the contributions as real, credible and proven in the course of the candidate's research work. The contributions present Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov as a researcher with excellent theoretical training, with the ability to make creative generalizations and formulate solutions for practice.

5. Significance of contributions to science and practice

The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions, a representative part of which has been published in journals and scientific collections published by well-known academic publishing houses. *His theoretical developments have practical*



applicability, some of which are directly oriented towards academic work.

6. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks, but I would like to make some recommendations:

- I recommend that the candidate publish studies in the direction and field of his/her scientific research.
- In order to promote his scientific work among the international academic community, I recommend that he increase his publications in refereed and indexed publications in global databases.
- In order to improve the learning process, I recommend that the candidate make efforts to develop independent textbooks and teaching aids in the disciplines he/she teaches.

7. Conclusion

Based on the above, I can summarize that there is a convincing candidacy for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University of Varna. Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Vladi Kurshumov is a scientist with great potential, combining scientific research with practical and applied activities, who has also proven his achievements in teaching and learning. The competition documents testify that both the minimum national requirements and the quantitative and qualitative criteria of the University of Varna for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" have been met.

With full conviction, I give my POSITIVE assessment and recommend to the other esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to vote "FOR" awarding the academic position "Associate Professor" to Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, in Scientific Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Direction 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)".

21.03.2026
Plovdiv

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679
Prepared by: ALEKSI

/ Prof. V. Nikolova-Alexieva, PhD /

CONFIDENTIAL EVALUATION REPORT

for Appointment to the Rank of **Associate Professor**
University of Economics – Varna

Field: Social, Economic and Legal Sciences

Discipline: Economics

Specialization: Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)

1. Context and Purpose of the Evaluation

This report provides a comprehensive academic evaluation of Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov in connection with his candidacy for appointment to the rank of Associate Professor at the University of Economics – Varna. The position has been formally announced in the State Gazette (Issue 104/05.12.2025) for the needs of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics, and the candidate is the sole applicant.

The evaluation is based on a systematic and detailed review of the submitted academic portfolio, including the candidate's research output, habilitation monograph, citation record, participation in research projects and academic initiatives, teaching activity, and professional engagement. The assessment follows internationally recognized academic standards, emphasizing research productivity, originality, methodological rigor, academic impact, independence, and contribution to teaching and institutional development.

2. Compliance with National and Institutional Requirements

From the submitted documentation, it is evident that the candidate not only meets but substantially exceeds all national and institutional requirements for appointment to the rank of Associate Professor. At the national level, the candidate exceeds the minimum requirements by 255 points, which indicates a high level of sustained research activity and academic productivity.

Table 1. National Minimum Requirements

| Indicator | Achieved Points | Minimum Required |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Group A | 50 | 50 |
| Group B | 100 | 100 |
| Group C | 305 | 200 |
| Group D | 200 | 50 |
| Total | 655 | 400 |

At the institutional level, the candidate also significantly exceeds the additional requirements of the University of Economics – Varna, accumulating 230 points compared to a required minimum of 110 points, which represents an excess of 120 points.

Table 2. Additional Institutional Requirements

| Indicator | Achieved Points | Minimum Required |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Scientific conference papers | 140 | 30 |
| Articles and studies | 90 | 80 |
| Total | 230 | 110 |

These results demonstrate not only formal compliance but also a consistent and cumulative pattern of academic activity. From a tenure-style evaluation perspective, such quantitative overperformance is indicative of a stable research trajectory and sustained engagement with scholarly work.

3. Academic Background and Career Development

Dr. Kurshumov holds a PhD degree awarded in 2015 by the University of Economics – Varna. His academic training includes a Bachelor’s degree in Industrial Economics and a Master’s degree in Corporate Business and Management, providing a solid interdisciplinary foundation for his research and teaching activities.

His academic career began in 2011, and since 2016 he has held the position of Chief Assistant Professor. This trajectory reflects a steady and continuous development within the academic environment, characterized by institutional commitment and progressive accumulation of teaching and research experience. While his career path is primarily institutionally anchored, it demonstrates consistency, reliability, and a sustained contribution to academic life.

4. Research Output: Structure, Volume, and Coherence

The candidate presents a substantial body of research consisting of 28 academic publications with a total volume of 804 pages. This output reflects both quantitative adequacy and structural diversity, combining monographic work, peer-reviewed publications, and conference contributions.

Table 3. Types of Publications

| Type of publication | Number |
|--|-----------|
| Monograph (habilitation thesis) | 1 |
| Book based on defended dissertation | 1 |
| Participation in a collective monograph | 1 |
| Scientific studies | 2 |
| Scientific articles | 8 |
| Scientific conference papers | 15 |
| Total publications | 28 |

A particularly important indicator of academic maturity is the authorship structure. The candidate has authored 19 publications independently and 9 in co-authorship, which demonstrates a high level of intellectual independence and the ability to develop and sustain individual research directions.

Table 4. Authorship Participation

| Type of participation | Number |
|------------------------------|--------|
| Single-authored publications | 19 |
| Co-authored publications | 9 |
| Total | 28 |

Thematically, the candidate's research is coherent and focused, centering on European funding mechanisms, project management, business diagnostics, and enterprise competitiveness. This thematic consistency contributes to the formation of a recognizable research identity, which is a critical factor in advanced academic evaluation systems.

5. Evaluation of the Habilitation Monograph

The habilitation thesis, entitled "*Financing of Enterprises in Bulgaria through European Funds*," represents a central element of the candidate's academic contribution. The work offers a comprehensive analysis of European programmes as a source of enterprise financing and situates them within a broader economic and institutional context.

The monograph demonstrates conceptual clarity by framing European funding as a strategic instrument influencing enterprise development and competitiveness. Methodologically, it integrates theoretical analysis with a structured empirical investigation, reflecting a well-designed research approach. The inclusion of practical recommendations further enhances its relevance, as it addresses real-world challenges related to project management and the effective utilization of European funds.

