

REVIEW

on the competition for the academic position of "Professor"

Professional field: 3.8 Economics

Scientific specialty: "Economics and Management (Modern Forms of Commercial Business)"

1. General information

- Prepared by: Prof. Dancho Yankov Danchev, PhD, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Trade)", Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services at the University of Economics – Varna.

- Grounds for preparing the review: decision of the scientific jury of 24.02.2025, order of the Rector of the University of Economics – Varna No. RD-06-26/28.01.2025, decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics (protocol of 23.01.2025).

2. Information about the competition

- Field of higher education: 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences.

- Professional field: 3.8. Economics.

- Faculty for the needs of which the competition is announced: Faculty of Economics

- Department for the needs of which the competition is announced: Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services at the University of Economics – Varna.

- Issue and date of the State Gazette in which the competition was announced: No. 105/13.12.2024.

3. Candidate for the competition

The only candidate for the competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Modern Forms of Commercial Business)" is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov from the Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services at the University of Economics – Varna.

The scientific production presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov in terms of quantity and quality corresponds to and exceeds the minimum national requirements for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education in which the competition was announced, according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), which is illustrated in the following table:

Indicators	Minimum required points by groups of indicators for obtaining an academic position of "Professor" in the professional field 3.8. Economics (according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria)	Declared points by the candidate
Dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"	50	50
Main habilitation work - monograph	100	100
Sum of indicators from 4 to 10, incl.	200	901,66
- Published monograph that is not presented as the main habilitation work	100	100
- Articles and conference papers published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases	30/n	30
- Articles and conference papers published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes	10/n	626,66
- Studies published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases	45/n	67,5
- Studies published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes	15/n	47,5
- Published chapter of a collective monograph	20/n	30
Sum of indicators from 11 to 13, incl.	100	740
- Citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases	15	345
- Citations in peer-reviewed monographs and edited collective volumes	10	100
- Citations in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals	5	295
Sum of indicators from 14 to the end, incl.	100	255
- Supervision of a successfully defended doctoral student	40/n	80
- Participation in a national scientific or educational project	15	45
- Supervision of a national scientific or educational project	30	90
- Published university textbook	40/n	20
- Published university teaching aid	20/n	20

The candidate fulfils 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:

No.	Indicators	Points for obtaining an academic position of "Professor"	Points declared by the candidate
1	Conference papers	60	291,66
2	Scientific articles and studies	115	382,5

3	Publications in Scopus and/or Web of Science	30	97,5
4	Citations in Scopus and/or Web of Science	15	345
5	Defended PhD students	40	80
6	Research projects	15	195

According to the submitted report-declaration, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov has fulfilled and quantitatively significantly exceeded the minimum national quantitative requirements in general and according to the individual criteria, as well as the additional requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

4. Details of the applicant (personal profile of the candidate)

The candidate for the competition for the academic position “Professor” holds a PhD diploma No. 29696/03.05.2005 and a record for the academic position “Associate Professor” No. D 011/16.12.2011.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov meets the requirements in Art. 118, para. 2, items 1 and 2 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna - holds the PhD degree and has held the academic position “Associate Professor” for no less than two academic years at the same higher education institution.

The candidate for participation in the competition has completed secondary education at the High School of Commerce “G. S. Rakovski” – Varna. During the period 1996-2000 he was a student at the University of Economics – Varna and obtained a bachelor's degree, during the period 2000-2001 he completed a master's program in “Economics of Trade”, and during the period 2001-2004 he was a PhD student in the doctoral program “Economics and Management (Trade)” at the University of Economics – Varna. During the period 2000-2004, he worked as a tour guide in the Golden Sands resort. From 2004 to 2005 he was a part-time assistant, and in 2005 he joined the Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services at the University of Economics – Varna, where his professional development continues as an associate professor (2011 until the present). He holds certificates for participation in 35 specializations, courses, trainings and seminars and has carried out international teaching activities under a number of Erasmus and Erasmus+ programmes in English. The main scientific interests of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov are in the fields of commerce and, more specifically, in terms of retail, e-commerce and non-store forms of sales.

5. Description of the scientific works

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov meets the requirements of Art. 118, para. 2 items 3-6 in connection with Art. 129 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

The total number of publications of the candidate for the academic position “Professor” is 118, including 15 monographs and studies (6 single-authored), 48 scientific articles (45 single-authored), 47 conference papers (40 single-authored), 5 textbooks and teaching aids (2 single-authored), and 3 other publications. A total of 3 publications in English are included in world-renowned referencing and indexing databases, of which in Scopus - 2 scientific studies (1 single-authored and 1 co-authored) and 1 scientific article.

In the present competition, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov participated with some of the above-mentioned publications - a total of 85, which are presented in the following table:

Types of scientific publications	Total (number)	including	
		single-authored	in refereed and indexed publications in world-renowned databases
Monographs	4	2	-
Scientific studies	7	3	2
Scientific articles	36	33	1
Conference papers	33	27	-
Textbooks and university teaching aids	2	1	-
Other publications	3	3	-
Total	85	69	3

Sixty-nine of the works submitted for the competition are single-authored publications, including 2 monographs, 3 scientific studies, 33 scientific articles, and 27 conference papers. In addition, the candidate has submitted 16 more collective publications in which he participated as a co-author. Two (2) of the scientific studies and 1 scientific article are published in English and are referenced and indexed in the world-renowned scientific information database Scopus. The majority of the remaining publications are included in a number of other referencing and evaluation systems, and some publications are directly related to teaching and academic learning activities.

To participate in the competition for the academic position “Professor”, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov has submitted one of the single-authored monographs entitled “Non-store

forms of retail trade in Bulgaria” with a total volume of 267 pages as the main habilitation work. The monographic book meets the requirements, as it has been published in a specialized scientific publishing house, has been discussed in the university department, has been reviewed by two qualified reviewers, solves a significant scientific and scientific-applied problem at a high contemporary level and does not repeat the publications for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” and for obtaining the academic position “Associate Professor” (in accordance with the requirements of Art. 118, para. 2, item 4 and Art. 129, para. 2 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna).

The habilitation work (Publication No. 1.1.) presents the author's point of view in understanding the problems in the field of non-store forms of trade. Within the framework of the monographic study, the conceptual characteristics of selected non-store forms of retailing – e-commerce, vending, homeshopping, direct sales and traditional sales at open stalls and markets – are consistently summarized, and the ability of individual forms to adapt and exploit the opportunities arising from changes in the socio-economic environment is demonstrated.

The analysis shows that the spread of individual non-store forms is influenced by the phases of the economic cycle, digitalization and the systematic manifestation of crises with diverse genesis and impact on these forms. Digitalization predetermines the gradual abolition of the strict distinctive features of each individual form and their combined use in the complex business strategies of modern retailers, allowing the full deployment of sophisticated multichannel, cross-channel and omnichannel commercial strategies.

