



О P I N I O N

Вх. № PA20-397/09.03.2026г.

regarding a competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in Higher Education Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Field 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialization Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods).

1. General Information

Opinion prepared by: Prof. Dr. Donka Dimitrova Zhelyazkova, University of Economics – Varna, Department of Economics and Management of Trade and Services, Professional Field 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialization Economics and Management (Transport Logistics).

Grounds for preparing the opinion: Order of the Rector of University of Economics – Varna No. RD 06-22/26.01.2026 appointing the members of the Scientific Jury, issued pursuant to Art. 4 in conjunction with Art. 25 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 7, para. 2 and Art. 106, paras. 3 and 4 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna (adopted by the Academic Council on 09.10.2025), and pursuant to a decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics (Minutes No. 31/20.01.2026), in connection with an announced competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialization Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods), for the needs of the Department of Commodity Science, promulgated in the State Gazette of the Republic of Bulgaria, Issue No. 104 of 05 December 2025.

2. Information about the Competition

A competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in Higher Education Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Field 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialization Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods), announced in the State Gazette of the Republic of Bulgaria, Issue No. 104/05.12.2025, for the needs of the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics – Varna.

3. Candidate in the Competition

The candidate, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, is the sole applicant in the present competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in Higher Education Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Field 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialization Commodity Science and Customs Activity



(Quality and Customs Control of Goods), announced in the State Gazette of the Republic of Bulgaria, Issue No. 104/05.12.2025, for the needs of the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics – Varna.

The candidate meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in Higher Education Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, in which the competition has been announced, pursuant to Art. 2b, paras. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation. Under the indicators of Group A, the candidate declares the required 50 points; under Group B, an individual monographic work accounting for 100 points is presented; under Group C, a total of 276.6 points have been accumulated against a required minimum of 200 points; and under Group D, the candidate declares citations amounting to 250 points, with a minimum requirement of 50 points.

On this basis, it may be concluded that the candidate exceeds the overall quantitative evaluation across nearly all groups of scientometric indicators reflecting her research achievements.

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, fully complies with all requirements pursuant to Art. 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna, which stipulates that:

Art. 101. Candidates for the academic position of Associate Professor must meet the following requirements:

1. The candidate successfully defended a doctoral dissertation entitled "Quality and Efficiency of Products from Recycled Paper Materials" in 2020 for the award of the educational and scientific degree Doctor (PhD).
2. The candidate held the academic position of Assistant from 2008 to 2021 and, since 2021 to the present, has held the position of Chief Assistant Professor at the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics – Varna, thus having more than 17 years of teaching experience.
3. The candidate has submitted a monographic work that does not duplicate the topic of the doctoral dissertation for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree Doctor (PhD). The monograph, entitled "The Importance of the Relationship between Commodity Science and Customs Control", was published in 2025 by the publishing house Nauka i Ikonomika, Tsani Kalyandzhiev Library.
4. The candidate meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor pursuant to Art. 2b, paras. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.
5. The candidate fulfills the requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor at the University of Economics – Varna pursuant to Art. 2b, para. 5 of the same law, as evidenced by submitted scientific papers and scholarly articles.



6. There is no legally established evidence of plagiarism in the candidate's scientific works.

4. Information about the Candidate (Personal Profile):

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, has held the academic position of Assistant since 2008 at the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics – Varna. The courses taught by her are directly or indirectly related to the subject area of the announced competition, including Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods, Quality Management in Logistics Activities, Quality and Safety Management of Goods, Customs Activity, Commodity and Customs Control, Standardization, Metrology and Qualimetry, among others.

In parallel, the candidate has participated in seven research projects, contributed to the development of 26 curricula, supervised graduating students, and actively engaged in professional development and qualification training activities.

The research interests of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, are primarily focused on economic knowledge in the field of customs control and commodity science, as well as on substantiating and analyzing the interrelationship between these two areas.

5. Description of the Scientific Works

The candidate participates in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialization Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods) with a total volume of 705 pages of scholarly publications, of which 176 pages constitute the principal habilitation monograph entitled "The Importance of the Relationship between Commodity Science and Customs Control."

In her principal habilitation work, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, sets the objective of examining and evaluating the relationship between commodity science and customs control, as well as the possibilities for improving the quality of specific customs control processes through enhancing the competence of customs authorities in the field of commodity science. The author consistently explores contemporary theoretical aspects of customs control, drawing upon an extensive body of scholarly literature. She provides a detailed characterization of customs control, examines risk management in customs control, and considers customs control within the context of digitalization.

The second chapter of the monograph analyzes the interrelationship between commodity science and customs control, based on an examination of both their conceptual interconnections and the regulatory framework governing customs control in the context of commodity science. Applying a comprehensive approach to customs control, the author addresses issues related to modernization and the competencies of



customs administrations. In the concluding stage of the research, risk in customs control is assessed through the lens of commodity science.

A significant scholarly achievement of the candidate is her co-authored publication in the Handbook of Research on Quality and Competitiveness in the Healthcare Services Sector, as well as six papers published in journals indexed and abstracted in Scopus.

The list of publications includes 16 articles and 12 conference papers, with a total volume of 216 pages, devoted to topical issues such as the competencies of the customs administration in the context of e-Customs, training in customs control, the Single Window service environment in customs, and other subjects that correspond, to varying degrees, with the scientific specialization of the announced competition for the academic position of Associate Professor.

In substantive terms, the presented publications reflecting the research activity of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, are fully aligned with the thematic scope of the announced competition.

6. Identification of Contributions

In the report submitted by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, the contributions are structured into two groups: scientific and scientific-applied.

In her research, the candidate examines theoretical and theory-applied aspects of customs control and commodity science, substantiating the need for a risk-oriented approach to customs control. She investigates and evaluates risks arising from the impact of external and internal environmental factors; further develops and enriches scientific knowledge regarding the interrelationship between sustainability, circular economy, and bioeconomy in specific industrial sectors; and expands understanding of quality-related aspects of certain assortments of secondary products.

From a scientific-applied perspective, the candidate interprets a complex set of competencies of customs officials; adapts a standardized and validated qualitative method (the Ishikawa diagram) to the activity of customs control; examines the relationship between legally established principles, the organizational framework, and the risk management process as instruments for change management and their impact on process quality and the safety of goods; studies and analyzes the degree of digitalization in specific sectors of activity and control, including customs activity, highlighting the challenges, opportunities, and consequences of its implementation; and formulates practice-oriented proposals aimed at enhancing the competence of customs officials for the continuous improvement of the effectiveness of applied control mechanisms, directed toward reducing and eliminating potential or actual risks in the implementation of customs control.

According to the reference report on citations, the candidate indicates 24 citations, 13 of which are in publications indexed and abstracted in Scopus. The Scopus database profile clearly demonstrates the candidate's visibility in the international scientific community, as evidenced by an h-index of 2, based on 12 publications and 8 citations.



