

Opinion Template

Recommended length: two to three pages

OPINION

By: Murat Somer, Associate Professor, Koç University, Istanbul

Regarding: The application of the following candidate for habilitation as **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR** according to the Bulgarian legislation at the American University in Bulgaria in Area of Higher Education *Social Science, Economic Science, and Law* in Professional Field 3.8 *Economics*. The procedure has been announced in the State Gazette issue 75 dated September 9, 2014.

Candidate: **Dr. Didar Erdinc, American University in Bulgaria**

I present the evaluation below in my capacity as a member of the Habilitation Jury appointed for the above mentioned procedure by a letter of the AUBG President dated November 6, 2014 and according to a Decision of AUBG dated August 19, 2014. This evaluation is based on the *Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act*, the Rules for its implementation, the internal AUBG rules, regulations, and policies, including the *Habilitation Procedure* and the habilitation procedure advertisement on the AUBG website.

Evaluation of the Candidate

*The evaluation is carried out according to the **Primary Indicators** and **Additional Indicators** included in the document **Guidelines for the Habilitation Jury**.*

I. Basis for Evaluation

Please indicate on what information this evaluation is based - documents submitted by the Candidate, professional activities, publications, e.g.:

- YES monograph(s);
- YES articles in refereed journals specialized in the area;
- YES non-refereed publications;
- YES conference reports;
- YES other publications (Book reviews and media interviews);
- YES citations (by publications in Bulgaria/abroad);
- YES reviews, recommendations, opinions for the candidate's works;
- YES projects (Bulgarian, international, project leader);
- YES professional memberships;
- YES theoretical and applied works;
- other activities (Consulting, editorial board memberships).



American University in Bulgaria

II. Eligibility

1. Please find enclosed the enclosed **Eligibility Checklist 1)**. It combines eligibility conditions set forth in the Law and the University regulations.
2. Please state your opinion with regard to the Candidate's eligibility.

In my opinion, the candidate is eligible to apply for habilitation.

III. Areas of Research of the Candidate. Evaluation of the Contributions of the Candidate.

1. Please describe the principal areas of the Candidate's research.

With primary areas of expertise in macroeconomics-monetary economics, econometrics, European economic integration, and economics of reform and transition, the candidate has focused on related areas of research including panel data analysis of the Bulgarian banking system, banking, credit, and monetary mechanisms in emerging European economies, corporate culture in emerging European economies, banking and financial crisis and macroeconomic uncertainty. Utilizing her theoretical depth and comparative perspective, she has conducted very interesting research on Turkish-Bulgarian economic and political relations and the economic status of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, an insufficiently explored area where more research is needed. A full list of the candidate's areas of research can be found in the enclosed list of additional requirements.

2. Please fill out the enclosed **Additional Requirements list 2)** and submit it with your opinion. Include here a statement whether the Candidate's areas of research correspond to the specific requirements of the current procedure.

In my opinion, the candidate's research record corresponds to the specific requirements of the current procedure as explained.

3. Please include focused evaluation, according to Primary and Additional Indicators, of the Candidate's major theoretical and applied results and contributions.

As an expert in banking, credit, and monetary mechanisms in emerging European economies, a major area of research the candidate has focused on is panel data analysis of the Bulgarian banking system with an emphasis on financial fragility, credit booms, profitability and efficiency of the sector. She has published the results of her research, which employ advanced panel data techniques such as Generalized Method of Moments, in research articles in *Eastern European Economics*, *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, and *Journal of East-West Business*. These publications manage to empirically demonstrate, based on the Bulgarian case, the complex dynamics of bank behavior that led to banking fragility, credit booms and profitability-credit boom. They make a contribution



American University in Bulgaria

to extant research by distinguishing between, and empirically displaying differences in lending behavior of large and small size banks, with implications for the 1997 financial crises and for Bulgaria before 2008. Another contribution of these articles is that they make concrete policy proposals, calling for banking sector reform.

The candidate has expanded her research to other areas with papers titled "Coping with the Global Financial Crisis: Demystifying the Role of Foreign Banks in the Bulgarian Banking Sector, 2007-2011," "The Impact of Financial Integration and Foreign Bank Entry on the Stability of Banking Systems in Emerging Europe, 2002-2011," "How did the Bulgarian Banking System Cope with the Global Financial Crisis during 2008-2012?: A Panel Study," "Assessing the Extent of the Crisis-Induced Credit Crunch and Banking Distress in a New EU Member- the Case of Bulgarian Banking System, 2008-2010" and "Banking or Risking on Foreigners?: A Panel Analysis of the Bulgarian Banking Sector before and after the Crisis, 2001-2012" co-authored with Valeriya Yordanova for submission to academic journals. She has also penned papers in the area of risk management in banking, one co-authored with Andrey Gurov and submitted to *Journal of Financial Risk Management* and one submitted to the journal *Banks and Banking Systems*.