Non-store forms of retail complement traditional commercial formats at every possible point of contact. Their intensive application is aimed at increasing consumer satisfaction, positive experience and loyalty of customers before, during and after the commercial contact. The focus of the work is on the systematization of the distinctive characteristics, organizational specificities, popular sub-varieties and trends in the diffusion of non-store forms of retail in contemporary trade.

The theoretical summary, the assessments and analyses carried out, and the formulated guidelines allow us to conclude that the independent implementation of different forms of non-store retailing is gradually losing some of its independent significance. In modern retailing, the synergistic, parallel and mutually complementary application of a complex of non-store and in-store retail forms determines the leading strategy for successful market coverage in all its dimensions and limitations. The problems considered in the monograph suggest broad

opportunities for future research on the problems of trade forms, with a theoretical and practical-applied focus.

The monograph “Global and Regional Dimensions of Trade” (Publication No. 3.2.) reaches generalizations regarding the presence of significant changes in basic and complementary economic indicators in the trade sector at the regional, national and global levels. The problems arising from regulatory provisions, market concentration in consumer goods trade, challenges to the development of international retail chains, and the physical location of retail outlets are discussed.

The significance of the study is determined by the complex transformation processes accompanying the development of the trade sector and its importance for the development of the regional, national and global economies as a source of economic growth and for increasing the level of local, national and global employment.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov contributed two chapters to the collective monograph “Impact of the Digitalization of Commerce on the Economic Development of Bulgaria and the Regions” (Publication No. 2.1.), expressing the idea that the dynamics in the processes of digital innovation lead to the restructuring of the economy, the emergence of new trade intermediaries providing digital services, the interpenetration of existing forms of trade and the creation of new ones, convergence between economic sectors and functions in business organizations.

The digital transformation of trade and the impact of its main effects on the economy of Bulgaria, at the national and regional levels, are studied, and existing policies for supporting and regulating digitalization are researched, as well as guidelines for their improvement being proposed. The impact of trade digitalization on enterprises in the country is studied, and key directions for accelerating digitalization processes in the economy of enterprises are outlined. It is emphasized that the digitalization of a number of processes and activities in enterprises and the wide possibilities of application of electronic governance are challenges for economic agents, which predetermine the formation of sustainable competitive advantages and a stable environment for doing business in the digital era.

I accept not only the main habilitation thesis and the other monographs mentioned, but also all the submitted publications as directly or indirectly relevant to the competition for the academic position “Professor” for the following reasons: (i) they prove a very high level of knowledge of the theory, methodology and practice in the field of modern trade; (ii) they are based on significant research that can also be used in the candidate's academic activities; (iii) the publications are an illustration of the evolution in the academic growth of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov, leading to publications in renowned Bulgarian and international publications;

(iv) the publications examine a number of the latest developments in modern commerce; (v) the scientific publications contain original contributions by the author; (vi) they are a personal product of the author and the presented works have been peer-reviewed by qualified habilitated professors and researchers; (vii) they are the product of a study of the most advanced modern scientific specialized literature in the field of modern forms of commercial business, which allows scientific conclusions to be drawn independently and implications to be formulated, which has a serious impact on commercial and marketing thinking.

The above gives grounds to conclude that the scientific production presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov for participation in the competition for the academic position "Professor" in terms of content and quantity is sufficient, exceeds the requirements for obtaining this academic position, and covers the profile of the announced competition.

6. Identification of contributions in the candidate's research work

In the scientific publications submitted by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov for participation in the competition for the academic position "Professor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Modern Forms of Commercial Business)", scientific contributions of a theoretical and scientifically applied nature can be identified:

Main theoretical contributions

1. Based on in-depth research, theoretical summary, critical analysis and one's own opinions, the theory of economics and trade management is developed and enriched in the fields of non-store forms of trade, global and regional dimensions of trade, analysis of the consumer market and some aspects of commercial management.

2. Expansion of existing theories in these areas by examining, systematizing and enriching existing theoretical concepts.

3. Supplementing knowledge of contemporary trade by covering and clarifying the specifics of the manifestation of some new trends and dimensions of commercial business.

Main scientific and applied contributions

1. The methodological problems in the study of the development of non-store forms of trade are examined and summarized by analyzing their essential characteristics and trends of manifestation in modern conditions.

2. The challenges associated with trade development are examined and analyzed from global, national, and regional perspectives, leading to the formulation of findings, trends, and conclusions regarding both their contemporary state and future evolution.

3. Synthetic conclusions are drawn from the analysis of the consumer market and its individual segments, some classical and modern problems of trade management, and an emphasis on new applied dimensions and innovations in the trade business.

7. Evaluation of citations

In the citations report, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov presents 92 identified citations (probably more), of which 23 are in world-renowned databases (Scopus and Web of Science), 10 are in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes and 59 are in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals. These citations are expressed in 740 points (with 100 points required) according to the minimum national requirements for obtaining the academic position of "Professor" according to Art. 2b, Para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov has profiles in Scopus, Web of Science, ORCID, Google Scholar and Research Gate, which contributes to increasing the visibility and popularization of his publications on a national and international scale.

8. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

In the competition for the academic position of "Professor" Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov participated in 9 scientific and educational projects (including 4 as a supervisor), of which 3 projects resulted with the publication of monographs, 4 with the publication of conference proceedings and 2 projects were related to the development of doctoral dissertations. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov was a member of the editorial board of the journal "Izvestiya of University of Economics – Varna" (2019-2024), a member of the editorial board of the journal "University Vesty" at University of Economics – Varna (2017-2020) and a member of a number of editorial boards of scientific forum proceedings.

9. Teaching work

When assessing the teaching work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov, the requirements of Art. 129, para. 5, item 1 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna and of Art. 29b, para. 3, item 1 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria were considered.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov has been working as a full-time lecturer in the Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services of the University of Economics – Varna for 20 years - part-time assistant (2004-2005), chief assistant since 2005 and associate professor since 2011. The candidate's pedagogical experience is in accordance with the topic of the competition for the academic position of "Professor". The teaching and pedagogical activity and experience of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov - in terms of duration and quality - corresponds to the requirements of this competition.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov is a qualified lecturer in various academic disciplines in various forms of training and academic levels, including full-time and distance learning for B.Sc., M.Sc. and PhD students, which cover the topics of the announced competition for the academic position of “Professor”.

