

REVIEW

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Professional direction 9.1 "National security" ("Crisis situations and human resources management")

- No. 29680 - Register of academic positions and dissertations at NACID:
<https://ras.nacid.bg/dissertation-preview/29968>
- <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Valentin-Vasilev>
- https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=J3V_gIAAAAAJ&hl=en
- <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0074-9578>

*on a competition for the occupation of an academic position "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" in the field of higher education 9. Security and defense, professional direction 9.1. National security, announced in SG no. 28/02/04/2024 with candidate **chief assistant Dr. Dafinka Vasileva Sidova***

I. Evaluation of compliance with the minimal national standards and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University.

The compliance assessment with the minimal national and New Bulgarian University requirements is completely positive.

The described data and related paperwork are fully relevant to the current procedure and meet all regulatory criteria.

The activities were carried out in line with the minimum national requirements as well as the NBU's requirements, as defined in Appendix 2 of the Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff of the NBU, which the candidate chief assistant. Dr. Sidova describes and verifies, in due order, through the attached documents, the total number of points for the groups of indicators 757.5, as evidenced by the table supplied by the candidate, which fully meets the requirements for the academic position "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR".

This point-based evaluation composition is distributed as follows:

I I. Research (creative) activity and results

1. Assessment of the monographic work, creative appears or other posts matching by volume and completeness on monographic labor including assessment of scientific and applied science contributions on the author.

A key element in the evaluation procedure is the role of the monographic work. In this regard, it can be pointed out that the topic of the monographic study "Human security through European territorial



cooperation - benefits, challenges, perspectives / on the example of the Republic of Bulgaria" is in full relation with the increased interest in the problems involved in the development both nationally and on a global scale, responding to a large number of challenges related to the development of security systems in a different perspective - human security through European territorial cooperation.

In the Bulgarian specialized literature, this topic is presented fragmentarily, primarily in the general context of project management and national security issues, but not in such a full-fledged scientific relationship. In this regard, there is a need to define the aspects of cross-border projects contacting particularly sensitive places and issues, as well as easily vulnerable groups of people, highlight the risk to them from various risks and impacts, and describe the features of their protection. Such study can be conducted on both a theoretical and practical level, with concretization occurring in a territorial and temporal context.

In this regard, the main concept of the monographic work is extremely creative and well-written as a scientific research strategy and the development of goals, tasks, hypotheses, and so on. The purpose of the monographic work is to examine the achieved results of cross-border, transnational, and interregional projects, with the participation of the Republic of Bulgaria, through which freedom from fear, scarcity, and freedom for a dignified life are ensured, as well as to identify positives and negatives, to examine challenges and perspectives of development, and to formulate recommendations concerning the current program period 2021-2027.

The author's main hypothesis is that European Territorial Cooperation has the capacity (qualitative and quantitative) to ensure human security; however, the Republic of Bulgaria does not fully utilize this capacity, limiting the benefits for human security, particularly in terms of cross-border and inter-regional cooperation.

The author's ability to define goals in a scientific plan, to create a meaningful notion to fill with scientific production, is **unquestionably positive**.

The conclusions in the monograph might be structured in two ways. The first line of conclusions is theoretical, focusing on the study of human security as a constructivist criterion, as well as European Territorial Cooperation as a functional criterion. Important aspects of its formation, evolution, and essence as a concept are highlighted, including purposefulness, legitimacy, adaptability, sustainability, broadening the scope of dangers, and procedures for coping with them. The concept of human security complements expands, builds on, and connects other key concepts such as the Concept of "broad security", the Concept of national security, the Concept of human rights, and the Concept of human development.

Dr. Sidova used research methods that were appropriate for the dynamic and complex nature of the problem, and the use of the dynamic, comprehensive, and evaluative approach resulted in a high degree of generalization, trend delineation, and the incorporation of prognostic elements into the work.

The results of the monographic work are correctly summarized both in the conclusion and in the conclusions drawn in the individual chapters. The conclusions drawn also correspond to the text and are correctly summarized, follow from the text, and reflect the concrete results achieved.

Undoubtedly, the monograph's results are admirable. In this direction, it is necessary to broaden the possibilities for applying and testing Dr. Sidova's scientific research in practice, to incorporate it more widely into the studied disciplines of the field's majors, and, last but not least, to seek opportunities for the establishment of a school of followers on the investigated problem, something that the topic's level of depth allows.