7. Participation in Research Projects and Scientific Forums

The candidate has participated in seven projects, two of which are research-oriented and dedicated to topical themes: "Contemporary Approaches to Sustainable Management of the Agri-Food Chain" and "Management of Bioeconomy Sectors in the Transition toward Sustainability of the Bulgarian Economy." She also participated as a member of a project supporting the organization of a scientific event entitled "Commodity Science – Traditions and Perspectives," held in 2023.

8. Teaching Activity

The report on the teaching workload of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, indicates that during the 2023/2024 academic year she conducted seminar classes in disciplines such as Customs Activity and Customs Regimes and Procedures, which correspond to the thematic scope of the announced competition.

The candidate also delivers lectures to full-time students in disciplines including Microbiology of Goods, Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods, Packaging Management, and Quality Management in Logistics Activities, demonstrating her accumulated experience and erudition as an academic lecturer.

9. Plagiarism

There is no legally established evidence of plagiarism in the candidate's scientific works.

10. Questions and Critical Remarks

I have no questions or critical remarks regarding the candidate.
I wish my colleague continued dedication and diligence in her academic and research endeavors.

11. Conclusion

The review of the professional achievements of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, demonstrates that she meets both the Minimum National Requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in the relevant professional field, pursuant to Art. 2b, paras. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and all requirements under Art. 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.



Based on the above, I respectfully propose that the distinguished members of the Scientific Jury **vote "FOR" of awarding the academic position of Associate Professor to Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova**, in Professional Field 3.8. Economics, Scientific Specialization Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods), for the needs of the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics – Varna.

09 March 2026
Varna

Prepared by:

(Prof. Dr. Donka Zhelyazkova)

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



STATEMENT

The statement was prepared by: prof. dr. Zornitsa Dimova Stoyanova, UNWE, field of higher education Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agricultural and Environmental Management), appointed as a member of the scientific jury by order № RD 06-22/26.01.2026 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna

regarding the competition for the academic position of associate professor in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods), announced in the State Gazette № 104/05.12.2025 with candidate chief assistant professor Velichka Peeva Marinova

1. Candidate in the competition

The only candidate in the competition is ch. assist. prof. dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, a lecturer in the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics - Varna. The submitted documentation shows that the candidate meets the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "associate professor", according to art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the LDASRB. At the same time, dr. Marinova also meets the additional quantitative requirements of the UE - Varna. The submitted scientific papers and the evidences of research activity also meet the requirements of art. 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the UE - Varna. The declared points exceed the minimum required for occupying the academic position of "associate professor" by over 60% (676.6 points out of 400 required).

Group of indicators	Content	Associate Professor	Points of chief assist. prof. dr. Velichka Marinova
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	-	-
C	Indicator 3	100	100
D	Sum of indicators from 4 till 10	200	276,6
E	Sum of indicators from 11 till 13	50	250
F	Sum of indicators from 14 till the end	-	-
Total		400	676,6

2. Candidate's data

Velichka Marinova has a PhD in Commodity Science (UE - Varna), a Master's degree in Economic and Financial Control (Academy of Economics D.A.Tsenov, Svishtov), a Master's degree in International Business (UE - Varna), a Bachelor's degree in Commodity



Science (UE - Varna) and a professional qualification "Teacher" (UE - Varna). She obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" at the University of Economics - Varna with a PhD thesis on the topic: "Quality and efficiency of products from recycled paper materials".

The candidate's scientific interests are mainly focused on commodity science, customs control, quality of goods, sustainability and quality management, circular economy, sustainable development, etc.

Dr. Marinova maintains scientific profiles in ORCID, Google Scholar, Scopus and Web of Science, which is a prerequisite for good international scientific visibility.

3. Description of the scientific works

In the competition for "associate professor" Velichka Marinova participated with a total production of 34 works, grouped as follows:

- ✓ Monograph - 1 issue. Chief assistant professor dr. Velichka Marinova participated in the competition with one monograph entitled "The Importance of the Relationship between Commodity Science and Customs Control", published in 2025;
- ✓ Studies - 1 issue in co-authorship, in English;
- ✓ Scientific articles - 16 issues, of which 8 are in Bulgarian, 4 of them are in co-authorship, and the remaining 12 are independent;
- ✓ Scientific papers - 12 issues (4 in Bulgarian, 8 in English, 3 independent and 9 in co-authorship)
- ✓ Textbooks and teaching aids - 4 issues in co-authorship.

Of the 34 publications submitted for review, 16 are independent and 18 are in co-authorship. Seventeen of the published works are in English, and the remaining 17 publications are in Bulgarian. It can be concluded that the structure of the types of publications is balanced, with about 50 % of them are in English, and the rest in Bulgarian, 50% are independent and 50 % are co-authored. Some of the publications are indexed in Scopus and Web of Science – 6 papers and 1 study, which shows the international visibility of the scientific results.

Chief assist. prof. dr. Velichka Marinova responds to art. 112, para.2 Assessment of the quality of the works from a linguistic and stylistic point of view.

4. Contributions

The theoretical and methodological scientific results that can be found in the scientific production of dr. Marinova are as follows:

- ✓ Enrichment and development of the theoretical framework of the relationship "commodity science - customs control" as two complementary areas of economic knowledge through a systematic and interdisciplinary approach;
- ✓ Development of the concept of risk-oriented customs control;



- ✓ Further development of the methodology for risk analysis and assessment by tracing the relationship between the characteristics of the objects of control and the identification of risks, taking into account the influence of external and internal environmental factors;
- ✓ Expansion of scientific knowledge about quality and sustainability management by studying the theoretical aspects of sustainable development, circular and bioeconomy, as well as their application in industry and the packaging sector;
- ✓ Theoretical knowledge about the quality and safety of goods, in particular the quality of secondary raw materials and food safety management systems, has been further clarified;
- ✓ The topics of digitalization and innovation in customs control have been further developed in a theoretical aspect, as well as the role of artificial intelligence and electronic customs as factors for the transformation of control processes.

The scientific and applied contributions of ch. assist. prof. dr. Velichka Marinova can be outlined on the basis of original practical and applied solutions that are contained in the candidate's scientific results and have practical application. They can be synthesized as follows:

- ✓ Adaptation and implementation of quality and risk management tools through the adapted Ishikawa method for analyzing cause-and-effect relationships in customs control, while simultaneously supporting the identification and management of risks;
- ✓ Formulation of practical solutions for increasing the efficiency of customs control through specific proposals for improving control mechanisms and increasing the competence of customs officers;
- ✓ The possibilities for digitalization and implementation of digital technologies, including "one-stop shop", electronic customs and artificial intelligence, as tools for optimizing processes have been studied;
- ✓ Approaches for the application of quality management systems in various sectors (healthcare and agri-food) are proposed;
- ✓ Research and improvement of practices in industry and packaging, analyzing processes related to packaging quality, sustainability and digitalization in the industry, on the basis of which specific practical recommendations for their improvement have been proposed.