From the presented teaching work report, it is clear that in the academic year 2022/2023, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov has led lecture courses in the Bachelor's Degree Programmes with a total of 250 hours in the disciplines “Planning and Analysis of Commercial Activities”, “Quantitative Methods in Trade” and “Sales Management and Logistics” (in English). In the academic year 2023/2024, the teaching workload of the candidate for the academic position of “Professor” is 180 hours in the above-mentioned disciplines, and in the Master's Degree Programme the teaching workload is 42 hours in the disciplines “Omnichannel Trade”, “International Trade and Logistics”, “Planning and Analysis of Commercial Activities” and “Master's Seminar”. He carries out international teaching activities under the Erasmus+ programme in the disciplines “Strategic Retail Management” and “Sales Management and Logistics”. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov participates in the development of curricula for training students in the bachelor programmes “Economics and Trade”, “Business Economics” and a number of other programmes at the University of Economics – Varna. He single-authored or co-authored the development of 2 university textbooks and teaching aids for the lecture course he conducted. He supervised teams participating in the Student Scientific Sessions at the University of Economics – Varna. Furthermore, he has been the scientific supervisor of graduates in the bachelor's and master's degree programmes, with 17 of them in the last five years alone, and reviewed 15 bachelor's and master's theses.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov participates in the PhD program in “Economics and Management (Trade)” with the discipline “Planning and Analysis of Commercial Activity”, for which he developed the curriculum. He is the scientific supervisor of 4 PhD students in the doctoral program, of whom 2 have successfully defended their dissertations, 1 has been exempted with the right to defend and 1 is in the process of training. He is the supervisor of 2 scientific projects to support the development of doctoral dissertations.

10. Administrative experience

In accordance with the requirements of Art. 129, para. 5, item 3 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna, it should be emphasized that in his professional development, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov held a number of administrative positions, such as: head of the Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services (2023 - to the present moment), member of the

Academic Council of the University of Economics – Varna (2016-2019), member of the Faculty Council of Faculty of Economics (2016 - to the present moment), member of the General Assembly of the University of Economics – Varna (2016 - to the present moment), member of the General Assembly of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Economics – Varna (2016 - to the present moment), member of the Attestation Commission of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Economics – Varna (2016-2019), Chairman of the Attestation Commission of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Economics – Varna (2019-2023), member of the Control Council of the University of Economics – Varna (2018 - to the present moment), member of the Permanent Committee on R&D at the University of Economics – Varna (2016 - to the present moment), member of the committee for giving the academic awards “Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev” and “PhD Student of the Year” (2020-2022). Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov is a member of the Scientific and Technical Union and the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria. The candidate for the academic position of “Professor” has made a number of media appearances in BTA, BNR and BNT, through which he has contributed to the development and confirmation of the values of the University of Economics – Varna.

11. Plagiarism

When reviewing and analysing the scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov, I have not identified plagiarism, incorrect data, or incorrect references to other scientific works.

12. Questions and Recommendations

In accordance with the provisions of Art. 130 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna, the following questions and recommendations may be addressed to the candidate for the academic position of “Professor”:

1. The statement of contributions could be presented better, clearly distinguishing between theoretical, methodological, applied, and educational-methodological contributions.
2. What is the candidate's opinion about the trajectory in the future development of modern retailing - towards digitalization, towards humanization, or towards a hybrid version of both perspectives?

13. Conclusion

After studying and analysing the scientific research and teaching activities of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov, it can be concluded that the candidate for the academic position of “Professor” meets the following conditions and requirements:

1. he has acquired the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in 2005;

2. has held the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University of Economics – Varna for at least of two academic years (from 2011 to the present moment);

3. has presented a published monographic work in a specialized scientific publishing house, which does not repeat the publications for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" and for the holding of the academic position of "Associate Professor";

4. meets and exceeds the minimum national requirements for obtaining the academic position of "Professor" according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria;

5. meets and exceeds the requirements for holding the academic position of "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;

6. has no proven plagiarism in scientific works in accordance with the statutory procedure.

This gives me reason to express my full and unreserved support and categorically positive attitude to the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov for awarding the academic position of "Professor" in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Modern Forms of Commercial Business)". This also determines my clear final decision, which is an uncompromising **"POSITIVE AND FOR AWARDING OF THE ACADEMIC POSITION PROFESSOR"**.

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

March 2025

Varna

Member of the scientific jury:

(Prof. Dancho Danchev, PhD)

REVIEW

**by competition for the academic position "professor" ,
announced by University of Economics - Varna**

1. General information

Prepared the review: **Prof. Mariyana Bozhinova, PhD, "D. A. Tsenov"**
Academy of Economics - Svishtov, professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific
specialty "Economics and management (commerce)"

Reason for writing the review: Order of the Rector of the University of
Economics - Varna, №RD 06-26/28.01.2025 and Decision of the meeting of the
scientific jury from 24.02.2025

2. Competition contest details

The competition was announced in SG No. 105/13.12.2024, for the needs of
the Department of "Economics and Management of Commerce and Services" at
the University of Economics - Varna, in field of higher education 3. Social,
economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty
"Economics and management (modern forms of commercial business)".

3. Competition candidate

The only candidate in the competition is Associate Professor Michal
Stojanov, lecturer in the Department of "Economics and Management of
Commerce and Services" at the University of Economics - Varna.

4. Personal characteristic of the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov, PhD, graduated from the specialty
"Economics of Commerce", Bachelor's Degree, in 2000 and the same specialty,
Master's Degree, in 2001, at the University of Economics - Varna. In 2005 he
obtained a PhD in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management of
Commerce".

The candidate in the competition has 20 years of teaching experience at the University of Varna, and since 2011 he has held the academic position of "associate professor".

Assoc. Prof. Stojanov was deputy director (2007-2011) of the "Master's Education" Center at the University, and is currently (since June 2023) head of the Department of "Economics and Management of Commerce and Services", which is proof of his managerial and organizational experience and authority. He is a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria - Varna branch.

Assoc. Prof. Stojanov has *118 scientific publications*, participated in *9 scientific research projects*, 4 of which he is the head of. He is the *scientific supervisor of 4 PhD students*, of which 2 have obtained the Educational and Scientific Degree "PhD".

Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov has presented evidentiary material for the fulfillment of all quantitative and qualitative requirements for occupying the academic position "professor", both national and additional at the University of Economics - Varna. In accordance with the national minimum requirements, according to the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB) (art. 2b) and the Regulations for its application (art. 1a, para. 1), the candidates for the academic position "professor" in professional fields in the scientific field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences must have a minimum of *550 points*, and Assoc.Prof. Stojanov has a total of **2046,66 points**. It also exceeds the quantitative requirements for occupying the requested academic position, according to Art. 77, item 5 of Regulations for the development of the academic staff of the University of Economics - Varna, forming **1391,66 points**, with a minimum of *275 points*.

5 . Quantitative and substantive characteristics of the presented scientific ones works after the last procedure

In the competition for academic position "Professor" Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov has presented **85 publications**, including 4 monographs, 7 studies, 36 scientific articles, 33 scientific papers, 2 textbooks and teaching aids and 3 other publications. Of these 85 works, *69 are independent* (2 of them are monographs), and *3 publications* are in editions indexed in *Scopus and/or Web of Science* (2 of

them are independent). The general volume of the presented publications is *1579 pages*.