The monographic work submitted for review provides a solid foundation for proving Dr. Sidova's ability to synthesize and analyze scientific material, as well as develop independent scientific and practical conclusions. The work gives the sense that she possesses the traits of an accomplished scholar and author, with a recognizable style of language that is both easy to understand and impart in an educational atmosphere.



The monograph serves as an ideal foundation for the overall creation of the competition paperwork, with messages, findings, and recommendations clearly defined.

2. Assessment of contributions in the other attached publications (creative appearances), made after the appointment to the academic " Chief Assistant " position. She also includes an assessment of the requirement for peer review on the editions.

This section of the review focuses on the examination of deposited articles linked to the current procedure.

The candidate's scientific and publication activities cover several major fields.

A high grade should be given to a book based on protected dissertation labor for the awarding of ONS " Doctor " / Trans-border cooperation and " broad " security in the Mediterranean region at the beginning of the XXI century, 75 points /.

Appendices to articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific reviewing, edited collective volumes, or specialized editions for classified material are as follows: 10 independent articles and 9 co-authored publications /145 points in the evaluation card/. All of them are about competition and have a direct scientific bind to both the monographic study and the author's scientific interests.

A study is presented, published in a non-refereed journal, or it is scientifically reviewed and carries 15 points.

The candidate submits for review and publishing the head of the collective monograph /Steady urban development - lessons learned for Sofia (collect. monograph), NBU, 20 points /.

The author used research methods that were appropriate for the dynamic and complex nature of the problem, and by applying the dynamic, systemic, and evaluative approach, she was able to achieve a high level of generalization, trend delineation, and the inclusion of prognostic elements in her publications.

The assessment of the candidate's original scientific contributions /attached in a separate document/ prepared in accordance with the requirements of Article 26, paragraph 1 of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff. In it, significant aspects of the contribution of the author in the current method are presented accurately and professionally, which I accept without reservation as original and author's. The described contribution moments are the monographic work, article, studies and chapter of a collective monograph.

The linked publications have received a positive overall rating since the author's style is recognized and easy for the reader to understand, and Dr. Sidova can explain highly complex terminology in the field of national security in style and language.

3. Citation from other authors.

Citations and references to the candidate's work provide a great source of information about his scientific activities and the recognition of his creativity.

General Assistant Dr. Sidova is a well-known and referenced author, and the total number of citations, as reported accurately in the attached paperwork, is 16 /sixteen/s, earning the applicant 102,5 points on the assessment card for verification in accordance with the method.

It should be noted that the author is mentioned not only by her university colleagues, demonstrating teamwork and a positive organizational culture, but also by other colleagues throughout the country. Furthermore, it is mentioned by foreign authors, which is an excellent testimony to the quality of the scientific and production work, as well as a prospective possibility to safely expand its publication activity to highly rated magazines overseas.



4. Assessment of the results from participation in research and creative projects and application of received results in practice.

The candidate under consideration for the procedure has been an active and exceptional participant in research and creative events over the years, and his activities have demonstrated a high level of sustainability.

Dr. Sidova gets an undeniably high grade for her active participation in projects that are critical to the department's and university's specialty. Among them, the following stand out: Participation as a member of the educational project " Second traveler seminar by criminology - Island Belene - Island on freedom or Island on slavery " together with 26 students (14 bachelor's and 11 masters). Funded from Central fund for strategic development to The guardianship of the NBU, " Students " fund programs " to BF and MF. Conducted on June 12 and 13, 2021; Participated as a member of creative project " Photo exhibition " Island Belene - Island on freedom or Island on slavery " for the presentation of 30 photographs on students. Funded from Central fund for strategic development to The guardianship of the NBU; Participation as manager on an educational project " Third traveler seminar by criminology - " Island " Sveta Anastasia " - Island on the hope " together with 7 students (4 bachelors and 3 masters). Funded from Central fund for strategic development to The guardianship of NBU, Studentski advice of the NBU, " Students " fund programs " to BF and MF. Held in the period May 21-24, 2022; Head on educational project " Educational visit on a penitentiary institution - Prison-Pazardzhik "with 15 students (14 bachelor's and 1 master's). Funded from Student advice of the NBU. Conducted on 31 May 2023

Among the leading contributing moments of these participations, which must be accounted for and highly valued, we may identify numerous areas of application and practical realization: Tracking and analyzing the achievements of programs under European territorial cooperation and influencing them on human security and "broad security"; Publication of scientific works in international and national editions; Conducting a questionnaire survey to determine the role of European territorial cooperation in providing human security and "broader security"; The results will be published as scientific articles in international and national publications. Organize and conduct seminars, open lectures, and educational trips with students on issues related to human security and "broader security"; Development and publishing of textbooks/textbook help for NBU students on essential topics relating to human security and measures to secure it.