I accept the list of the contributions of the scientific production of the candidate, ch. assist. prof. dr. Velichka Marinova.

5. Characterization of the candidate's academic citation

The total number of citations of dr. Marinova is 24, of which:

- ✓ Citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes – 13;
- ✓ Citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review – 11.

The number of citation points presented by the candidate – 250 points exceeds the minimum requirements for occupying the academic position of associate professor, required



in group of indicators E. The reference for citation of the publications of ch. assist prof. dr. Velichka Marinova gives reason to be concluded that the candidate's scientific research are of interest to specialists working on the topics related to the announced competition.

6. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

The candidate's submitted CV shows that dr. Marinova participates as a member of three national projects - Assessment of microbial safety, physicochemical characteristics and consumer health benefits of farm white brined cheese from cow's milk, Breaking Boundaries: Generations Y and Z in science and innovation for year 2024 and 2025, "Student Internships" and is a member of three research projects funded by the EU Varna - Modern approaches to sustainable management of the agri-food chain, Commodity science - traditions and perspectives, Management of bioeconomy sectors in the transition to sustainability of the Bulgarian economy.

Dr. Marinova participates as a lecturer in the preparation and conduct of a webinar on the topic: "Approaches to Sustainable Food Chain Management" for the period 14.09.2023-19.09.2023, organized by the Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovation - Varna, prepares a review for a publication for ACS Publications on the topic - Life Cycle Assessment of Denim Trousers Manufactured in Green Factories of Bangladesh: Revealing Environmental Footprints and Sustainable Paths, and has active administrative involvement as a Deputy Head of the Department of Commodity Science, a QMS manager at the Department of Commodity Science, internal QMS auditor at the EU - Varna, member of a permanent team for the preparation and organization of the annual candidate student campaign at the Department of Commodity Science from 2023, member of the Expert Council at the CCQCP at the Research Institute (EU – Varna) etc.

7. Teaching work

For participation in the competition, dr. Velichka Marinova presents a significant volume of educational and methodological production, including textbook and teaching aids. Among them, the textbook "Fundamentals of the commodity knowledge of industrial goods" and 3 teaching aids stand out, which are distinguished by high scientific and practical value. They support the educational process for the formation of practical skills in students through systematized laboratory tasks, to master the theoretical foundations of commodity knowledge, as well as the specifics of the commodity knowledge of industrial goods, providing a solid basis for training in the specialty. The presented educational publications are distinguished by a good structure, logical consistency and clarity of the presentation, which facilitates the assimilation of the educational material by students.

From the submitted documents on the educational workload, it is established that the candidate has significant teaching activity in both the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs. Velichka Marionova is lecturer in the disciplines "Microbiology of Commodities",



"Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods", "Customs Activities", "Customs Regimes and Procedures", "Packaging Management", "Quality Management of Logistics Activities", as well as other specialized courses. The total lecture workload presented in the candidate's document is 658 hours, of which 584 hours in the bachelor's degree and 74 hours in the master's degree.

As contributions to the teaching and learning activities of Velichka Marinova, the scientific supervision of graduates, the review of master's theses, her participation as a member of state examination committees at the Department of Commodity Science, and support for the annual review of student scientific activity can be mentioned.

Dr. Marinova's teaching activities in the above-mentioned disciplines, the written textbooks and teaching aids demonstrate her academic competence in the scientific specialty of the announced competition "Commodity Science and Customs activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)".

8. Plagiarism

In the materials provided for the completion, I do not find any plagiarism, incorrect data and/or incorrect references from foreign scientific works. Chief assist. prof. dr. Velichka Marinova also declares that the works submitted for the competition are her personal work.

9. Questions, critical remarks

I have not questions or critical remarks.

10. Conclusion

Based on the assessment of the scientific production, the presented competencies of the candidate, the scientific and scientific-applied contributions, I consider that chief assist. prof. dr. Velichka Marinova fully meets the requirements for occupying the scientific position "associate professor" set out in the LDASRB, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at the EU - Varna.

In conclusion, based on the presented facts and evidence related to the scientific research and teaching work and the achieved results, I assess positively the overall activity of chief assist. prof. dr. Velichka Marinova and express my positive assessment. I propose to the Scientific Jury to vote positively dr. Velichka Marinova to be elected occupying the academic position "associate professor" in the professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Commodity Science and Customs activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)".

24.03.2026

Prepared by:

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

(prof. dr. Zornitsa Stoyanova)



STATEMENT

The statement was prepared by: asoc. prof. dr. Stiliyan Svetoslavov Stefanov, UNWE, field of higher education Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Agricultural and Environmental Management), appointed as a member of the scientific jury by order № RD 06-22/26.01.2026 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna

regarding the competition for the academic position of associate professor in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods), announced in the State Gazette № 104/05.12.2025 with candidate chief assistant professor Velichka Peeva Marinova.

1. Candidate in the Competition

In the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods), there is only one candidate – Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova. The candidate significantly exceeds the quantitative requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor, in accordance with Article 2b, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria. Against a minimum threshold of 400 points, she has achieved a total of 676.6 points. The submitted scholarly works and evidence of research activity also comply with the requirements set out in Article 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna. With a minimum threshold of 110 points for indicators such as scientific reports, articles, and studies, the candidate has attained 276.6 points.

2. Candidate's data

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova obtained her Bachelor's degree in Commodity Science in 2004. She subsequently earned two Master's degrees: one in International Business in 2005 from the University of Economics – Varna, and another in Business and Financial Control in 2020 from the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics in Svishtov. During the period 2010–2015, she pursued doctoral studies at the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics – Varna. In 2020, she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation entitled “Quality and Efficiency of Products from Recycled Paper Materials”, thereby acquiring the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD) in Commodity Science.

The research activity of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova is focused on several principal thematic areas: Commodity Science and Product Quality, Customs Control, the Textile Industry and Packaging, and Sustainable Development.

Her strong international scientific visibility is evidenced by her maintained research profiles in ORCID, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science.



3. Description of the scientific works

For participation in the competition, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova has submitted a list of 34 scholarly publications. The works presented for evaluation include:

- one single-authored monograph, submitted as a habilitation thesis;
- six articles published in peer-reviewed journals indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases, co-authored;
- sixteen articles published in non-indexed but peer-reviewed scientific journals (of which twelve are single-authored and four co-authored);
- six papers published in edited collective volumes (three single-authored and three co-authored);
- one co-authored study published in scientific journals indexed in internationally recognized databases;
- one textbook and three teaching manuals.