Additionally, the candidate has done research on the political economics of ethnicity and management of ethnic diversity, with a focus on the Bulgarian model of ethnic accommodation. According to the candidate, the Bulgarian case is a relatively positive example that was able to avoid ethnic conflict during the tumultuous years of post-Cold War transition, thanks to restraint on the side of the central government as well as the Turkish minority, which contributed to Bulgaria's democratization. She also published on Bulgarian-Turkish economic relations (with Emilia Zankina), which show the role of the EU in the process.

The candidate is currently elaborating on the larger theoretical implications of her research on ethnic politics in Bulgaria, with a monograph on "The Impact of Cultural Diversity on Economic Growth and Convergence", which she co-authored with Altynai Mukambaeva and which is accepted for publication at LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, Germany (forthcoming in 2015). This monograph examines how cultural diversity influences different paths of economic growth across countries and suggests that cultural indicators may be a long-term background factor inhibiting convergence of economic performance across countries as predicted by economic theory. Dr. Erdinc plans to eventually publish this monograph as a book, which she is highly recommended to.

It is manifest from this research and publication record that Dr. Erdinc is a productive and very capable researcher.

IV. Evaluation of the Candidate's teaching



American University in Bulgaria

1. *Please include short evaluation according to the Additional Indicators related to teaching, with emphasis on teaching in recognized liberal arts institutions and student-centered approach.*


It is very clear from Dr. Erdinç's statement of teaching philosophy as well as from the evidence on her teaching record that she is a highly dedicated, thoughtful, innovative and successful teacher, who would be a greatly valuable asset for any liberal arts college. She has taught a wide range of different courses, some of which, such as econometrics, are among the hardest subjects to teach and make accessible to students. Dr. Erdinç evidently met this challenge very successfully and effectively trained students in technical and analytical skills while at the same time promoting their faculties of critical and multi-dimensional thinking. Finally, the candidate is also a very collaborative and conscientious teacher who allows her students to participate in her own research and helps their training and career development by coauthoring scientific articles with them, which is a major contribution to the reputation and attractiveness of her school's teaching programs.

2. In my opinion, the candidate's areas of teaching correspond to the additional requirements set forth by AUBG for this procedure.
3. In my opinion, the candidate's overall reaching performance clearly corresponds to the additional requirements set forth by AUBG for this procedure.

VI. Conclusion:

1. Based on her dossier, the candidate is an asset for the faculty of AUB and her performance corresponds to requirements of the university for habilitation.
2. I strongly recommend the candidate's habilitation.

Signature and date:

 Feb. 5, 2015

By signing here I also declare that writing this review does not represent conflict of interest.

American University in Bulgaria

Eligibility Checklist

Name of the Candidate: **Didar Erdinc**

Applying for habilitation as: **Associate Professor at the American University in Bulgaria according to announcement in State Gazette, issue № 75, dated 9 September 2014**

In the Professional Field: **3.8 Economics**

Check below what applies. Sign and submit together with your review or opinion.

- ☐ **YES** The Candidate has Ph.D;
- ☐ **YES** The Candidate has served five years as (Senior) Assistant Professor at a recognized academic institution;
- ☐ **YES** The Candidate has published a monograph or publications of equal standing in specialized journals. These should not repeat publications based on which previous degrees or ranks have been granted;
- ☐ **YES** The Candidate has experience from recognized academic liberal arts institution(s);
- ☐ **YES** The Candidate has experience in student-centered teaching approach;
- ☐ **YES** The Candidate has undergone at least one successful evaluation in teaching, research and service at a recognized academic liberal arts institution, including positive student evaluations of teaching.
- ☐ **YES** The Candidate has experience in teaching in English at a higher education institution with instruction in English language.
- ☐ **YES** AUBG can ensure teaching and research load according to its internal rules and regulations.

Signature and date:


Feb. 5, 2015

Additional Requirements

For Associate Professor academic position in Professional Field 3.8 Economics

Additional specifications: Banking, credit, and monetary mechanisms, corporate culture, and FDI in emerging European economies; Economic development among religious or ethnic minority populations; Banking and financial crisis and macroeconomic uncertainty; Panel data econometrics.

Name of the Candidate: **Didar Erdinc**

Check below what applies. Sign and submit together with your review or opinion.

Research

The Candidate has conducted research in the following areas:

- ☐ **YES** Banking, credit, and monetary mechanisms in emerging European economies;
- ☐ **YES** Corporate culture in emerging European economies;
- ☐ **YES** FDI in emerging European economies;
- ☐ **YES** Economic development among religious or ethnic minority populations;
- ☐ **YES** Banking and financial crisis and macroeconomic uncertainty;
- ☐ **YES** Panel data econometrics.

Teaching

The Candidate has teaching experience in the following areas:

- ☐ **YES** Theoretical and applied econometrics;
- ☐ **YES** Macroeconomics;
- ☐ **YES** Managerial economics;
- ☐ **YES** Open economy macroeconomics;
- ☐ **YES** Financial markets and institutions;
- ☐ **YES** Economics of transition and regional economic integration;
- ☐ **YES** Microeconomics;
- ☐ **YES** Industrial organization;
- ☐ **YES** International finance.

Signature and date:


Feb. 5, 2015