SUMMARY TABLE OF PUBLICATIONS SUBMITTED TO THE COMPETITION

of Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov, PhD

n o	Type of posts	Independent		Co-authored		Total	
		Number	Page	Number	Page	Number	Page
1.	Monographs	2	538	2	28	4	579
2.	Studios	3	72	4	47	7	119
3.	Scientific articles	33	314	3	14	36	328
4.	Scientific papers	27	232	6	21	33	253
5.	Textbooks and study aids	1	207	1	69	2	276
6.	Other publications	3	27	-	-	3	27
	Total:	69	1390	16	189	85	1579

The main directions in the scientific research activity of the candidate for professor are indicated in the attached reference for scientific contributions, and I accept them. I positively assess that most of Assoc. Prof. Stojanov's publications can gravitate in each of the indicated directions, which shows his ability to connect scientific problems in the economics and management of commercial enterprises, processes and activities, of modern forms of trade and to look for the connections and dependencies between them. In this regard, the main directions, with the numbers of the publications attached to them from the List of publications, can be systematized as follows:

1. Research of the forms of non-store product exchange – e-commerce, home shopping, vending, mobile, quick and voice commerce, direct sales – related to their genesis, essence, characteristics and development trends, systematization and enrichment of existing theoretical concepts ((№№ 1.1.; 6.5.; 7.6.; 9.8.; 10.9.; 14.3.; 16.5.; 17.6.; 18.7.; 19.8.; 21.10.; 28.17.; 29.18.; 38.27.; 40.29.; 42.31.; 45.34.; 54.7.; 56.9.; 65.18.; 67.20.; 71.24.; 72.25.; 75.28.; 79.32.).

2. Studies addressing issues of global and regional dimensions of trade - wholesale trade, trade in imported goods, retail chains, consumer spending, food vouchers, digitalization and new technologies in trade, retail formats, outsourcing, and formulated findings, patterns, conclusions related to their present and forecasts for their future state (№№ 2.1.; 3.2.; 4.3.; 20.9.; 23.12.; 24.13.; 26.15.; 27.16.;

33.22.; 39.28.; 41.30.; 43.32.; 44.33.; 48.1.; 50.3.; 52.5.; 55.8.; 58.11.; 59.12.; 62.15.; 69.22.; 70.23.; 73.26.; 76.29.; 77.30.).

3. Scientific publications on the problems of evaluation and analysis of the consumer market and individual market segments – low-cost airlines, the new car market, leasing, the second-hand goods market; postal and courier operators, which are examined in the context of successful business practices, the derivation of synthetic data and conclusions about the studied economic objects (№№ 5.4.; 12.1.; 15.4.; 37.26.; 47.36.; 51.4.; 53.6.; 57.10.; 61.14.; 63.16.; 64.17.; 66.19.; 74.27.; 80.33.).

4. Research examining issues of commercial management – culture in trade and consumer protection, electronic labels, classic advertising media, electronic payments and payment delays in trade, measuring economic performance in trade, which are deployed on modern and effective solutions of trade organization and technology and their improvement (№№ 8.7.; 11.10.; 22.11.; 27.16.; 30.19.; 34.23.; 35.24.; 36.25.; 46.35.; 60.13.; 68.21.; 78.31.).

5. Research on circular economy issues in trade and other economic issues, trade sustainability and citizens' rights - carbon footprint of trade, smart packaging, hybrid cars, which seek to enrich existing knowledge, new applied dimensions and innovations in the trade business (№№ 13.2.; 25.14.; 31.20.; 32.21.; 49.2.; 83.1.; 84.2.; 85.3.).

In most of the publications of Assoc. Prof. Stojanov, the results are related not only to scientific achievements, but are also directly aimed at the applied aspects of the economy and management of commercial enterprises, modern forms of trade, global and regional dimensions of trade.

The main monographic (habilitation) thesis *"Non-store forms of retail trade in Bulgaria"* (2024, with a volume of 267 pages) proves the thesis that non-store forms of retail provide improved opportunities for fully satisfying consumer demand, form and develop the benefits of offering various dimensions of convenience in product exchange, which stimulate consumer interest and loyalty. In terms of content, the monograph theoretically clarifies the essence of the various forms of non-store retailing and defines their specific characteristics. An analysis of secondary information was carried out on the status and development of non-store forms of retail in Bulgaria, with the time period of the study including quantitative data for the last 5 years until 2021 and forecast values in the horizon

until 2025. The results of the analysis are the basis for formulating possible directions and factors for the future growth and spread of non-store forms of retail in the conditions of the New Economy.

The topic is undeniably relevant in the current conditions of retail development both in the world and in Bulgaria.

From the list of publications, it is established that the candidate submitted a total of 4 monographs in the field of commercial business and commercial policy - 2 independent and 2 collective. The monographs are tied to the thematic directions, derived from the main points of the developed problems and the received scientific and scientific-applied results and contributions. It is noteworthy that most of the collective monographic works correspond to topics from the list of research projects, some of which Assoc. Prof. Stojanov was the head of. In this way, the contribution of his participation in scientific projects can be proven by publicizing the results in monographic works.

The candidate has submitted a declaration of reliability of the information provided on the competition, originality of the publications and non-infringement of copyrights. No information has been received about the presence of plagiarism in the scientific works of Assoc. Prof. Stojanov.

Synthesized about the performance of the quality indicators by the candidate in the competition, it can be said that the scientific publications of Assoc. Prof. Stojanov are written in clear scientific language, show professional competence and contain original authorial achievements, which determine his appropriate place in scientific community.

In summary, it can be claimed that the scientific production in quantitative and qualitative terms is in full compliance with the minimum national requirements in area 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of Act on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB) and fully meets the conditions for occupying the academic position "professor", according to Art. 24, paragraph 1 of the ADASRB, art. 53, para. 1 of the Regulations for implementing the Act on the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at UE-Varna.

6. Quantitative and qualitative assessment of teaching and learning work

From the reports prepared by the "Academic activity and students" Department and the "Masters" Sector at UE-Varna, it is clear that for the reported period (2022/2023 and 2023/2024 academic years) Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov has a total classroom workload in the Bachelor's Degree Program of 430 hours and 132 hours - in the Master's Degree Program (2021/2022 and 2023/2024 academic years).

He is a lecturer and has developed curricula in a number of academic disciplines: "Introduction to Trade", "Modern forms of Commercial Business", "Quantitative Methods in Trade", "Sales Management and Logistics" and "Planning and Analysis of Commercial Activities" - in the Bachelor's Degree Program and in the Master's Degree Program - "Omnichannel Commerce", "International Trade and Logistics", "Marketing Research in an Omnichannel Environment" and "Trade Policy". Some of the curricula are also developed in English.

From the presented documents, Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov has written 2 textbooks and study aids (1 is independent) as part of his teaching activities.

The candidate actively working with students like head of graduate students, participation in the jury of student scientific activity and others. He has also participated in organizational conference committees and in Editorial Boards of scientific publications.

He periodically participates in numerous courses to increase digital competence, work with databases, statistical processing, methodology of scientific work, project management and others.

In summary, the educational and teaching activities of the candidate are in full compliance with the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at UE-Varna.