It is noteworthy that 17 of the publications are in English, while the remaining 17 are in Bulgarian. In terms of content, the submitted works constitute completed scientific studies addressing significant and contemporary theoretical and practical issues. They employ rigorous scientific approaches and a clearly defined methodology to achieve the stated research objectives.

From a linguistic and stylistic perspective, the scholarly works presented by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova fully comply with the requirements of Article 112, paragraph 2.

6. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

The analysis of the evidence submitted for participation in the competition presents by Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Marinova as researcher demonstrating consistent scholarly interest and a professional approach within her fields of study. On this basis, I also confirm the contributions claimed by the candidate. These contributions represent well-founded, theoretically sound, and practically applicable results that enrich the body of knowledge in the researched area.

They could be classified as follows:

- The interrelationship between customs control and commodity science, as two fundamental domains of economic knowledge, has been substantiated and convincingly argued;
- The concept of a risk-oriented approach has been further developed, and the necessity of its application in the implementation of customs control has been well justified;
- The methodology for risk analysis and assessment has been enriched by tracing the relationship between the characteristics of controlled objects and risk identification, taking into account the influence of both external and internal environmental factors;
- Theoretical knowledge regarding the interconnection between sustainability, the circular economy, and the bioeconomy has been further developed, systematized, and



enriched, particularly within specific industrial sectors such as the textile and packaging industries;

- Theoretical aspects related to digitalization and innovation in customs control have been further elaborated, including the role of artificial intelligence and electronic customs as transformative factors in control processes.

Contributions of a scientific and applied nature:

- Adaptation and validation of standardized quality management tools (e.g., the Ishikawa method) for analyzing cause-and-effect relationships in customs control;
- Examination of the possibilities for implementing digital technologies— including “single window” systems, electronic customs, and artificial intelligence—as tools for optimizing customs processes, with identified challenges, opportunities, and implications of their application;
- Formulation of practical solutions to enhance the efficiency of customs control through specific proposals for improving control mechanisms and increasing the competence of customs officers;
- Investigation and enhancement of best practices in packaging production, including analysis of processes related to packaging quality, sustainability, and digitalization in the industry, leading to concrete practical recommendations for their improvement.

5. Characterization of the candidate's academic citation

The total number of citations of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Marinova amounts to 24, of which:

- 13 citations are in scientific publications indexed in internationally recognized databases, as well as in monographs and edited collective volumes;
- 11 citations are in non-indexed but peer-reviewed scientific journals.

The total number of citation points reported by the candidate to be 250 points which significantly exceeds the minimum requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor under this indicator. Notably, the substantial number of citations in publications that are indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases, as well as monographs and collective volumes, attests to the considerable international interest in the research work of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova.

6. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

The submitted documents for acquisition of the academic position of Associate Professor at the University of Economics – Varna clearly demonstrate that the candidate has made a significant contribution to the development of Commodity Science. As evidence of that could be used her participation in 6 research projects, of which 3 are national and 3 are university-based.

In addition, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova actively participates in the collective management bodies of the University of Economics – Varna, as follows: Quality Management System (QMS) Coordinator at the Department of Commodity Science; internal auditor at the Center for Quality and Safety of Products and Services within the Research Institute at the University of Economics – Varna; member of the Faculty Council of



the Faculty of Economics; member of the General Assembly of the University of Economics – Varna.

Moreover, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova is a member of 5 professional national and international organizations: The Territorial Organization of the Scientific and Technical Unions – Varna (Section “Commodity Science”); International Society of Commodity Science and Technology, Austria (IGWT); Alumni Association of the University of Economics – Varna; The Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Varna (Section “Economics”) and The Club 9000 Association – Sofia.

7. Teaching work

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova has 18 years of experience as a lecturer and researcher at the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics – Varna, including 13 years as an Assistant and 5 years as a Chief Assistant Professor. The total teaching workload reported by the candidate amounts to 658 academic hours, of which 584 hours are at the undergraduate level and 74 hours at the graduate (Master’s) level.

The candidate has delivered lecture courses, laboratory classes and seminar sessions across a total of 12 disciplines, including: Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods, Microbiology of Goods, Packaging Management, Quality Management in Logistics Activities, Quality and Safety Management of Goods, Customs Regimes and Procedures, Customs Activity, Commodity and Customs Control, Standardization, Metrology and Qualimetry, Management, Theory of Management, and Commercial Advertising. In addition, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Marinova has delivered lectures and practical exercises at the Master’s level in Commodity Science of Industrial Goods and Consumer Protection.

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Marinova has supervised 4 graduate students and has reviewed 29 diploma theses. Since 2022, she has been a member of the State Examination Commission at the Department of Commodity Science.

In her teaching practice, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova applies a variety of modern teaching methods and regularly updates and enriches the study materials. She has participated in the development and revision of 19 undergraduate curricula and 7 Master’s programs. Furthermore, she actively fosters collaboration between academia and business by organizing and supporting all departmental forums of the Department of Commodity Science.

All of the above provides sufficient grounds to conclude that the teaching and instructional activities of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova are clearly aligned with the subject area of the competition, and that her accumulated teaching experience fully meets the requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods) at the University of Economics – Varna.

8. Plagiarism



Upon review of the publications submitted for the present competition, no evidence has been identified, nor have any reports been established, of violations of the intellectual property rights of other researchers at the time of drafting this evaluation.

9. Questions, critical remarks

I have no critical remarks regarding the candidate in this competition. Based on the research and applied activities, as well as the demonstrated professional qualities and scientific interests of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Marinova, I recommend the continuation of her existing research endeavors in the fields of product quality, customs control, and sustainable development, as well as the expansion of opportunities for disseminating the results of her research.

10. Conclusion

The candidacy of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova for the academic position of Associate Professor fully complies with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria, its Implementing Regulations, and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

She possesses indisputable merits as both a lecturer and a researcher, with well-established contributions in the scientific specialty of the competition. All of the above provides sufficient grounds for me to give my POSITIVE EVALUATION of the candidate and, with full conviction, to support the appointment of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova to the academic position of Associate Professor in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods) at the Department of Commodity Science, University of Economics – Varna.

Date: 24. 03. 2026

Prepared By:
(assoc

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



STATEMENT

for a competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in field of higher education 3. “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”, in professional field 3.8 “Economics”, scientific specialty “Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)” by Prof. Dr. Michal Stojanov

1. General information

The statement was prepared by: Prof. Dr. Michal Stojanov, University of Economics – Varna, Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services, professional field (PF) 3.8 “Economics”.

