S T A N D P O I N T

of **Assoc. Prof. Vanya Dencheva Tsonkova, PhD**
Area of higher education: 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences
Professional field: 3.8. Economics (Finance, Money Circulation, Credit and Insurance)
(St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, Faculty of Economics, Finance and Accounting Department)

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" in the area of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal sciences, professional field 3.8 "Economics", scientific major "Audit and Financial control"

In the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue 89/ 24.10.2025, for the needs of the Department of Economics and Finance in the Department of Economics and Management at the University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, **Dr. Kiril Dimitrov Dimitrov** participated as a candidate.

1. Compliance of the candidate with minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria

The candidate's reference-declaration shows that he meets the minimum national requirements for holding the position under the announced competition (the total number of points obtained in the presented scientific works is 470 with a minimum required of 400). This was also confirmed at the first meeting of the scientific jury, held on 6.01.2026, on the basis of which Dr. Kiril Dimitrov was allowed to participate in the competition.

2. Brief biographical data

Kiril Dimitrov Dimitrov was born on 11 January 1989 in Plovdiv. He holds a Master's degree in "Business and Financial Control" (no information is provided on the higher education institution or the year of graduation).

In 2018, after completing doctoral studies at the Univeristy of Insurance and Finance – Sofia, he successfully defended a dissertation entitled "Bank Lending in Bulgaria after EU Accession" and obtained the PhD degree in Economics in the scientific field "Finance, Insurance and Social Insurance".

The candidate has 15 years of professional experience in commercial banks in the areas of lending activities and risk management, as well as experience as Director of Internal Audit, a financial controller in state-owned enterprises, and

a manager of an accounting and auditing company, as well as of a consulting company.

Kiril Dimitrov has also pursued an academic career at the University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, where, after winning a competitive selection procedure, he holds the position of Chief Assistant Professor.

3. General description of the presented materials

The candidate for the academic position "associate professor" has proposed for review a list of 12 (twelve) scientific publications, including:

- 2 Monographs;
- 8 Scientific papers;
- 1 Article;
- 1 Book.

All submitted works are solely authored by the candidate (i.e., they have no co-authors). Their analysis shows that they correspond to the professional field and scientific major of the announced competition.

The habilitation monograph "The Impact of the Digital Economy on the Evolution of Auditing: Trends and Implications" (2025, 247 pp.) is a topical and in-depth scholarly work examining the influence of digitalization on auditing practice and the competences required of auditors. Based on an analysis of relevant academic literature and the regulatory framework, as well as the application of general scientific methods (including a comparative approach and case-study analysis), the author substantiates the need for new requirements for reliability, efficiency and flexibility in auditing approaches and methods.

The monograph is structured into four chapters. First, it traces the development of the digital economy and the emerging challenges faced by the auditing profession. Next, it discusses the specific technologies transforming audit processes, such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, machine learning, blockchain, cloud technologies and robotic process automation (RPA). Third, it analyzes trends in auditing and the new skills and competences required of auditors in the digital era, as well as challenges related to ethics, data protection, cybersecurity and changes in the regulatory framework. Finally, it highlights the role of auditing in relation to sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.

The second monograph, entitled "Audit of Crypto-Assets and Blockchain Transactions: Regulatory Challenges and Methodology" (2025, 343 pp.), is a timely and original work in terms of both its topic and systematization. In it, the author focuses on one of the most up-to-date aspects of auditing, also addressed in the main monograph. The study is motivated by "the idea of the need to adapt

internal and external auditing to the dynamic and often weakly regulated environment of crypto-financial technologies" (p. 3). Structurally, it consists of three parts, each comprising two chapters, which consecutively examine the theoretical foundations of crypto-assets and blockchain technology, the challenges and risks in auditing crypto-assets, and the author's proposed methodology for auditing crypto-assets and blockchain transactions.

The book "Bank Lending in Bulgaria after EU Accession" (2025, 150 pp.) is based on the candidate's doctoral dissertation defended in 2018. It is structured into three chapters and analyzes the main trends and challenges in bank lending in Bulgaria, offering conclusions and recommendations for improving the lending mechanism and supporting the stability of the banking sector.

The other publications submitted for review (8 conference papers and 1 journal article) are consistent with the professional field of the announced competition. Four of them fall within the narrow scientific specialty (financial audit and control), while the remaining ones are directly related to it, addressing financial reporting, international accounting standards and sustainable corporate governance. The topics covered in these publications encompass key and highly relevant aspects of financial, accounting and auditing practice, including the application of International Standards on Auditing and IFRS (including IFRS 9), the enhancement of transparency and compliance in financial reporting, as well as the impact of digitalization on internal control and audit procedures.

These works have been developed and published mainly over the last two years (2024–2025), immediately prior to and concurrently with the two monographs published in 2025. This indicates, on the one hand, intensive research activity and thematic coherence across the individual studies, and on the other, the dissemination and promotion of the author's ideas and results within the academic community and professional circles.

Three of the publications proposed for review are in English, and two of them were presented at an international scientific forum outside the country.