7. Identification of contributions in research work. Evaluation of the applicant's citations

The presented scientific production contains indisputable scientific and scientific-applied contributions, which I group into three groups:

theoretical/scientific, methodological/scientific and scientific-applied. Among the more significant ones, I can point out the following:

First, the existing knowledge on: modern forms of commerce has been supplemented, with generalizations drawn about e-commerce, home shopping, vending, mobile, fast and voice commerce, direct sales, and definitions, specifics, classifications and development trends have been proposed for them, as well as their role in commerce and the economy (*theoretical/scientific contributions*).

Second, an assessment was carried out using summary and synthetic indicators and an analysis of the overall economic performance of trade, including retail and wholesale trade, as well as individual modern forms of trade. Conclusions and recommendations for future development were formulated and current and effective solutions in the field of trade management, organization and technology of trade were presented (*methodological/scientific contributions*).

Third, problems, recommendations and guidelines of the circular economy and trade sustainability, innovations in the trade business, which are the basis for the improvement of trade and the economy, as well as at the basis of the philosophy of responsibility towards customers, sales staff, business partners and society as a whole, are highlighted (*scientific and applied contributions*).

According to a report presented by Associate Professor Michal Stojanov, **99 credible citations** of his works in national and foreign publications have been identified, **23** of which are in *Scopus* and/or *Web of Science*, and **5** of them being to his publications in journals indexed in *Scopus* and/or *Web of Science*. The reference shows that Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov has an **h-index=1** in *Scopus*.

Scientific contributions are mainly for the enrichment of existing knowledge, for the improvement of economic and management policy and practice in the field of commercial business and modern forms of trade.

8. Critical notes, questions and recommendations

I have no major criticisms. My recommendation to Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov, PhD, is to concentrate his efforts on publishing his scientific research in refereed scientific publications with Impact Factor and Impact Rank, indexed in the world scientific databases *Scopus* and *Web of Science*. I also recommend that

he provide scientific supervision to more PhD students who will obtain a PhD degree.

9. Conclusion

Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov participated in the competition for the academic position of "professor" with a large volume of quality scientific works and has many years of experience in scientific and teaching activities. In his research, he demonstrates thoroughness, innovation and analytical thinking, and these include scientific and applied science contributions. The candidate fully meets the requirements for occupying the academic position "professor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and management (modern forms of commercial business)", specified in art. 24 of Act on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), in art. 53 of the Regulations for implementing the Act on the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and in the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at UE-Varna.

The above grounds me with conviction to propose to the members of the scientific jury **Assoc. Prof. Michal Stojanov, PhD**, to be **elected** to the academic position "**Professor**" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and management (modern forms of commercial business)" at the Department of "Economics and Management of Commerce and Services" at the University of Economics - Varna, for which I will vote **positively**.

03/22/2025

Reviewer:

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

/Prof. Mariyana Bozhinova, PhD/

REVIEW

Вх. № PA20-463/25.03.2025**1. General information**

- Person who prepared the review: Assoc. Prof. Ivanka Andreeva Nikolova; UNWE, Department of Economics of Trade; professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty 05.02.18 "Economics and Management (Economics of Trade, Hotels and Restaurants)".
- Purpose for preparing the review. Order of the Rector of the University of Economics – Varna No. RD – 06-26/28.01.2025 on appointing the Scientific Jury, on the basis of Art. 4 in connection with Art. 29a (1) of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in The Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 7 para. 2 and Art. 123, para. 3 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna, the decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics (Protocol No. 19/23.01.2025), as well as on the basis of the Notification Letter of the decisions of the first meeting of the scientific jury of the competition, held on 24.02.2025.

2. Information about the competition

The competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", professional field 3.8. "Economic", scientific specialty "Economics and management (Modern form of trade business)", announced in State Gazette No. 105/13.12.2024.

3. Candidate for the competition

According to the announced competition, within the relevant deadline, 1 (one) candidate has submitted documents for participation – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov. The candidate meets and repeatedly exceeds the minimum national requirements for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education in which the competition was announced, under Art. 2b, para. (2) and (3) of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in The Republic of Bulgaria. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov meets and exceeds the additional quantitative requirements pursuant to Art. 118 (2) item (6) of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna on the basis of Art. 2b para. 5 of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in The Republic of Bulgaria.

4. Details of the applicant

In 2004, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov successfully defended his dissertation thesis entitled "Research on the Risk on the Consumer Goods Market in the Republic of Bulgaria" for

the award of the educational and scientific degree “PhD” in the professional field 3.8. “Economics”, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (by industry)”, with diploma No. 29696/03.05.2005 and joined as a lecturer the Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services, where he works until now. He acquired the academic position of “Associate Professor”, scientific specialty 05.02.18 - Economics and Management (Trade) at the Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services at UE-Varna in 2011, which is in accordance with the requirements of Art. 118, para. 2, items 1 and 2 of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the University of economics – Varna. The scientific interests of Assoc. Prof. Stoyanov are in the fields of Commerce, Trade, Retailing and E-commerce.

5. Description of scientific works

During the period of his teaching and research activities, from 2004 to 2024, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov has published a total of 118 scientific works in the form of monographs and studies, articles and conference papers, textbooks and collection of tasks. As is well known, the Hirsch index is an established tool for assessing the impact of researchers and their contribution, as it considers both the number and quality of publications and the number of their citations. Assoc. Prof. Stoyanov achieved a personal h-index = 5 in Google Scholar, with 153 citations, and in just 4 years after 2020 - h-index = 4, respectively with 81 citations. In the global database of scientific information – Scopus, he is present with h-index = 1 (citation index). In the current competition for the academic position of “Professor” in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Modern forms of trade business)” Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov participated with a total of 85 publications. The structure of the presented scientific production is as follows:

- Monographs – 4 pcs., including:
 - 1 original single-authored monograph, in the nature of a main habilitation thesis on the topic “Non-store forms of retail trade in Bulgaria”;
 - 1 original single-authored monograph – which has not been presented as a main habilitation thesis under a previous or current procedure;
 - 2 collective monographs.
- Studies – 7 pcs. (3 of them are single-authored publications, which fulfils the requirements for at least one mandatory self-authored study for the acquisition of the academic position of “Professor”. One of the single-authored studies and one co-authored study are in English and have been published in the world-famous reference and index Scopus database);
- Scientific articles – 36 pcs. (33 single-authored publications, with 1 of the articles being published in the world-famous Scopus database);
- Conference papers – 33 pcs. (27 single-authored publications);

- University textbook – 1 pc. (co-authorship);
- University teaching aid as collection of tasks – 1 pc. (single-authored);
- Other popular science publications – 3 pcs. (single-authored).

The publications submitted for review by Assoc. Prof. Stoyanov under the announced competition have been published in specialized scientific publishing houses and do not repeat those for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree of “Doctor”, as well as those for the academic position of “Associate Professor”.