Overall, the monograph meets the standards expected of a habilitation thesis, combining theoretical depth, methodological rigor, and applied relevance.

6. Scientific Contributions: Theoretical, Methodological, and Applied Dimensions

The candidate's scientific contributions can be examined across three interrelated dimensions. First, at the theoretical level, his work contributes to the understanding of European funds as instruments for economic development and enterprise growth. It explores the relationship between funding mechanisms, investment activity, and competitiveness, thereby enriching the existing body of knowledge in this field.

Second, at the methodological level, the candidate develops analytical frameworks and systems of indicators for diagnosing project activities within enterprises. These tools enable a structured evaluation of enterprise participation in European programmes and provide a basis for analyzing the factors influencing project effectiveness. Such methodological contributions enhance both academic research and practical analysis.

Third, at the applied level, the candidate formulates concrete recommendations aimed at improving project management practices and increasing the efficiency of European fund utilization. These contributions are particularly valuable, as they bridge the gap between theory and practice and address the needs of both enterprises and public institutions.

Taken together, these contributions reflect a balanced academic profile that integrates theoretical insight, methodological development, and practical applicability.

7. Citation Impact and Academic Visibility

The candidate reports a total of 27 citations of his scientific works, including citations indexed in international databases such as Scopus and Web of Science, as well as in monographs and peer-reviewed journals. While the overall citation volume may be considered moderate in a global context, it is appropriate for the candidate's career stage and disciplinary field.

More importantly, the presence of citations in internationally recognized databases indicates that the candidate's research has begun to gain visibility beyond the national academic environment. This suggests potential for further development and increased international impact in the future.

8. Research Projects, Academic Service, and Professional Engagement

Dr. Kurshumov demonstrates active participation in research projects, academic initiatives, and professional activities. He has contributed to two research projects, including one related to his doctoral work and another collective project conducted within his department, the results of which have been published in a collective monograph. This reflects his ability to work both independently and as part of a research team.

In addition, the candidate has been actively involved in the organization of academic events, serving as a member of organizing committees for three international scientific

conferences and two round tables. This activity contributes to the academic visibility and reputation of the department and supports the development of scholarly communication.

His professional profile is further strengthened by consultancy experience, including eight completed consultancy assignments for healthcare, public, and business organizations. These activities demonstrate his capacity to apply academic knowledge in practical contexts and to support organizations in the development and implementation of project-based initiatives.

Participation in educational and institutional projects funded under national and European programmes further highlights his engagement with broader academic and societal processes.

9. Teaching Activity and Pedagogical Contribution

The candidate possesses substantial teaching experience at both the Bachelor's and Master's levels, delivered in full-time, part-time, and distance learning formats. His teaching portfolio covers a wide range of disciplines related to economics, management, and project activity, including economic analysis, business diagnostics, project management, logistics, and sustainability.

Over the last two academic years, he has delivered a significant teaching load, amounting to 577 hours at the Bachelor's level and 117 hours at the Master's level. This demonstrates sustained engagement in the educational process and full compliance with institutional requirements.

Importantly, there is a strong alignment between the candidate's teaching subjects and his research areas, which enhances the quality of instruction and supports the integration of research-based knowledge into the learning process.

10. Overall Assessment and Recommendation

The overall academic profile of Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov can be characterized as coherent, balanced, and steadily developing. His strengths include consistent research productivity, a high degree of research independence, clear thematic focus, meaningful applied contributions, active participation in academic and professional initiatives, and substantial teaching experience.

While there is potential for further strengthening of international publication activity and citation impact, these aspects should be viewed as natural directions for future development rather than as limitations.

In conclusion, the candidate fully meets and, in several respects, exceeds the requirements for appointment to the rank of Associate Professor. On this basis, I provide a clear and unequivocally positive recommendation in support of his candidacy.

Date: March 19, 2026

Review

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

Prof. Dr. Radko Radev

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - VARNA**

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OPINION

**on the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor"
announced by the University of Economics - Varna**

1. General Information

Prepared by: Prof. Tanka Vasileva Milkova, PhD, lecturer in the Department of "Statistics and Applied Mathematics" at the UE-Varna, Professor in Professional Field 3.8. Economics.

Basis for preparing the opinion: This opinion is prepared based on Order of the Rector of the UE-Varna No. RD-06-20/26.01.2026 regarding the composition of the Scientific Jury for the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" and a decision of the Scientific Jury taken at the first meeting on 12.02.2026.

2. Information about the Competition

The competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)" has been announced for the needs of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics by the Faculty of Economics at the University of Economics - Varna and has been announced in State Gazette No. 104 / 05.12.2025.

3. Candidate in the Competition

The only candidate in the competition is Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, PhD, lecturer at the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics at the University of Economics – Varna since 2011.

The candidate fulfills and even significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field of the announced competition. It also exceeds the additional quantitative requirements of the University of Economics – Varna. Fulfills the requirements in Art. 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University.



4. Information about the Candidate

Vladi Kurshumov has obtained Bachelor's degrees (specialty "Industrial Economics"), "Master" (specialty "Corporate Business and Management") and "Doctor" in Industrial Business from the University of Economics - Varna. His professional development began in 2009 and after gaining some experience in practice, since 2011 Vladi Kurshumov has been focusing and fully devoting himself to his scientific, teaching and administrative development at the University of Economics - Varna. In addition to being a lecturer at the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics, he has worked as an expert in Programs and Projects in the Project Management Sector, and is currently engaged in one of the most responsible activities at the university as Head of the Management Analysis and Rating System Sector.

The scientific interests of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD are related to business diagnostics, economic analysis, project management, urban logistics and competitiveness of the enterprise and fully correspond to the scientific specialty of the competition "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)". In full compliance with this scientific specialty are all publications of the candidate, submitted for participation in the competition.

