

## OPINION

**By:** Assoc. Prof. Tatyana Tomova, PhD, Sofia University, Department. of Public Administration

**Regarding:** The application of the following candidates for the academic position of **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR** according to the Bulgarian legislation at the American University in Bulgaria in Area of Higher Education 3.Social Science, Economic Science, and Law in Professional Field 3.3Political Science. The procedure has been announced in the State Gazette issue 70 dated September 9, 2016

**Candidate:** Emilia Zankina

I present the evaluation below in my capacity as a member of the Academic Jury appointed for the above mentioned procedure by a letter issued by AUBG dated November 4, 2016. 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 advertisement on the AUBG website regarding the procedure.

### Evaluation of the Applicants

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

#### I. Basis for Evaluation

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

- monograph(s);
- articles in refereed journals specialized in the area;
- non-refereed publications;
- conference reports;
- other publications (self-estimation of research and teaching activities);
- citations (by publications in Bulgaria/abroad);
- reviews, recommendations, opinions for the applicant's works;
- projects (Bulgarian, international, project leader);
- professional memberships;

- theoretical and applied works;
- other activities (*please specify*).

## II. Eligibility

1. Please fill it out the enclosed **AUBG Academic Position Requirements** (Enclosure 1) and submit together with your opinion. 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.

Emilia Zankina meets all requirements for holding the academic post "associate professor". She has a PhD degree in International Affairs, obtained from Pittsburgh University in 2010. Zankina enters in the competition announced from the AUBG with 11 articles that are published or will be published in peer-reviewed scientific reviews or books. The most of them concern three fields of study – the political populism, the gender political problems and the administrative reform. Her publications are exclusively result-oriented and create added value to the knowledge in the respective domains. 4 of indicated articles are quoted 19 times which confirm the added value they possess.

Emilia Zankina is very active as a researcher and scientist. She participates in a great number of international conferences and represents well done researches of present interest. Zankina is a recognized expert in Bulgarian Politics and introduces the Bulgarian case peculiarities before the international scientific community through publications and conference participations.

The candidate is very active as a teacher as well. She conducts a several courses that cover different fields - Comparative politics, Public Policy Analysis and Bulgarian Governance and Politics. Additionally she develops and conducts topics courses in the field of political parties and elites. The activities and the achievements of Emilia Zankina in the period after the PhD degree obtainment prove that she is an active and useful member of scientific community. They make her quite eligible for taking the academic rank she applies for.

## 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.

2. Please fill out the enclosed **Additional Requirements list** (Enclosure 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.
3. Please include focused evaluation, according to Primary and Additional Indicators, of the Candidate's major theoretical and applied results and contributions.

As we pointed out the theoretical contributions of Emilia Zankina refer to three main research fields - the political populism, the gender political problems and the administrative reform.

The populism is a topic that attains more and more importance in the political researches because of its growing role in the current politics. The main research question that the Candidate identifies is about the relation between the populism and the democracy. Unlike the prevailing thesis which stipulate that the populism erodes and jeopardizes the democratic institutions, Emilia Zankina asserts that its appearance is relevant to the spontaneous development of democracy because the „personalistic parties significantly reduce transaction costs for investment in politics”. Taking for granted that the populist political culture is a mix of pragmatism (anti-ideology), populism (antielites) and personalism (antiparty), the Candidate explores the development of its soft form in Bulgaria after 2001 focusing on two political parties that acquire exclusive importance for the political life of the country. As a specific phenomenon in the development of the populism Zankina stresses on the construction of political charisma with the argument that it “is of the utmost necessity for populist leaders, who rely on charismatic qualities to attract voters rather than on ideological and/or programmatic platforms”. One of the main conclusions Zankina made is that notwithstanding the soft populism is a consequence of the changes in the incentive structure “the firm establishment of such a model would have a lasting effect on democratic politics that could lead to increased democratic and institutional deficits and to an irreversible change in the nature of representative democracy”.

Along with populism the political problems of the gender are the other important aspect of Emilia Zankina's research profile. She works up this subject in the comparative perspective of the Balkans region as well as of the post-communist countries. The authoress studies the regulations over the political representation



# American University in Bulgaria

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and the political parties in three Balkan States and the main research question she formulates is "in what extent the existing regulations stimulate or contrariwise – burden the gender's political representation". The conclusion she made through the comparative method is that in spite of the "communist legacies, culture, and a history of women activism influence outcomes in women's representation" the gender-specific regulation (quotas) remains the most powerful tool for the inclusion of women in politics. Zankina examines the female representation in politics also in the concrete case of Bulgaria. The main research question she identifies is the comparison between the right and the left female political representation. Her research backs with arguments the conclusion that „the number of conservative women is on a par if not greater than that of socialist women". After this conclusion Bulgaria looks much more different from the western countries as far as the female political representation is concerned.

The third subject in Emilia Zankina's research is the administrative reform in Bulgaria. She stresses on the politicisation in the Bulgarian public administration, which because of the existing normative restrictions on binding the politics and the administration, occurs through the restructuring of administrative bodies. Taking this point of view the authoress uses the level of restructuring as a measure for the politisation extend. She examines the difference of the Bulgarian administration politicisation across sectors and across time and makes the conclusion „that politicisation is a persistent problem in the Bulgarian civil service and is widely practiced by all governments, regardless of political orientation". The authoress formulates as well as important conclusions about the used research method and its implementation in the researches of the administrative reforms in Central and Eastern Europe countries.