In terms of content, the submitted works correspond to the topic of the announced competition in the scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Modern forms of trade business)” and cover the following 5 major areas:

- forms of non-store product exchange - e-commerce, homeshopping, vending, mobile, quick and voice commerce, direct sales;
- global and regional dimensions of trade - wholesale trade, trade of imported goods, retail chains, consumer spending, food vouchers, digitalization and new technologies in trade, commercial formats, outsourcing;
- assessment and analysis of the consumer market and individual market segments - low-cost airlines, the market for new cars, leasing, the market for second-hand goods; postal and courier operators;
- commercial management – culture in trade and consumer protection, electronic shelf labels, classic advertising media, electronic payments, payment delays in trade;
- circular economy and trade sustainability – carbon footprint of trade, smart packaging, hybrid cars, etc.

Regarding the first scientific problem on which the candidate conducted research, the monographic book, in the role of a main habilitation work by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov on the topic: “Non-store forms of retail trade in Bulgaria”, deserves special attention. It was discussed and defended in the Department of “Economics and Management of Commerce and Services” and was reviewed by two qualified reviewers (Protocol No. 3/17.10.2023). In 2024, the monograph was published in the specialized well-known scientific publishing house “Science and Economics” of the University of Economics – Varna, Collection of books “Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev” with ISBN 978-954-21-1176-4 and is in volume of 267 printed pages. The monographic work is a natural logical continuation and synthesis of the author's previous works on the issue, some of which were presented as publications in the present competition. Specifically, the first issue “Forms of non-store product exchange” can be attributed 25 scientific publications of the candidate's scientific works from the list of scientific publications as follows:

- monographs and studies – 5 pcs., one of the studies published in Scopus – 7.6; (1.1; 6.5; 7.6; 9.8; 10.9);

- scientific articles – 12 pcs., one of which published in Scopus – 18.7; (14.3; 16.5; 17.6; 18.7; 19.8; 21.10; 28.17; 29.18; 38.27; 40.29; 42.31; 45.34);
- conference papers – 8 pcs. (54.7; 56.9; 65.18; 67.20; 71.24; 72.25; 75.28; 79.32).

The monograph of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov “Non-store forms of retail trade in Bulgaria” is a contemporary, original, independent and in-depth study of an essential and significant problem for theory and practice concerning the state and development of the main forms of non-store retail trade in the Republic of Bulgaria as modern innovation strategies, in the context of global processes in their innovative improvement and digitalization. It is necessary to note that the relevance of the researched issue is also justified by the fact that at the present time, in the Bulgarian economic literature this is the first complex study on this topic.

Based on a thorough study and critical analysis of a substantial volume of Bulgarian and foreign literary sources, the first chapter provides a theoretical summary of the essence and types of non-store forms of trade, and outlines their main characteristics, advantages and limitations. Significant problems of non-store forms of retail trade with a conceptual and practical-applied dimension have been highlighted, such as:

- the gradual abolition of the strict distinction between individual forms of trade and their conditional overlap in the context of the penetration of digital technologies and the simultaneous application of more than one form in the business strategies of modern retailers;
- the need for the increasing complexity of the protection of consumer rights, which should be covered in a universal approach, regardless of the offline or online methods of sales;
- the need to ensure equality of participants in the economic process and protection of their socio-economic interests through legal regulation and a mechanism for the prevention of all types of commercial discrimination.

As a result of a conscientious analysis of a significant volume of secondary information such as market surveys by recognized international organizations, aggregated data from the National Statistical Institute, Eurostat, analyses and reports of industry and sector organizations, regulatory authorities, etc., in the second chapter a study has been conducted on the state reached and development by types of non-store forms of retail trade in the Republic of Bulgaria over the last 5 years. The applied nature of the analyses and conclusions made enrich and complement the existing knowledge in our country in the field of commercial science and practice.

In the third chapter, the results of the assessments and analyses performed argue the formulated guidelines and prospects for the development of non-store forms of retail trade in modern conditions, with an emphasis on three areas – digitalization, quick-commerce and voice-commerce. In particular, the effects of the digital transformation of trade and its manifestation in the individual forms of commerce are studied and the opportunities for the

development of electronic, mobile, quick and voice commerce are identified. The main conclusion is that the emergence of new forms of trade and the implementation of smart solutions in the trade process are linked to the opportunities for adding additional value to the offered commercial service, resource efficiency, improving the user experience and offering convenience in all possible channels and sales contact points.

In the conclusion of the monographic work, an important generalization is made, that the independent application of the individual forms of non-store retail trade in our nowadays is gradually losing economic significance. The author's position is that the leading strategy for successful market coverage in all its dimensions and limitations is determined by the synergistic, parallel and complementary application of a complex of non-store and in-store retail trade forms.

The above indicates that the monograph, which is a major habilitation work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov on the topic "Non-store forms of retail trade in Bulgaria", explores an essential scientific and scientifically applied problem at a high contemporary level.

The second scientific topic on which the candidate has conducted research is focused on the global and regional dimensions of trade. This problem has been studied in 25 scientific publications of the candidate from the list of scientific publications, as follows:

- monographs and studies – 3 pcs. (2.1; 3.2; 4.3);
- scientific articles – 10 pcs. (20.9; 23.12; 24.13; 26.15; 27.16; 33.22; 39.28; 41.30; 43.32; 44.33);
- conference papers – 12 pcs. (48.1; 50.3; 52.5; 55.8; 58.11; 59.12; 62.15; 69.22; 70.23; 73.26; 76.29; 77.30).

In this direction, the single-authored monographic work "Global and Regional Dimensions of Trade" should be noted, the relevance of which in the conditions of globalization is without doubt. The relevance of the issue can also be sought in the context of enriching economic theory and practice, due to the fact that in the Bulgarian specialized literature there is no such large-scale and complex study of the state of trade at different economic levels. The aim of the work is logically detailed in several research tasks, the solution of which contributes to the derivation of the relevant scientific and scientific-applied achievements in the monograph. Specifically:

- Significant factors that determine the development of trade on a regional, national and global scale have been studied;
- Economic quantitative indicators have been supplemented and systematized, with the help of which the development of the trade sector on a national, regional and global scale has been analyzed and assessed for a period of 13 years;

- The problems arising from regulatory provisions concerning the industry, the market concentration in trade with consumer goods, the challenges to the development of international retail chains and the territorial location of retail outlets have been studied;

- Prospects for the development of trade on an international, national and global scale have been outlined;

- A positive aspect of the development is the study and summary of impressive statistical information from the National Statistical Institute, Euromonitor and Eurostat, which together with the long research period (from 13 to 26 years) contribute to the scale and complexity of the research conducted.

It supports the author's position that the significance of the monographic study is determined by the complex transformation processes accompanying the development of the trade sector during the period 1990-2015 and the importance of trade for the development of the regional, national and global economy as an employer and source of economic growth.