I also want to share my wonderful personal impressions from the joint work with Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD. I have worked with him in connection with the implementation of various tasks related to accreditation procedures at the university and I believe that he is extremely responsible, precise and dedicated to each task assigned to him.

5. Description of Scientific Works

For his participation in the competition, Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD presents the following scientific papers:

- main habilitation work (single-authored monograph) entitled "Financing of enterprises in Bulgaria through European funds". The monograph is published in a specialized scientific journal - monographic library "Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev" at the Science and Economics Publishing House at the University of Economics - Varna. It was reviewed by two habilitated persons, it was discussed at a meeting of the primary unit. The topic of the monographic work fully corresponds to the scientific specialty of the competition;
- one single-authored monograph on the topic "Problems of outsourcing in the Bulgarian industry" on the basis of a defended dissertation;



- one co-authored monograph on "Prospects and Opportunities for Industrial Enterprises in Bulgaria";
- two co-authored studies;
- 8 articles, of which 6 are single-authored and 2 are co-authored;
- 15 reports, of which 11 are single-authored and 4 are co-authored.

One of the studies and one of the reports are indexed in the Scopus database, and the others are included in the National Reference List of Contemporary Bulgarian Scientific Journals with scientific peer review. Most of the publications of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD are single-authored, but there are also co-authored publications. This shows that he can develop single-authored scientific research, and also knows how to work in a team.

The scientific works of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD are dedicated to current economic problems that fully correspond to the scientific specialty of the competition. They are written in a high scientific style, they are structured logically, the goals of the research set by the author are achieved. The publications are built on the basis of established scientific methodologies, and where necessary, author's ones are proposed. Real data of different nature, according to the needs of the specific publication, are summarized and in-depth economic analyses and conclusions are proposed. I believe that the scientific developments of the candidate in the competition can be evaluated very highly not only in quantitative terms, but also in qualitative terms.

6. Identification of Contributions

In the publications of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD, significant original contributing moments are identified. I accept and fully confirm the contributions presented by him, divided into three groups – scientific-theoretical, scientific-methodological and scientific-applied. All of them concern economic problems, both at the enterprise level and at regional and national level and fully correspond to the scientific specialty of the competition. In general, they are related to: the opportunities for enterprises in Bulgaria to increase their competitiveness through work in the field of project management for grants through European funds; implementation of outsourcing in its activities; development and implementation of eco-innovations, effective participation in the processes of building an adapted urban logistics system; development of corporate culture and achieving sustainable development through the integration of the above areas.

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov presents a reference and evidence of 27 citations, 5 of which are in publications in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. With 50 points required to fulfill the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate



Professor", he reports 200 points from citations of his scientific works. At the moment, there is h-index 2 in Google Scholar and h-index 1 in Scopus, which indicates the presence of interest in his scientific works on the part of other researchers.

7. Participation in Scientific Projects and Scientific Forums

On the basis of the presented by Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD, it can be argued that he has a very rich and diverse project activity. Participation in 7 scientific and educational projects and membership in 5 organizing committees for conferences and round tables have been reported. All scientific projects and scientific events are on topics that directly correspond to the scientific specialty of the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor". For the active participation of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov in scientific forums also testify to the presented scientific publications in the part of reports. With that said, I highly appreciate the project activity of the candidate in the competition.

In addition to the project activity, Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov has also carried out expert and consulting activities for external organizations (evidence of 8 such activities has been presented), related to the development of economic analyses and evaluation of various projects. The expert and consulting activities also correspond to the direction of the scientific specialty of the competition.

8. Teaching Work

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov has 15 years of teaching experience, and according to the presented reports, only in the last two academic years he has taught classes in more than 10 different disciplines. In total, he has developed teaching materials in 18 different academic disciplines. He is a co-author of 31 study programs for the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs. During the last 5 academic years, he has conducted scientific supervision of 19 students and has written 18 reviews in the two educational and qualification stages. I believe that the activities described in this way are the result of very serious and purposeful work of the candidate in the competition, and his teaching work is highly appreciated by the students.

I would like to note that in addition to the scientific and teaching work, Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD is also very active in the administrative work of the University of Economics – Varna. In addition to his participation over the years in a number of commissions and councils at the university, he reports 15 participations in working groups with different nature of the tasks assigned to them.



I highly appreciate the fact that Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov also works in terms of improving his own competencies and qualifications. Proof of this are the reported 9 participations in various specializations and trainings.

9. Plagiarism

I have not found plagiarism in the scientific works of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD. The references to other people's scientific works are correct and I believe that the publications are his own work.

10. Questions and Critical Remarks

I have no questions and critical remarks to the candidate. I hope that he will continue to deepen his research work in the field of his scientific interests.

11. Conclusion

My acquaintance with the documents provided and my personal impressions of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD are grounds to assert that he has all the necessary achievements in the scientific, educational and administrative work of the university, which are necessary to occupy the academic position of Associate Professor.

On the basis of the established overfulfillment of the Minimum National Requirements for Occupying the Academic Position of Associate Professor and the additional quantitative requirements for occupying this position at the University of Economics - Varna, I declare my positive opinion and propose to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to vote FOR occupying the academic position of Associate Professor by the candidate in the competition Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, PhD.

17.03.2026

Varna

Prepared by

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

Prof. Dr. Tanka Мѝjkova

OPINION

Вх. № PA 20-571/30.03.2026г

Prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Silviya Georgieva Blagoeva-Karamfilova, PhD, habilitated in professional field 3.8 "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Logistics and Operations Management)", University of Economics - Varna

Subject: Competition for occupying the academic position of "associate professor" in professional field 3.8 "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)" at the University of Economics - Varna

1. Information about the competition

The competition was announced in the State Gazette No. 104/05.12.2025 for occupying the academic position "associate professor" in professional field 3.8 "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)" for the needs of the Department "Industrial Business and Logistics" at the University of Economics - Varna. I participate in the scientific jury of the competition according to order No. RD 06-20/26.01.2026 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna. The opinion was prepared according to the decision of the scientific jury at a meeting held on 12.02.2026.