The basis for preparing the statement is an order of the Rector of the University of Economics – Varna No. RD 06-22/26.01.2026, according to which I am appointed as a member of the scientific jury, on the basis of Art. 4 in connection with Art. 25 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (with abbreviation in Bulgarian – ZRASRB), Art. 7, para. 2 and Art. 106, para. 3 and 4 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna (adopted by the Academic Council on 09.10.2025) and a decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics, Protocol No. 31/20.01.2026, in connection with an announced competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” for the needs of the Department of “Commodity Science” from the field of higher education 3. “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”, in the professional field 3.8 “Economics”, scientific specialty “Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)”, announced in the State Gazette, issue 104 of December 05, 2025.

2. Competition information

The announced competition is for the academic position of “Associate Professor in the field of higher education 3. “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”, in professional field 3.8 “Economics”, scientific specialty “Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)”, announced in the State Gazette No. 104/05.12.2025 for the needs of the Department of Commodity Science at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Economics – Varna.

3. Contest candidate

In the current competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor”, a commission, appointed by order of the Rector of the University of Economics – Varna, after reviewing the documents submitted by candidates, determines the admission to participation of one candidate - Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova. The candidate meets the minimum national requirements set out in the ZRASRB and PPZRASRB for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the field of higher education 3. “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”, PF 3.8 “Economics”, in which the competition was announced, in accordance with Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the ZRASRB and PPZRASRB, by declaring the required 50 points for the indicators from group “A”; for the indicators from group “B” there is an independent habilitation work - a monograph for 100 points; A total of 276.6 points were accumulated for indicators from group “D” with a required minimum of 200 points and for indicators from group “E” the candidate declared 250 points with a minimum required of 50 points. On this basis, it can be stated that the candidate meets and exceeds the overall



quantitative assessment for all groups of scientometric indicators reflecting her scientific work and achievements.

The candidate also meets the additional quantitative requirements of the University of Economics – Varna under Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, by declaring 118.3 points of conference papers published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes, and 158.3 points of articles and studies published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes. This gives reason to conclude that Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova meets and exceeds the additional quantitative requirements for holding the academic position of “Associate Professor” at the University of Economics – Varna.

The candidate also meets all the requirements of Art. 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna, and more specifically:

1. The candidate must have acquired an educational and scientific degree of “Doctor”. Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Peeva Marinova, PhD, successfully defended her dissertation on the topic “Quality and Efficiency of Products from Recycled Paper Materials” in 2020.

2. The candidate must have held the academic position of “Assistant”, “Chief Assistant” or have at least two years of teaching experience in a higher education institution or scientific organization. Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova held the academic position of “Assistant” from 2008 to 2021 and from 2021 to the present is a “Chief Assistant” at the Department of “Commodity Science” at the University of Economics – Varna, i.e. she has more than 17 years of teaching experience.

3. The candidate must submit a monographic work that has been published in a specialized scientific publishing house and that does not repeat the theses for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” and the scientific degree “Doctor of Sciences”. In 2025, an independent research work on the topic “Significance of the relationship between commodity science and customs control” was published in the specialized academic publishing house “Science and Economics” as a publication of the monographic library “Tsani Kalyandzhiev” by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova with scientific reviewers Prof. Dr. T. Turlakova and Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Genov, ISBN 978-954-21-1202-0, with a volume of 174 pages; this work does not repeat the topic of the dissertation “Quality and efficiency of products from recycled paper materials” successfully defended in 2020.

4. The candidate meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of “Associate Professor” according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (reference prepared by the candidate No. 12).

5. The candidate meets the quantitative requirements for scientific reports and scientific articles for holding the academic position of “Associate Professor” at the University of Economics – Varna on the basis of Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (reference prepared by the candidate No. 13).

6. There is no plagiarism proven in accordance with the statutory procedure in the candidate's scientific works.

4. Personal characteristics of the candidate in the competition



In the competition, the candidate, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, joined the department as an assistant professor in commodity science in 2008. In 2021, she held the academic position of “Chief Assistant” at the Department of Commodity Science, where she teaches “Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods”, “Microbiology of Commodities”, and “Packaging Management” to students in the bachelor's degree program and “Commodity Science of Industrial Goods” and “Protection of Consumer Interests” to students in the Master's degree program. At different periods, she has led seminars for students from various specialties in “Quality Management of Logistics Activities”, “Quality and Safety Management of Goods”, “Customs Regimes and Procedures”, “Customs Activities”, “Commodity and Customs Control”, “Standardization, Metrology and Qualimetry”, “Management”, “Management Theory”, “Commercial Advertising”. Additionally, she was the supervisor of four graduate students, prepared 29 reviews for diploma theses, and was a member of the state examination committee at the Department of Commodity Science. In 2022, she participated in seven scientific projects: three university projects; one national project (No. 22011, “Assessment of microbial safety, physicochemical characteristics, and consumer health benefits of farm white brine cheese made from cow's milk”), two projects (NPF-KS24-10-BBYZGSI and NPF-KS25-05-BBYZGSI; and one project under the OP “Human Resources Development”. She speaks Italian, English, Spanish, and Russian. She is an internal auditor for QMS at UE – Varna and a member of academic bodies at UE – Varna. She has acquired a professional qualification as a “Teacher” from the Vocational Training School of the University of Economics – Varna and two master's degrees: one from the University of Economics – Varna in “International Business” and the second from the “D. A. Tsenov” University in “Currency, Customs and Tax Control” (“Economic and Financial Control”).

5. Description of scientific works

Under the current competition, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova presents a total of 34 publications with a total volume of 705 pages, of which 30 are scientific publications (1 monograph, 1 study, 16 scientific articles, and 12 conference papers) and 4 are university textbooks and teaching aids. The single-authored publications number is 16 with a volume of 353 pages, and those in co-authorship are a total of 18 with 352 pages, with 8 works published in foreign publications (reported as 7 in Table 3 on page 10 of reference prepared by the candidate No. 5, which is a technical inaccuracy in the total sum) – 1 study, 1 scientific article, and 6 conference papers.

Of greatest importance for the candidate's scientific and research work is the single-authored monographic study on the topic: “The Importance of the Relationship between Commodity Knowledge and Customs Control”. The work is developed in a structure of four chapters, upholding the thesis that “commodity knowledge and customs control are interconnected, with training in commodity knowledge being a condition for the competence of customs personnel in key areas of customs control technology, allowing for the improvement of the quality of its implementation in separate areas by applying a competency-based approach based on commodity knowledge in the implementation of personnel management”. The study presents the processes of digitalization as key to the implementation of the control of goods and customs activities, with their escalation being both the basis of the competence of customs authorities and a prerequisite for quality risk management in customs and in the transportation of products between countries. In this regard, the requirements in the customs area are constantly growing, both for its organization and for resource provision and competence within



the scope of the control object. All of them together create the complex that ensures the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of control activities by customs authorities at the national level and through international partnership, exchange of information, and joint activities.