The third scientific area of research is dedicated to a wide range of contemporary and significant issues related to the assessment and analysis of the consumer market and individual market segments – low-cost airlines, the new car market, leasing, the second-hand goods market; postal and courier operators, which are examined in the context of successful business practices. These problems are studied in 14 scientific publications of the candidate from the list of scientific publications, as follows:

- Studies – 1 pc., published in Scopus (5.4);
- Scientific articles – 4 pcs. (12.1; 15.4; 37.26; 47.36);
- Conference papers – 9 pcs. (51.4; 53.6; 57.10; 61.14; 63.16; 64.17; 66.19; 74.27; 80.33);

The study “Income elasticity of demand and trends in sales of second-hand goods” is relevant and apt, as it helps to promote and reveal the potential of second-hand goods as a key element of the circular economy. The study mainly reveals practical and applied contributions related to:

- highlighting the main trends in the trade in second-hand goods based on a comparative analysis conducted for 21 European economies;

- assessing the importance of disposable income as an economic factor for the sales of second-hand goods;

- studying the impact of income inequality on the purchases of second-hand goods in 21 European countries;

- examining the economic importance of the trade in second-hand goods for the GDP of each of the European countries;

The results show that within the research period 2010-2020, in the EU-21, the trade in second-hand goods has shown an uneven and slightly downward trend and contributes, although weakly, to the creation of added value in national economies. It is proven that in practice second-hand goods are not underestimated as a source of utility and their preference is determined by a number of other factors beyond income.

The following main conclusion with practical and applied significance is reached: in order to justify the expectations for the development of the circular economy in the expanse of sustainable consumption, the restrictions on the purchase of second-hand products should be overcome and their market should be transformed from a niche to a more mass and popular one.

The fourth scientific topic includes the candidate's scientific works, examining problems of trade management such as culture in trade and consumer protection, electronic shelf labels, classic advertising media, electronic payments, payment delays in trade, measurement of economic performance in trade, which are developed with a view to modern effective solutions in the context of organization and technology of trade activity. These issues have been studied in 12 scientific publications of the candidate from the list of scientific publications, as follows:

- Studies – 2 pcs. (single authored, 8.7; 11.10);
- Scientific articles – 7 pcs. (22.11; 27.16; 30.19; 34.23; 35.24; 36.25; 46.35);
- Scientific reports – 3 pcs. (60.13; 68.21; 78.31).

The scientific study “Protection against fraud in electronic payments in commerce” discusses contemporary issues, focused on the specifics of the various technological means of protecting electronic payments in real and digital commercial environments. The theoretical aspects of crimes and protection in electronic payments are summarized. The main tools for protection in electronic payment transactions in a digital environment are systematized, namely: the use of a secure HTTPS network protocol for data transfer in the Internet environment (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure), token devices, electronic signature and biometric data. The national and global state of financial crimes and the implementation of an official information security policy of Bulgarian enterprises are analyzed. The main conclusion with practical and applied significance confirms that identification and authentication are the basis of the current approach to combating fraud in payments in commerce.

The second scientific study in this direction – “Contemporary Problems of Culture in Trade” is also dedicated to an interesting and significant topic, conditioned by the absence of a definite and generally valid understanding of the essence of culture in trade, of its complexity and multidimensionality in the conditions of a market economy. A theoretical overview of the conceptual foundations of culture in trade has been made. A practical-applied and methodological contribution is the addition of the existing system of indicators for assessing culture in trade, through which individual elements of the commercial service and commercial

activity as a whole can be regularly studied. The author's view that the culture of trade should be considered as a concept for providing additional value, in addition to that related to the acquisition of the product, that it forms the core of the image of each commercial company and is the most important parameter of influence on it. Of practical importance is the opinion that directing resources towards culture in commerce should aim to achieve higher consumer satisfaction and a change in customer behavior, creating preference and loyalty to the commercial service.

The fifth scientific issue on which the candidate has conducted research is focused on the circular economy in trade and other economic problems such as trade sustainability, trade carbon footprint, smart packaging, hybrid cars, etc. These issues have been studied in 8 scientific publications of the candidate from the list of scientific publications, as follows:

- Scientific articles – 4 pcs. (13.2; 25.14; 31.20; 32.21);
- Conference papers – 4 pcs. (49.2; 83.1; 85.3).

The indicated above publications contribute to the enrichment of existing knowledge and are related to new applied dimensions and innovations in the commercial business.

When assessing the quantitative parameters of the scientific production, it was noted that the candidate participated in the competition with 36 scientific articles and 33 conference papers, some of which are directly related to the problems studied in the monographs and scientific studies. It is necessary to note that the scientific articles and papers complement and enrich the researched problems and results of the candidate on the topic of the competition.

The publications submitted to the competition testify to the rich linguistic culture of the candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov, are characterized by a scientific style of presentation and correctly used economic language and terminology.

In conclusion, it can be summarized that the quantitative, structural and content assessment of the scientific works presented to the competition by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov fully meet the requirements of Art. 118, para. 2 items 3-6 in connection with Art. 129 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

6. Identification of contributions

The analysis and evaluation of the scientific publications presented in the competition for the academic position of “professor” by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov give grounds to accept and confirm the scientific contributions formulated by the candidate. The more significant contributions by areas are as follows:

Contributions of a scientific and theoretical nature:

- The existing theoretical knowledge in the field of non-store forms of trade as modern innovation strategies is further developed and enriched, in the context of global processes in their innovative improvement and digitalization:

- The existing knowledge regarding the forms of trade, their theoretical essence, advantages, disadvantages, classifications are supplemented and the existing problems and possible solutions in conditions of intense market competition are highlighted;
- The theoretical knowledge has been expanded as a result of the studied effects of the digital transformation of trade and its manifestation in the individual forms of trade, as well as in relation to the agents of exchange. The opportunities for the development of electronic, mobile, fast and voice commerce are identified;
- The theory is enriched as a result of the substantiated importance of out-of-store forms of commerce for more complete satisfaction of consumer demand and as an innovation driver for the development of the entire retail trade sector and the economy;
- The theory is enriched with the validation of the position that at present, modern retailers use hybrid and extremely powerful combined trade strategies that take leverage of the traditional advantages of each non-store form, adapted and enhanced by digital technologies, implemented in multichannel, cross-channel and omnichannel trade strategies.

- Economic theory is further developed through an extensive and comprehensive study of the state and significance of trade for the development of the regional, national and global economy as a source of economic growth:

- Economic theory is being developed additionally upon as a result of studying the influence of significant factors that determine the development of trade on a regional, national and global scale;
- The state and trends in the trade sector have been analyzed and assessed for an extended period of time, on a national, regional and global scale;
- The problems arising from the regulatory provisions concerning the sector, the market concentration in trade of consumer goods, the challenges facing international retail chains and the territorial location of retail outlets have been highlighted;
- Prospects and opportunities for the development of trade as an economic sector on an international, national and global level have been outlined.

Contributions of a scientific and methodological nature:

- An existing methodology for independent and comprehensive research of non-store forms of trade has been summarized and further developed, characterizing various economic aspects of these forms and their importance for trade in general for the sector and as a contribution to the national economy and the world economy.