2. Competition candidate

Only one candidate participated in the competition for the academic position of "associate professor": Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, PhD, a full-time lecturer in the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics" at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Varna.

The required number of points to fulfil the minimum national requirements according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Academic Staff Development Act is 400, and the actual fulfilment by Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD is 655 points, as follows:

- defended dissertation work for the acquisition of the Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor" on the topic "Problems of Outsourcing in Bulgarian Industry" (50 points);
- published habilitation work (monograph) on the topic "Financing Enterprises in Bulgaria through European Funds" (100 points);
- a published book based on a defended dissertation work for the award of the Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor" (75 points);
- 20 scientific articles and scientific reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes for 175 points;
- 1 scientific study published in a scientific edition, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus and/or Web of Science) for 15 points;
- 1 scientific study published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes (5 points);
- 1 scientific report published in a scientific edition, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus and/or Web of Science) for 15 points;
- published chapter of a collective monograph for 20 points;
- 5 citations in scientific publications, monographs, collective volumes, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus and/or Web of Science) for 75 points; the attached reference describes 22 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review, as well as in non-refereed journals with scientific review for a total of 125 points.

The fulfilment of the quantitative requirements for occupying the academic position of "associate professor" at the University of Economics - Varna, specified in the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna on the basis of Article 2b, paragraph 5 of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria, is as follows: with 30 points required for scientific reports, the candidate has 140; with 80 points required for scientific articles and studies, the candidate has 90 points.

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements for the academic position of “associate professor” in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, in which the competition is announced. He also categorically exceeds the additional quantitative requirements of the UE-Varna under Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria.

3. Information about the candidate in the competition

In 2008, Vladi Kurshumov obtained a bachelor's degree (specialty “Economics of Industry”) at the UE-Varna, and in 2009 he also obtained a master's degree - specialty “Corporate Business and Management”, UE-Varna. He successfully defended his doctoral dissertation and in 2015 was awarded the Educational and Scientific Degree “Doctor” in scientific specialty “Industrial Business”. He also holds a professional qualification “Manager in the Hotel and Restaurant Business” after completing training at the Centre for continuing education at the University of Economics - Varna in the period 2005 - 2008.

In the period 2009 – 2011 he was the manager of VV Trans EOOD, Stara Zagora. In 2011-2012 he was a part-time assistant at the Department of Industrial Business at the University of Economics - Varna, and from October 2012 he was appointed to the position of “assistant”, which he held until June 2016. In the period 2015 – 2019 he also worked as an expert “Programmes and Projects” in the “Project Management” office at the university. From July 2016 to the present, he holds the academic position of “chief assistant” at the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics at the University of Economics - Varna. Since June 2023 he also holds an administrative position as head of the “Management Analyses and Rating System” office at the university.

The candidate's areas of scientific interest are in the field of the announced competition - business diagnostics, economic analysis, project management, urban logistics, enterprise competitiveness. He is fluent in English.

I personally know Vladi Kurshumov from the period of his studies at the University of Economics - Varna, because I have taught him in each of the educational levels, as well as participated in the discussion of his scientific production in the department. Currently, I am his direct manager for the administrative position he holds (head of the “Management Analyses and Rating System” office) and I can say that in close cooperation we carry out all activities related to the preparation of various management analyses, including the preparation and submission of reports related to all accreditation procedures at the university. In performing his work, Vladi Kurshumov is exclusively responsible, stands out with analytical skills and proactive behavior.

4. Quantitative, structural and content characteristics of the submitted scientific papers

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD has provided the necessary evidence for fulfilling the conditions specified in Art. 101, items 1-6 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna for occupying the academic position of “associate professor”:

1. He has acquired the Educational and Scientific Degree “Doctor” in scientific specialty “Industrial Business” since 2015.

2. He holds the academic position of “chief assistant” at the University of Economics - Varna since 2016, Department of “Industrial Business and Logistics” (for 10 years now).

3. He submits for participation in the competition published in the publishing house “Science and Economics”, bibliography “Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev” in 2025 a monographic work on the topic: “Financing Enterprises in Bulgaria through European Funds”, which does not repeat publications submitted for the acquisition of the Educational and Scientific Degree “Doctor”.

4. References are submitted for fulfilling the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of “associate professor” in the field of higher education 3. “Social, economic and legal sciences” according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on Higher

Education and Research of the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as the requirements for occupying the academic position of “associate professor” at the University of Economics - Varna on the basis of Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria.

5. The candidate submits a declaration of originality of the scientific works.

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD participates in the competition for the academic position of “associate professor” with 28 publications (independent - 68% and co-authorship), a total of 804 pages of personal participation, including:

1. Monographs – 3 issues, 470 pages (of which 2 are independent, one of which is a published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the Educational and Scientific Degree “Doctor”, 415 pages).

2. Studies – 2 issues in co-authorship, 30 pages of personal participation.

3. Scientific articles – 8 issues, 117 pages (of which 6 are independent, 99 pages).

4. Scientific reports – 15 issues, 187 pages (of which 11 are independent, 159 pages).

In terms of content, the main part of the publications of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD are dedicated to problems related to the theory and practice of project management, business diagnostics, enterprise competitiveness and concern: the opportunities for enterprises in Bulgaria to increase their competitiveness through work in the field of project management for grant financing through European funds; implementation of various outsourcing solutions; development and implementation of eco-innovations, effective participation in the processes of building an adapted urban logistics system; development of corporate culture and achieving sustainable development through integration of the above-mentioned areas. The publications treat economic problems both at the enterprise level and at regional and national levels.