The modern realities of increasing globalization and intensification of international product flows are interconnected and require parallel knowledge and complex management of the processes for risk analysis and minimization of potential undesirable effects on key aspects of customs control activities. They can be influenced by implemented national economic policies, new national and international regulations, specificities and risks in supply chains, product and technological innovations, etc.

All this results in the main theoretical generalizations achieved in the monographic work: the need for in-depth theoretical training of customs experts for the control tasks and processes they perform; knowledge in the field of goods quality is a prerequisite for effective customs control; definition of the applied areas of commodity science in customs activities: identification, calculation of tariffs, proof of origin, carrying out customs checks, expertise, and risk analysis; knowledge of the regulatory framework for the implementation of laboratory tests and actual physical examination of cargo by customs officers. The main conclusion is related to the affirmation of commodity knowledge as a strictly necessary element of the technology of modern customs control.

An important achievement of the candidate is the publications included in world-recognized scientific information databases Scopus and/or Web of Science – a collective study in 2023 in the Handbook of Research on Quality and Competitiveness in the Healthcare Services Sector of IGI Global Publ. Hershey (Pennsylvania, USA) and 6 co-authored conference papers published in the period 2021–2024.

The educational literature presented in the competition is co-authored and consists of one university textbook with self-written participation of 11 pages and 3 manuals for laboratory exercises with a total of 181 pages of authorial contribution by the candidate. They are related to the topic of the announced competition in the commodity science part of it.

In some of the co-authored publications, a division between the authors is described, but as a recommendation, it is good for future teamwork for each collective scientific research work that the conditional self-authored contribution must be included/described or there must be a protocol for the contribution of each single author.

Scientific publications are emphasized in the areas and problems of commodity knowledge and customs activities in and as part of the bioeconomy, sustainable fuels, import of agricultural goods and food safety, packaging of goods and their sustainability, the textile industry, paper and textile waste, the pulp and paper industry and its sustainability, digitalization in Bulgarian customs and “one-stop” customs services, risk management in them, customs intelligence activities, investigation and use of artificial intelligence, and consumer protection.

6. Identification of contributions

The contributions of the candidate's scientific work can be presented in two fundamental groups. The first includes contributions of a purely theoretical and theoretical-methodological nature, and more specifically:

- Conceptual clarification of the interrelationship and synergy between commodity science and customs control, through which the application of knowledge about goods and their



characteristics, qualities, origin, etc., is a critical driver for the implementation of an effective control process by customs authorities.

- A generalized presentation of the external and internal factors determining the success of the control process in customs, in which information provision regarding goods as the object of control is a critical element for risk management and prevention against manipulation.
- Important generalizations regarding sustainability, the bioeconomy, and circular economy, where the quality characteristics of secondary products (waste and packaging) allow for a rational approach to improving resource efficiency and meeting the increased demands on products in modern economic reality.

The second group covers contributions in the field of practical and applied aspects:

- Systematizing aspects of digital transformation and the application of information and communication technologies that are used to arm customs officers with the appropriate tools to perform operational activities and improve the control mechanism.
- Revealing and demonstrating the connection between commodity knowledge and effective risk management in cargo control, which results in both expanded opportunities for preventing potential problems and in optimizing the administrative process in customs services and ensuring the safety of goods subject to international trade.

The candidate's citations report lists 24 citations to a total of 11 of her publications, with more than half of the cited publications being the author's own work. The candidate's citations report (Scopus ID: 57226177923) in the global scientific information database Scopus at the time of submission of the competition documents indicates 8 citations and 12 indexed documents, reaching an h-index of 2 (at least two publications have 2 or more citations in the database). In addition to Scopus, the candidate has active profiles in ORCID, Google Scholar, and Web of Science, and is registered in NACID researchers database, which is a prerequisite for the candidate's discoverability and recognition in the Bulgarian and global scientific communities.

7. Participation in scientific projects and forums

Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Peeva Marinova has participated in seven projects. She has actively participated in university, national, and international scientific forums, which is the right approach to presenting and promoting the author's achievements to the Bulgarian and international scientific communities.

The candidate has certificates of completed practical training and successful knowledge testing in modular training for the preparation of internal auditors and managers of quality management systems BDS EN ISO 9001:2015, module 3A ISO 19011:2018 (2018 and 2025), and two certificates of professional training for parts of the professions “Warehouse Logistics” (2022) and “Customs Representation” (2017) at the Center for Professional Training at the Training Center - NSBS EOOD, Sofia.

8. Teaching work

The candidate has recorded participation in the development of curricula for 19 university disciplines for the bachelor's and 7 for the master's degree, both for the programs “Commodity Science and Customs” and “Quality and Expertise of Goods” led by the department unit, as well as for other specialties at the University of Economics – Varna: “Logistics”, “Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship”, “Business Economics”, and “Marketing.”



The profile of the academic courses taught by the candidate during the last two academic years corresponds to the competition, as these are “Customs Activities” and “Customs Regime and Procedures” on the one hand, and on the other hand, in the field of commodity science, these are “Microbiology of Goods”, “Fundamentals of Commodity Knowledge of Industrial Goods”, “Packaging Management”, and “Quality Management of Logistics Activities”.

9. Plagiarism

There is no plagiarism proven in accordance with the statutory procedure in the candidate's scientific researches.

10. Questions and critical notes

I have no questions or critical remarks toward the candidate, and I would like to recommend that she continue her scientific work in the areas of standardized methods and control mechanisms and procedures of customs activities, her creative and academic approach to training specialists for the needs of the customs administration and business, as well as supporting business practice with her scientific expertise.

11. Conclusion

Within the framework of the procedure for reviewing and evaluating the information and reference documentation provided by the candidate, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova, under the announced competition, comprehensive and simultaneous fulfillment of the minimum national requirements and the additional quantitative requirements of the University of Economics – Varna for occupying the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the Professional Field 3.8 “Economics” is demonstrated.

Based on the described findings and the evidence provided, I propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to vote **“POSITIVE” for the appointment of the candidate Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Velichka Peeva Marinova to the academic position of “Associate Professor”** in the scientific specialty “Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)” for the needs of the Department of “Commodity Science” at the University of Economics – Varna.

Prepared the statement: ..

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

Varna
20.03.2026



OPINION

Ex. No PA20-548/26.03.2026r

by competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor"
at the University of Economics - Varna, field of higher education 3. "Social,
Economic and Legal Sciences", professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty
"Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)"

1. General information

The opinion was prepared by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sabka Dimitrova Pashova, University of Economics - Varna, professional field 3.8. "Economics"; scientific specialty: "Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Food Safety, Quality and Control of foods)".

Grounds for preparing the opinion – decision of the meeting of February 16th, 2026 of the Scientific Jury, appointed by Order of the Rector of University of Economics-Varna, No RD-06-22/January 26th, 2026.