The main advantages of Emilia Zankina's research profile are:

1. She examines the current problems of politics. For this reason her researches are valuable for the theory as well as for the practice. Her main contribution is the implementation of existing theories to new facts.
2. Mostly her researches are focused on Bulgaria. This way she contributes to the development of the knowledge about Bulgarian political life – a case that is

specific and in the same time is not often a subject of international comparative researches.

3. The authoress research orientation is prevailingly empirical. She has a good knowledge in research methods and in some cases makes a contribution to their implementation.
4. Emilia Zankina is very purposeful in her research activity. She works in a few research fields and continuously deepen her expertise in relevance to these fields.
5. The authoress publishes in reviews with high impact-factor. Two her books are adopted from prestigious publishing houses. These books are linked to the publications Zankina participates in the current competition with. Despite they are not included as text in the Candidate's documents they should be having in mind in the current estimation for academic rank conferment.

#### IV. Evaluation of the Candidate's teaching

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.*
2. *Please indicate your opinion as to whether the Candidate's areas of teaching correspond to the **Additional Requirements** (Enclosure 2) set forth by AUBG for this procedure.*
3. *Please state your opinion with regard to the correspondence between the overall teaching experience of the Candidate and the requirements of the current procedure.*

The Candidate has important teaching experience. At the present moment she teaches in three main subjects: Comparative politics, Public Policy Analysis and Bulgarian Government and Politics. The quality of Emilia Zankina teaching is highly appreciated by her colleagues. The students' estimation for Zankina teaching is also high.

The advantages of Zankina as a teacher are:

1. The Candidate teaches in fields where she has an expertise proven through researches and publications. The exception is the Public Policy Analysis – a field where Zankina has not specific publications.

2. Zankina is up-to-date teacher that comprehends the students' needs as well as their attitudes and seeks to respond to them in the best way.
3. The Candidate is very reliable as a teacher – she changes and updates her courses' content in a way to respond to the new emerging problems and theories.
4. She is valuable for every University teacher because she covers a wide range of courses; she works actively with students and is apt to promote her competence for teaching.

**V. Major critical notes and recommendations**

The empirical researches made by the Candidate prove her knowledge and skills in the methods' field. From this point of view the lack of publications in Public Policy Analysis looks inexplicable. Zankina has the capacity to expend her expertise in this field and this way to contribute for the enlargement of Bulgarian science in Public Policy that is still under-developed.

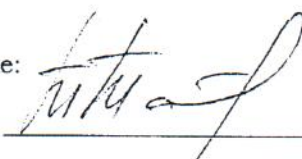
Despite some exceptions Emilia Zankina insufficiently quotes Bulgarian authors and especially bibliography issued in Bulgarian language. I consider that in this way she limits her own argumentation and in the same time she doesn't contribute for Bulgarian science popularization. In this regard she could contribute to a large degree through her publications and conference activities.

**VI. Conclusion:**

1. *Appropriateness to the specific requirements of the American University in Bulgaria*
2. Recommendation "for" or "against" granting the academic rank.

**Emilia Zankina responds fully to the specific requirements of the AUBG – she has enough experience in teaching and valuable publications in the subjects she teaches. Zankina is young purposeful researcher with a proven capacity for scientific and teaching activities. With these arguments I explicitly recommend Emilia Zankina to be conferred on the academic rank Associate Professor.**

Signature and date:

 20.07.2017

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

# American University in Bulgaria


## AUBG Academic Position Requirements

Name of the Candidate: **Emilia Zankina**  
Applying for: **Associate Professor**  
In the Professional Field: **3.3 Political Science**

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

- ☐ The Candidate has Ph.D;
- ☐ The Candidate has served five years as (Senior) Assistant Professor (for applicants for Associate Professor) or six years as Associate Professor (for applicants to Full Professor) at a recognized academic institution;
- ☐ The Candidate has published a monograph or publications of equal standing in specialized journals. These should not repeat publications based on which Ph. D., or Doctor of Science degree, or Associate Professor Rank was granted;
- ☐ For applicants for Full Professor: The Candidate has other original research works, publications, and other theoretical or applied-theoretical works;
- ☐ The Candidate has experience from recognized academic liberal arts institution(s);
- ☐ The Candidate has experience in student-centered teaching approach;
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ The Candidate has experience in teaching in English at a higher education institution with instruction in English language.
- ☐ AUBG can ensure teaching and research load according to its internal rules and regulations.

Signature and date:

 20.07.2017  
Tatiana Tomova

# American University in Bulgaria

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## Additional Requirements

### For Associate Professor Academic Position in Professional Field

#### 3.3 Political Science

Additional specifications: democratic transitions, public policy, political elites, comparative politics, East European politics, political parties, gender and politics, populism.

Name of the Candidate: Emilia Zankina

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

#### Research

The Candidate has conducted research in the following areas:


- ☐ Democratic transitions;
- ☐ East European politics;
- ☐ Political elites;
- ☐ Public policy and public administration;
- ☐ Political parties;
- ☐ Populism;
- ☐ Gender and politics.

#### Teaching

The Candidate has teaching experience in the following areas:

- ☐ Comparative politics;
- ☐ Bulgarian politics;
- ☐ Russian politics;
- ☐ Political elites;
- ☐ Public policy;
- ☐ Research methods.

Signature and date:

  
Tatiana Tomova