In structural terms, independent publications predominate (68% of the total number), which covers almost all types of publications (monographs, articles, reports). Such a ratio is a sufficiently strong argument in support of the independence of the candidate's scientific achievements and contributions. The chosen scientific direction allows the author to work actively, proving himself as a competent researcher who justifies his ideas and convincingly achieves the goal of his studies. The joint publications emphasize the skills of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD to work successfully and in a team.

In terms of quality, the scientific production of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD is characterized by purposefulness, analyticity and thoroughness. Basic theoretical statements related to business diagnostics and project management, which have been in the field of the candidate's scientific interests for a long time, have been systematized, enriched and further developed. Convincing evidence of the high quality and scientific value of the candidate's production is the fact that 2 publications in co-authorship (a study and a report) have been published in scientific editions, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus). 25 of the publications for participation in the competition (studies, scientific articles, reports) are included in the National Reference List of Bulgarian Scientific Publications with Scientific Review. In my opinion, the scientific production of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD corresponds to the subject matter and content of the announced competition for the academic position of “associate professor” in Professional field 3.8 “Economics”, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)” and is appropriately linked to the academic disciplines in which he carries out his teaching activities. The scientific publications do not repeat those for acquiring the Educational and Scientific Degree “Doctor”, they are dedicated to current problems of the theory and practice of business diagnostics and project management, and they highlight interesting and significant assessments, conclusions and recommendations.

5. Identification of scientific and scientific-applied contributions

The long-term scientific research of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD in the field of project management, business diagnostics, enterprise competitiveness and urban

logistics has provided the opportunity to create productions with scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the following areas:

1. The general characteristics of the European funds and programmes directly aimed at business in Bulgaria are defined. The role of the European programmes for the development of business organizations in Bulgaria is clarified, including the main advantages that working on projects with European funding provides, as well as the risks that accompany this process, including in the area of health and safety working conditions, for start-ups and in the field of courier services.

2. The theoretical statements on the relationship between Operational programmes and European funds as a whole have been supplemented as well as achieving sustainable development of the country. A comprehensive methodological toolkit has been designed for diagnosing the degree of participation of Bulgarian enterprises in European funding programmes and the level of project activity of enterprises through an integrated system of indicators. A system of indicators has been developed also for diagnosing the project activity of Bulgarian enterprises in the field of improving working conditions through European funding and of courier companies in Bulgaria.

3. The existing theory in the field of sustainable development of cities and enterprises has been enriched and further developed by studying the concept of "urban logistics" and the possibilities for comprehensive optimization of the urban logistics system in order to achieve economic growth and economic, social and ecological balance; features have been identified in the application of the "Zero waste" concept as a factor for sustainable development and the integration of co-modality in urban conditions by synchronizing the interests of public and private logistics operators.

4. Scientific knowledge in the field of outsourcing has been further developed by defining opportunities for implementing outsourcing of processes and activities in industrial enterprises in Bulgaria in order to achieve a high level of competitiveness and sustainable development. A methodology has been developed for identifying activities and processes suitable for outsourcing in industrial enterprises.

5. A number of studies of a practical and applied nature have been conducted and some theoretical and applied results have been achieved in:

- development of a conceptual model with specific practical steps for effective project management by enterprises and the ability to optimize the level of their project activity; the importance of preliminary business diagnostics before initiating a potential project is highlighted;

- formulating specific recommendations to enterprises on how to create, motivate and manage teams when working on projects with different characteristics related to scale, duration, etc.;

- formulation of practical recommendations to the responsible institutions for: achieving a balance between the interests of stakeholders in the process of programming and managing funds; prioritizing national interests in order to more fully absorb European funding; stimulating the participation of enterprises as beneficiaries of European programmes;

- defining recommendations to municipalities in Bulgaria for optimizing urban logistics processes and the transport system in order to achieve sustainable development, economic growth and better living conditions;

- formulating guidelines for Bulgarian enterprises for effective integration of process outsourcing in their business activities with a view to maintaining a high level of competitiveness.

6. Evaluation of citations

The citation report shows that a significant part of the scientific publications of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD have been cited by Bulgarian and foreign authors - evidence of 27 citations for a total of 200 points has been submitted, significantly exceeding the required ones. 5 of the citations are in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-

renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus and/or Web of Science). This is convincing evidence that the candidate's scientific achievements are well known to the scientific community in our country and abroad.

7. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

Vladi Kurshumov has participated in the following projects related to the topic of the competition: 1) member of the scientific team of the scientific research project SRP-147/ 2015 on the topic "Prospects and Opportunities of Industrial Enterprises in Bulgaria" with the result of a published monographic work on the topic "Prospects and Opportunities for Industrial Enterprises in Bulgaria", ISBN: 978-954-21-0992-1 after conducting research; 2) contractor of the research project RP-102/2013 to support the development of an empirical part of a doctoral dissertation on the topic: "Problems of Outsourcing in the Bulgarian Brewing Industry" with the result - an empirical study conducted among Bulgarian brewing enterprises on the degree of application of process outsourcing and effects of its implementation.

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD actively participates in the teams in three more projects, which end with the organization and conduct of scientific forums of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics. In addition, he is an active participant in national and international scientific forums, which is evident from the attached documents for the competition. He is a member of the Association of Professors of Economics and Management in Industry (APEMI).

8. Quantitative and qualitative assessment of teaching and learning activity

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD is a respected university lecturer and participates in the training of students of the Bachelor's and Master's programmes at the University of Economics - Varna. In the period (2015 - 2025) he teaches the following disciplines (lectures and/or exercises) at the University of Economics - Varna:

1. In the Bachelor's Degree Programmes (full-time and distance learning) – specialty "Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship": "Business Diagnostics", "European and National Programmes and Projects", "Industrial Entrepreneurship", "Business Planning of the Enterprise", "Academic Research"; specialty "Logistics": "Urban Logistics", "Organization of Forwarding Activities"; the university special discipline "Project Management" for all specialties.

