

OPINION

from

Associate Professor Dr. Eng. Romyana Ivanova Georgieva, TU-Gabrovo

Associate Professor – specialty "Economics and Management" (Industrial Property)

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, specialty "Management of Intellectual Property".

In the competition for Associate professor, announced in the State Gazette, no. 55/27.06.2023 and on the website of the Technical University of Gabrovo for the needs of the Department of Social and Economic Sciences at the Faculty of Economics, as a candidate participates **Head Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislava Aleksandrova Nikolova-Minkova**.

1. Overview of the content and results of the presented works

After learning about the works of Head Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislava Nikolova-Minkova rightly claims that the research and publication activities of the candidate show very good awareness and competence and exactly fall within the scope of the announced competition, namely in the field of intellectual property management, which is not only relevant for business, but also one of the most dynamically developing economic areas.

According to the problems to which the scientific works of the candidate are dedicated, they can be grouped into 4 research thematic areas:

1. Intellectual property management as a significant strategic policy element for the organization and management of modern companies [works: [12], [13], [20], [23], [24]].

2. Intellectual property management as a tool for achieving competitiveness, innovation development and economic firm growth [works: [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], [14], [15], [16], [18], [19], [22], [M1]].

3. Intellectual property as an indicator of the business environment [works: [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [17], [21], [25]].

4. Intellectual property as an indicator of innovative activity aimed at sustainable company development [works: [11], [26], [27], [28], [29], [30]].

The last two directions focus on the use of statistical data on intellectual property objects as an economic indicator, based on which various analyzes can be prepared, used by company management to make successful management decisions.

V. Nikolova's scientific works place intellectual property at the center of business and through it determine its effectiveness and competitiveness by providing answers to several questions of economic, managerial, and legal nature. They undoubtedly represent a step forward in the development of the scientific field indicated in the competition in our country.

2. General characteristics of the applicant's activities

2.1. Educational and pedagogical activities

Dr. Ventsislava Nikolova has a very diverse teaching experience at the Technical University of Gabrovo, as evidenced by the References of the Department of Social and Economic Sciences from 08.09.2023 for subjects and auditorium employment, as well as for

developed curricula. During the period 2012-2016 she has taught in more than 10 disciplines: Commercial Enterprise Management; Commodity science; Market research; Consumer behavior; Sales management; Quality management; Commercial logistics; International Economic Relations and External Trade Activity, Consumer Behavior, etc. After 2016 teaches in the Bachelor's Degree and the Master's Degree, with 17 disciplines added to the teaching ones: Intellectual Property; Industrial property and patent policy; Protection of intellectual property; Management of innovation and industrial property; Sustainable development of the public sector; Organization of commercial activity; Prices and pricing; Stock trading; Commercial intermediation and representation; Commercial advertising; Management of administrative services; Intellectual property in the social sphere; Digital advertising; Economics; Economics and Management; Economics of the enterprise; Negotiation of design work and copyright.

For the entire period since 2012, Dr. V. Nikolova has led classes in over 25 disciplines, and in recent years patent law disciplines prevail and fully correspond to the specialty of the competition. The workload estimates of the habilitated lecturers from the Social and Economic Sciences Department for the current and subsequent years show hourly assurance with lectures and seminars.

2.2. Scientific and applied science

The candidate Head Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislava Nikolova has submitted for the competition 30 publications, including: 3 studies published in journals, referenced, and indexed in international scientific databases; 10 articles; 17 reports. There are 12 publications in English (40%). She is the author of one monograph, two textbooks and one teaching manual. The publications show that most of them (83%) are written independently, which speaks of an effective independent work, the result of which is accumulated knowledge and good theoretical training.

Scientific works contain up-to-date scientific research, written in a very good language and style, with well-founded positions and analyzing a significant volume of information sources. I highly appreciate the monographic work that reveals and proves the significant role of strong brands in increasing company competitiveness.

Based on the attached reference for the fulfillment of the minimum requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor", a significant over-achievement of both the minimum national requirements (400 points required, out of 625 proven) and the requirements of the Technical University of Gabrovo were found. Indicative of the scientific and applied activity of V. Nikolova are also the available 19 citations of 14 (46%) of the publications submitted for the competition.

2.3. Implementation activities

Most of the research, educational and applied projects (10 in total) in which Dr. V. Nikolova has participated are highly appreciated by the contracting authorities and have a practical orientation and applicability. It is obvious that the projects are related to the problems of the competition, such as her participation in the project under the Operational Program "Science and Education for Smart Growth" - BG05M2OP001-2.016-0019-C01, in which she develops a lecture course and digital resources for the discipline "Intellectual Property in the Social Sphere", on which she leads classes today.