2. Competition information

The competition for the academic position of Associate Professor at the University of Economics – Varna, has been announced in the State Gazette, No. 104/December 5th, 2025 on the basis of Art. 3, par. 1 of the Law on the State Academic Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)", for the needs of the Faculty of Economics and the Department of Commodity Science at the University of Economics-Varna, with a term of 2 months from its publication.

3. Candidate for the competition

Chief Assist. Prof. Velichka Peeva Marinova, PhD from the University of Economics – Varna is participating in the announced competition for the academic position of "associate professor." She is the only candidate in this competition.

3.1. Fulfilment of minimum national requirements

The candidate for the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" exceeds the minimum national requirements regulated in Art. 2b, par. 2 and 3 of the Law on the State Academic Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, within the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic, and legal sciences," professional field 3.8. Economics.

Indicator	Points scored	Minimum requirements	Difference
Group A	50	50	0
Group B	100	100	0
Group D	276,60	200	+76,60
Group D	250	50	+200
Total (national)	676,60	400	+276,60



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3.2 Fulfillment of the additional quantitative requirements of UE-Varna

The candidate fulfills and significantly exceeds the additional quantitative requirements of UE-Varna, established in accordance with Art. 2b, par. 5 of the Law on the State Academic Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Indicator	Points scored	Minimum requirements	Difference
Scientific reports	118,30	30	+88,30
Scientific articles and studies	158,30	80	+78,30
Total (additional)	276,60	110	+166,60

Based on the evidence presented, it can be summarized that the candidate for the competition, Chief Assist. Prof. Velichka Peeva Marinova, PhD, fulfills the minimum national requirements and the additional institutional requirements of UE-Varna for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field in which the competition is announced. The data show that the candidate meets the requirements in Article 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at UE-Varna.

4. Candidate details

The candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor, announced by the University of Economics-Varna, Chief Assist. Professor Velichka Peeva Marinova, PhD, holds a PhD degree in the scientific specialty "Commodity Science" from 2020, with diploma No. 137, issued by the University of Economics-Varna, on May 18th, 2020, based on a defended dissertation on the topic "Quality and Efficiency of Products from Recycled Paper Materials".

The candidate in the competition obtained a Bachelor's degree in Commodity Science at the University of Economics-Varna in 2004, a Master's degree in International Business at the University of Economics-Varna and in the specialty "Economic and Financial Control", a Master's degree in Currency, Customs and Tax Control in 2005 and 2020, respectively. And since 2021 she has held the academic position of Chief Assistant. She teaches numerous Bachelor's and Master's degree courses at the University of Economics - Varna, including: "Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods", "Microbiology of Goods", "Packaging Management", "Commodity Science of Industrial Goods", "Protection of Consumer Interests", etc.

The scientific interests of Chief Assistant Prof. Velichka Marinova, PhD are in the field of sustainable production and consumption; customs and control; circular economy; quality management; packaging and waste management systems, by-products, recycling and recycled products; "green" trends in European legislation; climate change policies, etc. Her research in these fields has resulted in a total of 69 publications, including: 1 monograph; 2 studies; 28 scientific articles; 33 scientific reports; 4 textbooks and teaching aids.

In summary, the candidate for the competition possesses professional and scientific qualification, has acquired scientific and academic experience, and fully complies with the requirements in Article 101 of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at UE-Varna for holding the academic position of "Associate professor".



5. Description of scientific papers

The scientific works submitted for participation in the competition for "Associate Professor" cover 34 publications with a total volume of 705 pages of independent participation. The structure of the publications is as follows:

Total number of publications: 34 with a total volume of 705 pages. Of these:

- Monograph on the competition – 1, with a total volume of 176 pages.
- Participation in a collective study – 1, with a total volume of 21 pages.
- Scientific articles – 16, with a total volume of 213 pages.
- Scientific reports – 12, with a total volume of 103 pages.

16 of the publications are independent and 18 are co-authored. Four of the publications (4 reports) are indexed in Scopus and three of the publications (1 study and 2 reports) are indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, with the share of indexed publications being 20.6%.

In this competition, the monograph "The Meaning of the Relationship between Commodity Science and Customs Control", published in the Monographic Library "Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev" in 2025, is presented as a habilitation work. The monograph examines in depth and in many aspects the relationship between two main areas of economic knowledge – commodity science and customs control in modern conditions. I believe that the monographic work meets the criteria for independent scientific research with outlined authors' positions and scientific contributions that contribute to the development of scientific knowledge in the field of quality and effectiveness of customs control.

The analysis of the obtained scientific and scientific-applied results in the presented works shows that the publications of Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Marinova, PhD, testify to serious authority in the above-mentioned research areas. The presented works are at a high scientific level and ensure the dissemination of the results of the conducted research among the academic community.

6. Identification of contributions

A number of scientific and applied contributions can be identified in the research activities of Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Marinova, PhD. Based on the analysis of the scientific works presented, I believe that the following main contributions of the candidate can be identified:

6.1. Contributions of a scientific nature:

- The two main areas of economic knowledge – customs control and commodity science – are systematized and analyzed, and the relationship between them is substantiated.
- The volume and limitations in customs control are studied, and based on the need for a risk-oriented approach, based on the requirements of society and business to facilitate the processes, combined with the application of the competence approach, linking the knowledge obtained from commodity science, measures are derived to ensure the effectiveness of customs control.
- A study of the risks arising from the impact of external and internal environmental factors has been carried out, highlighting the relationship between the information on the objects of control and the measures for influencing the identified risks.



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- The scientific knowledge on the importance of the relationship between sustainability and circular economy, bioeconomy in specific sectors of industry has been outlined, further developed and enriched.
- Knowledge of the quality aspects of some assortments of by-products has been researched and supplemented.

6.2. Contributions of a scientifically applied nature:

- A complex of competencies of customs officers from the operational level of the technology of customs activity has been interpreted.
- A standardized and validated qualitative method (Ishikawa diagram) has been adapted to the activity of "customs control", revealing the importance of knowledge of commodity science and the resulting risks in achieving set goals.
- The relationship between the statutory principles, the organizational framework and the risk management process as tools for managing changes and their impact on the quality of processes and ensuring safety of goods is examined.
- The degree of digitalization in individual sectors, including customs activities, has been studied and analyzed, revealing the challenges, opportunities and consequences of its implementation.
- Practical proposals have been formulated to increase the competence of customs officers, to continuously improve the effectiveness of the applied control mechanisms aimed at reducing and eliminating potential or real risks in the implementation of customs control.

The candidate's contributions are of significant importance for the development of theory and practice in the field of customs, customs control and some specific sectors of industry, offering solutions with high practical applicability in contemporary conditions and educational environments.

The submitted reference for a total of 24 citations of the candidate's scientific works shows that they are distributed as follows:

- 13 citations in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information Scopus and Web of Science (195 points).;
- 11 citations in non-refereed journals with scientific peer-review (55 points).