2. In the Master's Degree Programmes (part-time and distance learning form) - specialty "Corporate Business and Management": "Management of Competitiveness and Growth"; specialty "Project Management": "Resource Management and Project Budgeting", "Fundamentals of Project Management"; specialty "Logistics Management": "Sustainable Development and Green Logistics".

In developing the curriculum for the new master's programme "Outsourcing and Business Development" at the Industrial Business and Logistics Department, Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD participates in the teams developing the following curricula: "Outsourcing and Outsourcing Strategies", "Planning and Financing of Outsourcing Processes", "Business Analytics", "Intercultural Communications". When updating the curriculum in 2024, he participates in the teams developing the curricula of the aforementioned and other disciplines (a total of 19 programmes in the Bachelor's and 12 programmes in the Master's degree). For each of the last two completed academic years (2023/2024 and 2024/2025 academic years), the candidate in the competition has a full annual academic workload in the Bachelor's degree (the report indicates a total of 577 unreduced academic hours/809 hours in academic workload in the Bachelor's degree and a total of 117 unreduced academic hours in the Master's degree). The disciplines taught (8 in the Bachelor's degree) are in the field of the announced competition and permanently ensure a full annual academic workload for the candidate in accordance with the standards approved by the university.

In my opinion, a positive assessment should also be given to the active extracurricular work with students: 1) scientific supervision of dozens of graduates from the specialties "Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship", "Logistics" and "Business and Management

(teaching in English)" in the Bachelor's degree and specialties "Corporate Business and Management" and "Logistics Management" in the Master's degree; 2) reviewing dozens of theses of students from the indicated specialties (detailed reference attached in the competition documents). Attention also deserves the support provided in the process of developing, submitting and reporting a student project (Business Plan) with entry No. 94-I-84/29.05.2017, submitted by a student from the specialty "Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship") under the "Technostart 3" programme at the Ministry of Economy.

Vladi Kurshumov's efforts to provide full-time and distance learning students with electronic learning materials (subject-specific reference attached) deserve high praise.

The candidate in the competition provides information about teaching activities (lecturer) at the Centre for Professional Training of the Bulgarian Industrial Association: a total of 249 hours were reported in various trainings related to business planning, entrepreneurship, small and medium-sized businesses and others.

What has been reflected so far gives reason to claim that in nature and content, the teaching activity of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD fully corresponds to the topic and scientific field of the announced competition. At the same time, it characterizes him as an experienced university lecturer with an established teaching authority. The developed lecture courses, the conducted seminars and the active methodological work with students are categorical proof that Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD successfully participates in the preparation of specialists in business diagnostics, entrepreneurship and project management for practice.

9. Administrative experience and achievements

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD also has significant experience in administrative positions at the university, including participation in collective management bodies and a number of committees and councils. In June 2023, he was appointed Head of "Management Analyses and Rating System" office - a position he currently holds. In the period 2015 - 2019, he works as an expert "Programmes and Projects" in the "Project Management" office. He is a member of the Academic Council of the University of Economics - Varna since 2020 to the present. He is a member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Economics - Varna - since 2023 to the present. He is a member of the Council for Electronic and Distance Learning of the University of Economics - Varna since 2019 to the present. He is a member of the Standing Accreditation Commission at the University of Economics - Varna since 2023 to the present. He is a member of the Committee for Monitoring, Evaluation, Optimization and Risk Management at the University of Economics - Varna since 2024 to the present. Member of the internal auditors team at the university since 2017 to the present. Member of the Central Competition Committee at the university from 2019 to 2023. Coordinator of the project "Investments in the education of students, doctoral students, postdoctoral students and lecturers - a guarantee of a better future", implemented within the framework of the OP "Science and Education for Smart Growth" - 2017-2019. Coordinator of the project "99 out of 100 - Academic traditions in the future", implemented within the framework of the Culture Fund of the Municipality of Varna. The long list of administrative commitments and participation in dozens of working groups is a clear proof of the skills of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD to work in a team, as well as his serious commitment to the activities of the department, faculty and university.

The attached competition documentation also contains information about the serious consulting and expert work for external organizations carried out by the candidate within the scope of the announced competition.

10. Plagiarism – I have not found any plagiarism, incorrect data, or incorrect references to other people's scientific works in the candidate's scientific production.

11. Critical notes and recommendations

Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Kurshumov, PhD possesses the necessary research potential and can carry out independent and team research. I would kindly recommend him:

- to develop and publish textbooks and teaching aids, as they are one of the most important conditions for effective student learning;
- to actively participate as a leader of research teams for the implementation of scientific projects;
- to work actively for publication in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases.

12. Conclusion

The in-depth analysis of the documents and works of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, PhD gives reason to claim that:

1. all conditions and requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Implementation of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria for holding the academic position of “associate professor” have been met;

2. with the position held and the publications realized in terms of quantity, type, content and quality, he fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna (in their part for holding the academic position of “associate professor”).

All this gives me reason to confidently express a categorically positive attitude towards the competition and to support the candidacy of Chief Assist. Prof. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, PhD to occupy the academic position of “associate professor” in professional field 3.8 “Economics”, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)” at the University of Economics - Varna, as well as to recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to support this decision.

26.03.2026
Varna

The opinion is prepared by:
(Assoc. Prof. Silviya G. Blagoeva, PhD)

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

Opinion

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Plamen Pavlov, habilitated in professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Innovation Management".

1. **The opinion is prepared** regarding a competition for the academic position of **associate professor**, in accordance with Order No. RD 06-20/26.01.2026 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna and the decision of the scientific jury, held on 12.02.2026.

2. Competition information

The competition for associate professor is in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)", for the needs of the University of Economics - Varna, Faculty of Economics, Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics" and is announced in the DV /State Gazette/ No. 104 / 05.12.2025.