3. Contributions (scientific, scientific applied, applied). Significance of contributions to science and practice

The research work of Dr. V. Nikolova is focused on a topic on which relatively little work is done in Bulgaria, which, combined with the qualities outlined above, favors the importance of the achieved scientific and applied scientific results. I accept (without one - See item 5) the combined in two main areas contributions from the detailed author's reference, but I believe that the main scientific and applied scientific contributions in the monograph and in the other publications of the candidate can be systematized as follows:

Scientific contributions:

- Through multifaceted and in-depth research and analysis, the strategic role and importance of intellectual property management as a strategic resource for achieving sustainable economic firm growth has been demonstrated [[M1], [12], [13], [20], [23], [24]].
- The role and significance of the marketing toolkit for the sustainable competitive advantages created by trademarks and brands are justified [[M1], [6], [7], [15], [16], [18], [19], [22]].
- By systematizing different author's views on the positive impact of trademarks and brands on company competitiveness, the role of the brand in forming a sustainable over time company competitive advantage is justified [M1].
- When examining the correlation between the competitiveness of the EU-27 national economies and their trademark applicant activity, the positive impact of trade marks on the level of competitiveness at both company and national level has been demonstrated [8].

Scientific applied contributions:

As a result of a study of the dynamics of Bulgarian and foreign trademark activity in Bulgaria for the period 2000-2019, as well as the Bulgarian trademark activity abroad, the interrelationship between trademark activity and the conditions of the business environment has been proven, as well as the effectiveness of the impact of regulated legal changes on trademark activity [1].

When applying a System of Concordance between the Nice Classification of Goods and Services and the Classification of Economic Activities in Bulgaria in a study of Bulgarian and foreign trademark applicant activity, it has been proven that foreign activity is aimed at economic sectors and activities in which the Bulgarian applicant trademark activity is higher [2].

Through an analysis of the dynamics of Bulgarian and foreign patent activity for the period 2010-2021, the trends in technological development by technological areas and directions have been revealed, and a predominant orientation of both Bulgarian and foreign patent owners to technological areas and fields with the highest concentration of patent rights has been established [3], [4]].

4. Assessment of the applicant's personal contribution

I believe that the presented publications convincingly prove the personal contributions of the candidate in the field of empirical analyses of the state and trends of Bulgarian and foreign activity on various intellectual property objects; the use of a variety of indicators based on patent statistics; and study of the relationship of intellectual property management with other processes occurring in the economic system.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

In the scientific works I have not noticed any serious shortcomings and weaknesses that affect the overall positive assessment, with one exception. I do not accept the incorrect

formulation of the contribution in item 2.1., Appendix 11, at the end of page 3 (A Correspondence System between the Classification of Economic Activities in Bulgaria (NACE.BG-2008) and the International Patent Classification (IPC) has been developed and through its implementation the priority technological directions and economic sectors, i.e. those with the greatest potential for technological development [5]), have been established). The said "Correspondence System....." It was not developed by the candidate in the competition, but only used. This contribution should be correctly reformulated.

The presented scientific production is of very high quality and thoroughness. I find it appropriate for the candidate for "Associate Professor" to continue her research in the field of intellectual property, the results of which to periodically publish in authoritative scientific journals, referenced and indexed in global databases, as well as to increase the share of joint research and publication activities with colleagues from the guild. These recommendations refer to the future research and publication activities of Dr. Ventsislava Nikolova-Minkova, which in no way underestimates the results achieved so far and does not undermine the positive assessment in this opinion.

6. Personal impressions

I have known Dr. Ventsislava Nikolova for 18 years, still as a student at the Technical University of Gabrovo, which I have taught. I have an immediate idea of her qualities, achievements, and career development. She is a hardworking and disciplined person, striving for new knowledge and constantly improving her qualifications, through proven by 25 certificates participation in various online training courses at the World Intellectual Property Organization and the European Patent Office.

In recent years, she has radically changed her writing style and research approach in a positive direction and has grown as a very good researcher and lecturer, enjoying the respect of students and colleagues.

7. Conclusion:

The documents submitted to the competition meet and exceed the legal and regulatory requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor at the Technical University of Gabrovo. At present, I do not find any signals of copyright infringement of other persons by the candidate, whom I consider to be a fully established and prominent very good researcher, analyst, and lecturer.

Considering the above, I give a positive assessment of the candidate in the competition, and I confidently suggest Head Assist. Dr. Ventsislava Aleksandrova Nikolova-Minkova to be elected "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Intellectual Property Management", professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, at the Technical University of Gabrovo.

28.10.2023

Member of the jury: /signature/

/Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eng. Romyana Ivanova Georgieva /