These activities are particularly valuable for the educational institution and show the high added value of the candidate for the institution from the perspective of his future personnel development.

I II. Learning and teaching activity

1. Auditory and non-auditory employment, work in electronic instructive "MOODLE – NBU" module, assurance on student practices and internships, work with students and doctoral students

Ch. Associate Professor Dafinka Sidova teaches "Civil and Corporate Security" at BP, as well as the master's programs "National and International Security" and "Criminology and Crime Prevention Policies".

The annual workload for the academic year 2023/2024 exceeds the necessary 180 classroom hours and 60 training hours, resulting in 264 hours of classroom employment and 420 hours of non-auditory/training employment.

It is also an important point that the candidate has developed a new classroom course NISM307 Combating Environmental Crime to MP "National and International security"; from the



2023/24 Semester 3 catalog as well as greatly aided the development and the improvement of classroom courses: SECB023 Policy and security factors (two-semester), SECB728 Migration, Refugees and Border Control, SECB758 Prevention and Countering Criminal Behavior, SECB759 Ethics and Criminology - BP "Civil and Corporate Security".

An essential indicator of the overall activity in the growth of the majors and the university as a whole is the candidate's organizational engagement and gained experience, among which particularly important ones can be identified, such as: Member of Organizational committee on the annual International Scientific Conference of DNMS for the period 2020-2023; Member of Organizational committee on Scientific conference " Applied Criminology in Bulgaria " - 14-15.10.2021; Member of Scientific committee International Conference National Security Faculty of War Studies University, Institute of Strategic Studies, SECURITY & FORECASTING 2021 SEC4, Challenges for the State and International Security – the Current State and Prognosis for the Future, Warsaw – Poland, 11th -12th May 2021; Member on Organizational team and moderator on Youthful discussion forum for security for period 2020-2022: Member on Organizational team and moderator on Student seminar by security for the period 2020-2021; Member on Organizational team and presenter on Student colloquium " Policies and management by time on crises "- 7.06.2022 and other relevant ones.

This organizational experience is especially significant and deserves recognition and encouragement to be expanded in the future.

Dr. Sidova's excellent academic and teaching commitment is demonstrated by the fact that she assisted six students from the Ministry of Justice's "National and International Security" program with an internship at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that lasted one month.

2. Assessments from the polls on the students.

Satisfaction surveys show a high average rating of 4.85 out of 5 for Dr. Sidova's work among students.

This evaluation is a sufficient measure of both the job and the attitude of students and trainees relate to the activity and personality.

IV. Administrative and public activity

1. Participation in collective organs on the management of the NBU.

Dr. Sidova is a respected member of the university community of the NBU, and the following participations of her in collective governing bodies of the NBU can be indicated - Member on The council on Undergraduate faculty from December 2022; Member on The program advice of DNMS from 01.10.2017 to 1.10.2022; Director on Program Board from 1.10.2022

Participates in DNMS's academic, administrative, and public activities, such as conferences, seminars, projects, accreditation work groups, and work groups for internal and external auditing.

Dr. Sidova's academic events primarily reach students from DNMS and other NBU departments, such as student conferences and colloquiums, youth forums, traveling seminars, meetings with practice specialists, and so on. She collaborates effectively with colleagues from other departments.

2. Public activity .

The candidate under the procedure also stands out with his public activity.



For example, Dr. Sidova is a Member of the Bulgarian Community for Liberal Democracy (BOLD) as an expert on security policies and strategies.

3. Attraction on students in the program.

There is also high activity in the direction of attracting students to the program and expanding the educational field of the university.