3. Competition candidates

Only one candidate participated in the competition for the academic position of "associate professor" - Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, a full-time lecturer in the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics" at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Varna. From the documents provided by Chief Assistant Professor Kurshumov, it can be argued that he **fulfills** both the requirements specified in Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the ZRASRB for holding the academic position of "associate professor", as well as the quantitative requirements of the University of Varna (based on Art. 2b, para. 5 of the ZRASRB).

4. Candidate details

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, graduated with a bachelor's degree in 2008 with a major in "Industrial Economics" and a master's degree in 2009 at the University of Economics - Varna, with a major in "Corporate Business and Management". Since 2012, he has been an assistant professor in the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics". In 2015, he defended his dissertation and received the Educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in "Industrial Business". Since July 2016, he has been a Chief Assistant Professor in the same department.

Chief Assistant Prof. Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov has held administrative and management positions at the University of Varna, including Head of the "Management Analyses and Rating System" sector and Expert "Programs and Projects". He has also participated in numerous university committees.

The areas of scientific interest of Chief Assistant Prof. Kurshumov are in the field of the announced competition, namely: economic analysis of the enterprise, business diagnostics, project management.

The candidate for the announced competition for the academic position of "associate professor" **meets** the requirements of Art. 101, points 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Varna (PRAS).

5. Description of scientific works

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov participates in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)" with 28 scientific publications. The candidate fulfills the requirements under Art. 101, items 1-6 as well as Art. 112 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna (PRAS).

The required number of points to fulfill the minimum national requirements from the Appendix to Art. 1a, paragraph 1 of the PPZRASRB is 400 points, and the actual fulfillment by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov is 655 points, complying with the requirements of the PRAS and the corresponding quantitative requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" at the University of Economics - Varna.

To participate in the competition, the candidate has submitted:

- Defense dissertation for the acquisition of the Educational and scientific degree (ONS) "doctor" on the topic "Problems of outsourcing in the Bulgarian industry" (50 points according to the MNI for holding the academic position of "associate professor").

- Independent monograph (main habilitation work) "Financing of enterprises in Bulgaria through European funds", published in 2025 by the "Science and Economics" publishing house, University of Varna, with reviewers Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lyubomir Georgiev, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slavi Genov. The presented work is 220 pages long. The work carried out a large-scale study of the degree of participation of Bulgarian enterprises in European programs for supporting innovation and competitiveness and human resources development after 2007, with the analyses being at three levels: national, regional and enterprise level. The following were made: a theoretical overview of the operation of European programs, including deriving the main advantages and risks for business organizations; assessment of the participation of enterprises in grant projects and their overall level of project activity; guidelines for improving project management by balancing the interests of stakeholders.

It has been established that European funds actually provide serious opportunities for business organizations for their development, but in order to achieve maximum efficiency, enterprises should perceive project activity as an opportunity of strategic importance, adequately and expediently model and manage the processes of initiation, planning, implementation and reporting of their projects. (100 points);

- Published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of an educational and scientific "doctor" (75 points); published chapter of a collective monograph, which is not presented as a main habilitation work (20 points); 2 studies in co-authorship, one of which in a scientific publication, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases (20 points); 8 articles, 7 of which are listed in the MNE reference (including 2 in co-authorship - 70 points) and 15 reports (14 are listed in the MNE reference, including 4 in co-authorship), one of which is in a referenced and indexed publication. In total, in the sections reporting publications in the reference for minimum national requirements, the candidate has reported (305 points).

In terms of content, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov's publications are predominantly focused on the field of project management and the importance of operational programs for achieving sustainable development; urban logistics; outsourcing in industrial enterprises.

The candidate's scientific output is characterized by depth, competence, analytical skills, purposefulness and style. It is noteworthy that about 32% of the publications (in number) are co-authored, which gives reason, on the one hand, to take into account the individual contribution to the scientific achievements of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov, and on the other hand, his ability for team scientific work.

6. Identification of contributions

The significant volume of scientific research by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov in the field of project management, sustainable development, urban logistics and outsourcing has contributed to the identification of a number of significant contributions to theory and practice, namely:

Scientific and theoretical contributions of the participant in the competition:

- The main characteristics of the manifestation of the Cohesion Policy of the European Union through the operational programs in Bulgaria and the changes that occur in its scope, structure and objectives are summarized and the features of the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism and National Recovery and Resilience Plans in some European countries are highlighted (In publications with numbers 28.11; 10.1. and 13.4 from the list of scientific publications of Chief Assistant Professor Kurshumov).

- The general characteristics of the European funds and programs directly aimed at business in Bulgaria are defined. The role of the European programs for the development of business organizations in Bulgaria is clarified, including the main advantages that work on projects with European funding provides, as well as the risks that accompany this process, including in the area of good and safe working conditions, for start-ups and in the field of courier services (In publications: 5.1; 15.6; 27.10 and 29.12).

- Regarding effective project management, the importance of teams in project activities in the organization has been studied, including a team for planning, implementation and management of the project, factors related to the proper formation and work of the team, as well as its importance for the ultimate success in the absorption of European funds (In publication 26.9).

- A theoretical overview of the relationship between operational programs and European funds as a whole and achieving sustainable development of the country has been made (In publication 16.7).

- In the field of sustainable development of cities and enterprises as part of the supply chain, the concept of "urban logistics" and the possibilities for comprehensive optimization of the urban logistics system with the aim of achieving economic growth and economic, social and environmental balance are studied. Good practices are summarized regarding urban logistics, features of the application of the concept of zero waste as a factor for sustainable development and the integration of co-modality in urban conditions by synchronizing the interests of public and private logistics operators (In publications 11.2; 12.3; 21.4; 22.5; 23.6 and 24.7).

- Possibilities for implementing outsourcing of processes and activities in industrial enterprises in Bulgaria as a way to achieve a high level of competitiveness and sustainable development are outlined (In publications 8.3; 9.4; 17.8; 30.13; 31.14 and 32.15).