- A methodological contribution is the addition of the existing system of indicators for assessing culture in trade, through which individual elements of the commercial service and commercial activity as a whole can be regularly studied.

Contributions of a scientific and applied nature:

- An empirical analysis of individual segments of the consumer market has been carried out, which allows for the formulation of conclusions about the progress achieved in the development of trade and the identification of accompanying problems and possible solutions.

- An analytical study of the development of non-store forms of trade in the specific context of Bulgarian retailing has been carried out.

- The main guidelines and prospects for the development of non-store trade in modern conditions have been formulated, with an emphasis on e-commerce, homeshopping, vending and direct sales and their varieties.

- Research on the conditions, prerequisites and evolution in the digital transformation of trade and its individual forms.

- The applied nature of the analyses and conclusions made in the empirical studies conducted enrich and complement the existing knowledge in Bulgarian literature in the field of trade science and practice.

Contributions of an educational and methodological nature

- The conducted quantitative research and analysis of the obtained results allow enriching the educational process with real data, identifying the contemporary problems of business practice and their possible solutions.

The candidate's citation report shows that 99 citations of the scientific publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov were found, 5 of which were cited in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in the world-known database of scientific information Scopus.

7. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov has participated in a total of 9 scientific projects, 3 of which are research projects and the results of which have been published in 3 co-authored monographs, the subjects of which are related to the topic of the current competition for academic position "professor". Two projects, of which Assoc. Prof. Stoyanov is the supervisor, support the research activities of doctoral students administered by him who have successfully defended their dissertations. The remaining 4 projects, of which Assoc. Prof. Stoyanov is also the head, are related to the organization of scientific events in the form of scientific conferences, the results of which are systematized in scientific conference proceedings.

The candidate participates in 4 organizational committees of scientific forums, respectively in 2 as a head and in 2 as a team member.

Recognition of the candidate in the research community is his membership in 6 editorial boards, as follows:

- During the period 2019 - 2024, he was a member of the editorial board of the journal "Izvestiya" at the University of Economics – Varna;
- During the period 2017 - 2020, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov was a member of the editorial board of the journal of the University of Economics – Varna – "Universitetski vesti";
- In 2013, 2018, 2022 and 2023, he was a member of the editorial boards of 4 conference proceedings.

8. Teaching work

The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov over the years covers a total of 8 disciplines in the Bachelor's Degree Programme, 4 of which he has been conducting lectures and exercises in so far, including "Sales Management and Logistics" in English. In the Master's Degree Programme, Assoc. Prof. Stoyanov has given lectures and exercises in a total of 10 disciplines over the years, 4 of which he has lectured and exercises in so far. He has developed 21 curricula for the Bachelor's Degree Programme, including 5 in English and 10 curricula for the Master's Degree Programme.

To ensure the educational process, the candidate co-authored the writing of a university textbook "Quantitative Methods in Trade" and single authored a university textbook "Analysis of Commercial Activity".

He is the scientific supervisor of 4 PhD students, of whom 2 successfully defended, 1 dismissed with the right to defend within 5 years and 1 enrolled in 2024.

In 2024, the candidate carries out incoming student mobility under the "Erasmus+" program in "Sales management and logistics", and in the period 2016 - 2023 - in "Strategic retail management".

In 2018, he participated in a lecture on the topic "Consumer protection in the context of electronic commerce", in the form of an Academic internship, organized by Kherson National Technical University (Ukraine).

9. Others

During his professional development, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov has held a number of management positions such as: Head of the Department of Economics and Management of Commerce and Services from 2023 to the present; Member of the Control Council of the University of economics – Varna, from 2018 to the present; Deputy Director of the Center for Master's Studies - University of economics – Varna, 2007-2011; Member of the Academic

Council of the University of economics – Varna, 2016-2019; Member of the Faculty council of the Faculty of Economics of the University of economics – Varna, from 2016 to the present; Member of the General Assembly of the University of economics – Varna, from 2016 to the present; Member of the General Assembly of the Faculty of Economics of the University of economics – Varna, 2016 to the present; Member of the Attestation Commission of the Faculty of Economics of the University of economics – Varna, 2016-2019; Chairman of the Attestation Committee at the Faculty of Economics of the University of economics – Varna, 2019-2023; Member of the Standing Committee of R&D at the University of economics – Varna, from 2016 to the present; Member of the committee for awarding the academic award “Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev” at the University of economics – Varna, 2024, 2022; Member of the evaluation committee for the award “PhD Student of the Year” at the University of economics – Varna, 2021, 2020; Member of the specialized committee on academic activities at the Faculty of Economics for the mandate - 2023-2027.

It is also necessary to note his membership in the Union of Scientists - Varna, in the “Economic Sciences” section from 2017 to the present, as well as his membership in the Territorial Organization of the Scientific and Technical Union Varna from 2007 to the present.

During the period 2017-2024, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stoyanov has participated in 35 trainings, mainly related to the use of scientific platforms for managing author profiles and personalization in global scientific databases, publications and citations in the global indexing systems Scopus and Web of Science; working with the Library's electronic resources, etc. The trainings also cover current topics such as: How artificial intelligence (AI) is changing digital marketing and business; Use of artificial intelligence in education, Legal regime of electronic documents; Research skills and tools when working with electronic scientific resources, Conducting distance exams in a non-attendance format; Protection of personal data in the field of higher education; Corporate social responsibility; Practical seminar on project management, etc.

The candidate contributes to the affirmation of the values and image of the University of Economics – Varna through participation in media appearances on up-to-date topics such as:

- BTA-Varna, interview on the topic: “New trends in trade mix the digital and real worlds” (13.10.2023);

- BNR: Radio Varna, interview on the topic: “Why the gas station with attractive prices is closing?” (15.07.2021);

- BNR: Radio Varna interview on the problems of shopping centers of the “mall” type with the topic: “Varna is outside the top three in malls raking” (28.03.2019);

- BNT: “Morning with BNT 2” interview on the problems of e-commerce, e-sales and personal data protection (04.04.2018).

10. Plagiarism

No plagiarism, use of incorrect data or incorrect reference to other scientific works in the submitted competition materials was found.

11. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks for the candidate, only a recommendation that he must retain and maintain his innovative drive and continue his research activities on the most relevant issues of commercial activity.

12. Conclusion

The analysis and evaluation of the scientific publications submitted by the candidate for the competition, the indisputable scientific contributions, the teaching activity, the proven professionalism testifies that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov meets and significantly exceeds both the minimum national requirements for the academic position "professor" in the field of higher education, in which the competition is announced, under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as the additional quantitative requirements, according to Art. 118 (2), item 6 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff 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.

The above gives me reason to confidently recommend to the members of the Honorable Scientific Jury to vote "POSITIVE" FOR AWARDING of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihal Stoyanov the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Modern forms of trade business)" at the University of Economics – Varna.

Member of the scientific jury: ...

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Nikolova)

Заличена информация съгласно
33ЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

03.04.2025

Sofia