For the expansion of the network from a partnership relationship with the NBU, Dr. Sidova is the initiator and has a main contribution to the signing of framework contracts for cooperation (including conducting practices and internships for the students) with the Diplomatic Institute to the minister on the external ones works with the " A21 Campaign " foundation, operating in the field on the fight against traffic on people, with Associations " Bulgarian hub for united Balkans " and " Cluster for integration on emerging technologies ", which are undoubtedly indicators of increasing interest in the university.

The candidate's level of commitment is high, and she is actively seeking new approaches and popularizing the university's programs through various information channels. Of particular interest is her active role in the development of the department's Facebook page, which is of extremely high quality and undoubtedly broadens the horizon for current and future students.

V. Personal impressions from the candidate

I know Dr. Sidova as a scientist with a distinguished and noteworthy scientific presence.

She is an accomplished author and scholar in the field of national security. I would focus on the administrator and organizer's high level of knowledge.

It has an outstanding name and reputation in scientific circles and is well-known for its accuracy, teamwork, and professionalism.

VI. Opinions, recommendations, and comments on the candidate's activity and achievements.

To the candidate in the competition procedure ch. Assistant Professor Sidova, I have the following recommendations and scientific-methodological notes:

- Future research could expand on the concept of "learning organization," which is overlooked in Dr. Sidova's monographs and articles. Using them, essential ideas in science and study might take on a more flexible form.
- Incorporating best practices from other countries can improve the credibility of scientific ideas and provide a solid platform for further research.
- Dr. Sidova's future study could benefit from using "benchmarking" and "benchlearning" methods to find best practices. This would make it easier to benchmark processes as well as test and apply research-identified best practices and concepts.
- In the future, I advocate putting some of the conclusions obtained in his monograph into scientific and public debates, as well as testing the concepts in practice in the coming year.
- I recommend the author of the book " The Good Life" / R. Waldinger, M. Schultz; ed. East West; 2023/. The ideas in the book resonate excellently to some of the theses and conclusions in scientific publications and can serve to expand the scientific horizons of the author;
- I recommend the author continue and expand her research by looking for appropriate ways to present her scientific ideas and production in foreign publications and scientific forums and to increase the publication activity of the doctoral student in English-language publications, to expand and



popularize the creativity and ideas of his scientific research, and in this direction, I firmly believe that the results of the research and the ideas in it can be published in editions referenced in Scopus;

- Dr. Sidova's contribution to scientific publications, both domestically and internationally, is crucial for her creative and scientific development. This would be especially useful to the department and its specialties in the long run.
- Another idea that could be expanded upon further in the future is that, given the direction that many of the candidate's publications have been heading in recently regarding the toolkit for strategic planning, it would be prudent to focus future scientific developments and research on the potential applications of Balanced Strategic Management Maps and Balanced Systems of Performance Indicators, or BsCs, as a component of strategic planning and management, particularly in the context of the issues under investigation. This would "transfer" the information and conceptual model offered in the monograph to a new practical level;

The suggested opportunities and recommendations will help Dr. Sidova's creative growth in her future work and provide a more precise disclosure of the scientific contributions without reducing the value of the documentation that has been analyzed and evaluated by the current procedure.

Conclusion

In summary, after reviewing the entire documentation for the competition for the academic position of "docent" in the field of higher education 9. Security and defense, professional direction 9.1. National security, announced in SG no. 28/02.04.2024, prepared and submitted by the only candidate admitted to the competition - chap. Assistant Professor Dafinka Vasileva Sidova, Ph.D., I should clarify that I have evaluated their substantive aspects as entirely "positive" and that they comply with the requirements of Art. 21. (1) and Art. 24 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as Art. 47. (2) and Art. 48. (3) for compliance with the minimum national requirements and Art. 1a, para. 2 of the Regulations for its application in the New Bulgarian universities.

The educational institution has ensured that the method is organized and documented in a way that satisfies the normative standards outlined in Bulgarian legislation. The procedure's formal requirements have been met, and the paperwork that is attached has been finished in a way that makes review easier.

I propose to the respected Scientific Jury of the competition to rank the candidate **Dafinka Vasileva Sidova** and to propose to the Academic Council of the New Bulgarian University that she be elected and occupy the academic position "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" in the professional scientific specialty in the field of higher education 9. Security and defense, professional direction 9.1. National Security.

17.07.2024 г.

Reviewer:

(prof. Valentin Vasilev, PhD)