This clearly shows that the candidate in the competition has contributions of theoretical, scientific and scientifically applied nature, which have been identified by other authors and contribute to the affirmation of his scientific achievements.

7. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Marinova, PhD, has participated in 3 research projects and 3 projects related to the organization of scientific forums. The two scientific projects represent joint studies by members of the Commodity Science Department and the Agrarian Economics Department at the University of Economics-Varna. One of the scientific projects is national, and the research is joint with colleagues from the MU-Varna. The candidate for the competition also reports active participation in 12 scientific forums (6 of them



are participations in international scientific forums), and in 4 of which she is a member of the organizing committee.

8. Teaching work

Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Marinova, PhD has significant experience as a lecturer at the University of Economics-Varna. She has led independently or participates in the teaching team of various subjects at Bachelor's and Master's degrees level. The attached reports show that she has taught 7 subjects at the bachelor's level and 2 at the master's level, which demonstrates her competence in many areas in the field of commodity science of industrial goods, microbiology of goods, customs activities, customs regimes and procedures, packaging management and quality management of logistics activities. The candidate for the competition meets the teaching load requirements at UE-Varna, has conducted a total of 224 hours of lectures and 360 hours of exercises in the bachelor's degree program and 44 hours of lectures and 30 hours of exercises in the master's degree program over the last two academic years.

Dr. Marinova actively participates in the development of the educational products of the Commodity Science Department, contributing to the development of 19 curricula for Bachelor's and Master's Degree programs in the period 2022-2026, in a team with other lecturers from the Department. Her work with students is also impressive, as she has been:

- Scientific supervisor of course papers;
- Academic supervisor of 4 and reviewer of 29 theses in both educational and qualification degrees.

For participation in the competition, Chief Assistant Professor Velichka Marinova, PhD presents her contributions as co-author in:

- 1 textbook: "*Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods*" (2 independently developed chapters);
- 3 teaching aids: "*Fundamentals of Commodity Science of Industrial Goods: A Guide to Laboratory Exercises*" (7 independently developed chapters); "*Commodity Science: A Guide to Laboratory Exercises*" (2 self-developed chapters) and "*Commodity Science of Industrial Goods: A Guide to Laboratory Exercises: Part 2*" (1 self-developed chapter).

The chapters developed by Dr. Marinova are characterized by up-to-date terminology, theory and regulatory framework, clarity and emphasized practical orientation in the presentation of the educational material on the individual topics.

The above evidence demonstrates the significant experience and a high level of preparedness of the candidate for Associate Professor, Dr. Velichka Marinova, in the field of teaching activity and education.

9. Others

The candidate for the competition provides evidence of active participation in various activities, which demonstrates his desire to increase academic competences and administrative capacity, and here should be noted:

9.1. Participations in trainings, for the period 2020-2026 – 7 participations:

- November 21st, 2025 Itera Institute Organization, Sofia. Sofia, Training Certificate "Mind Map" Representative Systems and Communication;



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- June 18th-19th, 2025 "INSERT" EOOD, Sofia. Sofia, Training Certificate for Internal Auditors of Quality Management Systems according to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 19011:2018 "Guidelines for Audit of Management Systems";
 - March 11th-15th, 2024 National Program "Digital Qualification", Sofia. Certificate from the Ministry of Education and Science for a course in innovative educational technologies;
 - April 18th – May 28th, 2022 National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, Sofia. Sofia, Certificate reg. No. 970-69/30.05.2022 "Warehouse logistics", part of the profession "Freight forwarder - logistician";
 - April 29th – May 23rd, 2022 University of Economics - Varna, "Foreign Language Skills" (English) - under project No BG05M2OP001-2.016-0002 "Modernization of higher education to achieve interdisciplinary and innovative learning in the context of digital transformation", University of Economics - Varna.;
 - November 11th-12th, 2022 University of Economics - Varna, "Training seminar with discussion panel "Intellectual Property, Copyright and Plagiarism: Regulatory Framework and Case Law";
 - October 19th – December 12th, 2020 University of Economics – Varna, Certificate No NID – 28/March 15th, 2021 for the course Digital Competencies, module "Internet Office Applications".
- 9.2. Membership in scientific organizations – 5 in total:
- since 2009 – Territorial Organization of the Scientific and Technical Unions – Varna, section Commodity Science;
 - since 2009 – International Organization of Commodity Science and Technology, based in Vienna, Austria – International Society of Commodity Science and Technology, Austria (IGWT);
 - since 2011 – Association of Alumni of the University of Economics – Varna;
 - since 2012 – Union of Scientists – Varna Branch, section Economic Sciences at the University of Economics-Varna;
 - since 2022 – Association Club 9000 – Sofia.
- 9.3. Other professional achievements:
- Responsible for QMS at the Commodity Science Department at the University of Economics-Varna;
 - Internal QMS Auditor at the University of Economics – Varna;
 - Member of the permanent team for the preparation and organization of the annual admission campaign at the Department of Commodity Science from 2023;
 - Member of the Expert Council at the Center for Quality of Goods and Consumer Protection (CQGCP) at the Research Institute of the University of Economics – Varna;
 - Deputy Head of the Commodity Science Department;
 - Member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Economics-Varna;
 - Member of the General Assembly of the University of Economics – Varna from the quota of non-habilitated lecturers;



- Participation as a lecturer in the preparation and conduct in a webinar on the topic: "Approaches to sustainable management of the food chain" for the period September 14th-19th, 2023, organized by the Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (RAPIV), Varna;
- Preparing a review for a paper to ACS Publications, on the topic: Life Cycle Assessment of Denim Trousers Manufactured in Green Factories of Bangladesh: Revealing Environmental Footprints and Sustainable Paths, 2024.

10. Plagiarism

In the submitted works, I do not find any plagiarism, incorrect data and/or incorrect reference to other people's scientific works.

11. Questions, critical notes and recommendations to the candidate

No significant omissions, contradictions or errors were found in the scientific production submitted at the competition. The works presented are distinguished by the necessary quality and a high degree of theoretical and practical applicability. I have no questions for the candidate. My main critical note is related to the low share of articles and studies in journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. In this regard, my recommendation for the future research and publication activity of Dr. Velichka Marinova is to present and publish the results of her research in such journals as a priority.

Conclusion

The findings related to the research, publication and teaching activities of Chief Assistant Prof. Velichka Peeva Marinova, PhD clearly show compliance with the requirements of the Law on the State Academic Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna for the academic position of "associate professor."

This gives me a reason to express *unequivocally positive opinion on the competition and to propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to support the candidacy of Chief Assist. Prof. Velichka Peeva Marinova, PhD 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 "Commodity Science and Customs Activity (Quality and Customs Control of Goods)".*

March 26th, 2026

Signature:

(Assoc. Prof. Sabka Pashova, PhD)

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