4. **Reflection of the candidate's scientific publications in the literature (known citations)**

In the reference-declaration on the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements of the candidate, for indicator group "D", there are the necessary citations for "associate professor" – a total of 55 points with a minimum required of 50 points. In his CV, Kiril Dimitrov reports a total of 13 citations as of the end of 2025. Based on the submitted list, as well as a check in the academic platform Google Scholar, it is evident that citations by international authors prevail and that they have been obtained within a relatively short period. This indicates the

topicality of the research subject and the visibility of the candidate's publications in the academic literature through citations by independent authors.

5. General characteristics of the candidate's activity

5.1. Educational and pedagogical activities (work with students and PhD students)

It is evident from the submitted professional CV that the candidate teaches courses corresponding to the announced competition and aligned with his research profile, namely: "International Standards on Auditing," "International Financial Reporting Standards," "Project Audit," "Financial Statement Audit," "Accounting in the Non-Material Sector," and "Bank Accounting."

5.2. Scientific and scientific-applied activity

The candidate's scientific interests and research can be divided into the following main thematic areas, corresponding to the announced competition:

- ✓ Auditing in the context of digital transformation;
- ✓ Audit of crypto-assets and blockchain transactions;
- ✓ Implementation of International Standards on Auditing (ISA) and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS, including IFRS 9): challenges, regulatory compliance, and financial reporting quality.
- ✓ Internal control and the impact of digitalization on the control environment (including in the banking sector), as well as accounting practices in the context of sustainable development.

5.3. Implementation activity

The materials submitted for the competition do not contain information regarding the candidate's participation in project-based and implementation activities.

5.4. **Contributions** (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)

I confirm that the candidate's contributions indicated in the report are indeed present in his publications. As my view of the contributions to the scientific works of Dr. Kiril Dimitrov, I should highlight:

- ✓ The impact of the digital economy on the auditing profession is systematized and analyzed, with an emphasis on the main challenges related to changing business models and the need to adapt auditing approaches in a digital environment.
- ✓ The impact of digital technologies on the transformation of audit processes (AI, big data, machine learning, blockchain, cloud technologies and RPA) is highlighted and argued.
- ✓ Current trends and guidelines for the development of auditing in the digital era are outlined (including the transition to continuous and proactive auditing; real-time data auditing), as well as the necessary new competencies of

auditors, in the context of ethics, changes in the regulatory framework, cybersecurity and ESG requirements.

- ✓ The main risks and current regulatory regimes related to crypto-assets are systematized and reviewed in a European and global context (including MiCA and applicable accounting and auditing standards), justifying the need to adapt audit practices and auditors' competencies to the dynamic environment of digital assets.
- ✓ An integrated methodological framework for auditing crypto-assets and blockchain transactions is developed and proposed, which combines classical auditing principles with specific procedures and techniques for the blockchain environment.
- ✓ The challenges related to the implementation of International Standards on Auditing (ISA) and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS, including IFRS 9) in practice are identified, and conclusions are drawn regarding their impact on financial control, transparency, and compliance in financial reporting, including within the banking sector and multinational companies.

I consider the above contributions to be the personal work of the candidate, as they, on the one hand, contribute to the development of scientific statements in the issue under consideration, and on the other hand, offer professionally reasoned guidelines for application in financial reporting, auditing and financial control.

6. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution

The analysis of the candidate's scientific publications highlights a practically oriented approach and very good theoretical preparation, expressed in proposals for the application of accounting and auditing tools in non-financial enterprises and banks.

7. Critical notes

I consider it appropriate to formulate several remarks and recommendations aimed at the candidate’s future research activity.

First, in the second monograph, certain inconsistencies can be found between the content of the text, some subheadings and the cited sources (pp. 27, 71, 166, 167). Therefore, an additional verification of the citations and their relevance is recommended.

Second, in the same work, some inaccuracies are observed regarding the tax treatment of income from cryptocurrencies and related transactions, which requires further clarification in line with the applicable provisions of the Personal Income Tax Act, the Corporate Income Tax Act and the Value Added Tax Act.

Third, a review of the footnotes and bibliographies indicates a need for further standardization and optimization of the bibliographic descriptions of the sources used, in order to ensure greater clarity and correctness in their presentation.

Finally, given the quality and high practical relevance of the author's works, I recommend that, in the future, part of the research results should also be published in journals indexed and referenced in the international databases Scopus and Web of Science.

8. Personal impressions of the candidate

I do not personally know the candidate and therefore have no direct impressions of him. However, based on the materials submitted for the competition, their proper technical preparation and documentation, as well as the information concerning his professional experience both in practice and in higher education, I can state with confidence that we are presented with a determined and highly qualified young scholar who demonstrates strong potential for a successful future career as a lecturer, researcher, and expert.

9. Conclusion:

Considering the above, I give a positive assessment to the candidacy and **propose that Dr. Kiril Dimitrov Dimitrov BE ELECTED AS "ASSOCIANT PROFESSOR"** in the field of higher education **3. Social, economic and legal sciences**, professional field **3.8 "Economics"**, scientific major **" Audit and Financial control "** for the needs of the Department of Economics and Finance at the Faculty of Economics and Management at the University of Agribusiness and Rural Development.

21.01.2026 Jury member: …….

(Assoc. prof. Vanya Tsonkova, PhD)