Scientific and methodological contributions of the participant in the competition:

- A system of indicators has been developed for diagnosing the project activity of Bulgarian enterprises in the field of improving working conditions through European funding and of courier companies in Bulgaria (In publications 15.6 and 29.12).

- A comprehensive methodological toolkit has been designed for diagnosing the degree of participation of Bulgarian enterprises in European funding programs and the level of project activity of enterprises through an integrated system of indicators (In publication 5.1.)
- A methodology has been developed for identifying activities and processes suitable for outsourcing in industrial enterprises as a path to its successful application (Publications 8.3; 9.4; 31.14 and 32.15).

Scientific and applied contributions of the participant in the competition:

- A conceptual model has been developed with specific practical steps for effective project management by enterprises and with the opportunity to optimize the level of their project activity. The importance of preliminary diagnostics of the business before initiating a potential project has been highlighted (In publications 5.1; 27.10; 29.12; 15.6).
- Specific recommendations have been made to enterprises on how to form, motivate and manage teams when working on projects with different characteristics related to scale, duration, etc. (In publications 5.1; 26.9).
- Based on the results of the study of the process of developing operational programs in Bulgaria and the degree of implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, practical recommendations have been made to the responsible institutions for: achieving a balance between the interests of stakeholders in the process of programming and managing funds; prioritizing national interests in order to more fully absorb European funding; stimulating the participation of enterprises as beneficiaries of European programs (In publications 5.1; 10.1; 13.4; 15.6; 27.10).
- Recommendations are proposed to municipalities in Bulgaria for optimizing urban logistics processes and the transport system in order to achieve sustainable development, economic growth and better living conditions (In publications 11.2; 12.3; 21.4; 22.5; 23.6).
- Guidelines are formulated for Bulgarian enterprises for effective integration of process outsourcing in their business activities with a view to maintaining a high level of competitiveness (In publications 8.3; 9.4; 30.13; 31.14 and 32.15).

The candidate reports a significant number of citations of works in scientific publications, namely: 5 citations in scientific publications referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus or Web of Science); 3 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review; 19 citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review. They bring the candidate a total of 200 points, which significantly exceed the minimum requirements of 50 points. This is an indicator of the recognition of the specialist, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov, not only among Bulgarian, but also among foreign scientists.

7. Participation in scientific projects, scientific forums and consulting and expert activities

Chief Assist. Prof. Dr. Vladi Kurshumov has participated in 7 scientific and educational projects. He has repeatedly been a member of the organizing committee of a number of scientific forums (a total of 6 times). He is a member of the Association of Teachers of Economics and Management in Industry (APIUI).

Chief Assist. Prof. Dr. Vladi Kurshumov has carried out expert and consulting activities in three Bulgarian enterprises from the real sector and healthcare and one NGO (work on a total of 8 separate projects), as his activity is directly related to the application of personal skills and

knowledge in the field of project management and improving the competitiveness of specific organizations.

8. Teaching work

The teaching activity of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov covers courses in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs in full-time and distance learning. The provided references for the candidate's academic workload in the last 2 academic years - 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 indicate that he mainly teaches disciplines in the field of this competition, namely: "Business Diagnostics", "Economic Analysis of the Enterprise", "European and National Programs and Projects", "Project Management", "Resource Management and Project Budgeting" and others.

Over the years, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov has participated in the development of 19 curricula in the Bachelor's degree programs for the specialties of IBP, Logistics, Business and Management and 1 fundamental and 12 in the Master's degree programs for the specialties of Corporate Business and Management; Logistics Management; Outsourcing and Business Development; Project Management.

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Kurshumov was the scientific supervisor of a total of 6 graduate students at the Master's degree level and 13 at the Bachelor's degree level, for the period 2021-2025.

9. Others

Chief Assistant Prof. Dr. Vladi Kurshumov has a very serious administrative experience, with which he has contributed over the years to the development of the University of Varna, the Faculty of Economics and the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics. Since June 2023, he has been the Head of the Management Analyses and Rating System Sector. From 2015 to 2019, he has been an expert in Programs and Projects, Project Management Sector.

From 2023 to the present, Chief Assistant Prof. Kurshumov has been a member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics; since 2020, he has been a member of the Academic Council of the University of Varna; since 2019, he has been a member of the Council for Electronic and Distance Learning of the University of Varna; since 2024, he has been a member of the Committee for Monitoring, Evaluation, Optimization and Risk Management at the University of Varna; since 2017, he has been a member of the team of internal auditors at the University of Varna. Over the years, he has had other commitments, working to improve the quality of processes at the university.

10. Plagiarism

There is no plagiarism proven in accordance with the statutory procedure in the works of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Kurshumov. The candidate has provided a declaration of originality.

11. Questions, critical remarks to the candidate

I recommend that the candidate:

- Continue to build on the development of his/her research activities in areas such as project management, business diagnostics, outsourcing and sustainable development.
- Consider publishing a textbook /textbook/ in the field of project development and financing, based on the exceptional expertise in this area of the candidate in the competition.

12. Conclusion

The analysis of the scientific, teaching and administrative activities, based on the documents submitted by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov, as well as his professional experience and personal qualities, give reason to believe that all the requirements of the ZRASRB and PPZRASRB for holding the academic position of "associate professor" have been met. Evaluating the quantity, type, content and quality of the publications, it can be confidently stated that the candidate meets the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Varna (in their part for holding the academic position of "associate professor").

All this gives reason to recommend to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to support the proposal that Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Vladi Hristov Kurshumov be approved for holding the academic position of "associate professor" in professional field 3.8 "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Diagnostics and Project Management)" at the University of Varna.

Date: 22. 02. 2026

Varna

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

 Assoc. Prof. Dr. Plamen Pavlov/