

## **Opinion Template – Associate Professor**

### **1. Information about the procedure**

Habilitation procedure for the academic position of **Associate Professor** at the American University in Bulgaria, conducted in accordance with Bulgarian legislation. The procedure falls within Higher Education Area **3. Social and Economic Sciences and Law**, professional field **3.3. Political Sciences** and has been announced in the Bulgarian **State Gazette, Issue 77 dated 19 September 2025**.

The evaluation below 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 additional requirements for the procedure advertised on the AUBG website.

**Candidate:** Senior Assistant<sup>1</sup> Professor Jean Crombois, Ph.D., American University in Bulgaria

**Reviewer:** Associate Professor Tamara Todorova, American University in Bulgaria

### **2. Confirmation of the Candidate's Eligibility for Admission to the Habilitation Procedure**

Dr. Jean Crombois fully complies with the requirements for being promoted to associate professor in accordance with the Bulgarian system. He was admitted to the habilitation procedure based on full compliance with the requirements listed in Enclosures 1, 2, and 3 to this document. In quantitative terms, Dr. Jean Crombois's research results are in compliance with and exceed the Minimum National Requirements (MNR) for the academic position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.3 Political Science (Enclosure 3). He is the author of 12 Scopus-indexed articles, of which only one coauthored with a student, which means that he nearly satisfies the requirements for a full professor and by far exceeds those for an associate professor in the professional field of political science.

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<sup>1</sup> As per the Bulgarian legislation

### 3. Qualitative Evaluation of the Candidate's Achievements

3.1 Dr. Jean Crombois' research interests include European integration from both historical and theoretical perspectives, with a focus on its evolution during the Cold War, as well as recent developments; EU policy toward the Eastern Partnership and enlargement; and the foreign policy of the EU and its Member States, particularly that of Bulgaria since 2014. He is also a leading historical expert on Camille Gutt's life and contribution to the International Monetary Fund and Belgian politics during the interwar period. Dr. Crombois' articles published in refereed journals demonstrate that he follows current political developments. His interests range from studying the Russian-Ukrainian war, to Bulgaria's foreign policy and membership in the EU, to European integration. In this sense, Dr. Crombois's interests are diverse and up-to-date, as appropriate for academia.

3.2 I read Dr. Crombois' two monographs. The book "Camille Gutt and Postwar International Finance" published in 2011 which is his habilitation monograph was published as:

Crombois, J. (2011). *Camille Gutt and Postwar International Finance*. Pickering & Chatto. 208 p.

His dissertation "Camille Gutt and the Belgian Government of London: Political, Economic and Financial Aspects of World War II" defended in 1999 was published as the book "Camille Gutt: Le finance et la guerre, 19940-1945" Quarum. The habilitation monograph is published in English by Pickering and Chatto, while his dissertation is written in French.

No self-plagiarism or repetition was detected in those works. At times the author refers to the same historical events and figures but discusses them in a completely different context without retelling the substance of his dissertation in his second monograph. The habilitation monograph is innovative in that it reveals new historical facts and circumstances which have become public through a series of new biographies such as those of Belgian politicians Paul van Zeeland, Paul-Henry Spaak and Hubert Pierot which have not been available at the time of the writing and defense of the dissertation. Dr. Crombois explains in the preface of the second book that it is a continuation of his research on the life and biography of Camille Gutt, a prominent Belgian politician, finance minister and lawyer. In fact, with his works on Camille Gutt Dr. Crombois turns out to be the key biographer of Camille Gutt as shown by Wikipedia. This in itself is a significant achievement.

Camille Gutt was a finance minister in several Belgian governments including the one in exile during the Second World War. His key contribution to Belgium was his rescuing the country's financial assets and their evacuation during the country's occupation by Hitler. After the war Gutt became the first managing director of the International Monetary Fund. It is worth stressing that both the book and the dissertation follow a historical approach to studying the life of this prominent Belgian politician. Both works cover mostly economic history and the interwar events particularly as it concerns European countries at the time. In this sense, Dr. Crombois has wide interests in economics and economic events. His choice of topic reveal he is not only interested in politics and history but in economics as well. Dr. Crombois' recent publications cover current political events and relate to political science and the history of the European Union. More specifically, his book chapters and articles in journals discuss the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, Bulgaria's contemporary foreign policy, small country foreign policy, EU foreign policy, etc. Dr. Crombois has published 12 Scopus-indexed articles and has

282 citations in Google Scholar and 17 citations in Scopus presently. These results by far exceed the requirements for associate professor in Bulgarian academia.

The habilitation monograph published by Pickering and Chatto is part of the series "Financial History" edited by Robert E. Wright and is also Scopus-indexed. The publishing house Pickering and Chatto identify Professor Robert E. Wright and Professor Herman Van Der Wee, both prominent scholars, as editors of the book in the process of publication. No plagiarism was detected in the habilitation monograph – in fact, the verification showed a similarity index of 4% for Dr. Crombois' work which is considerably lower than the average. This proves the originality and significance of his research.

In his habilitation monograph Dr. Crombois refers to the same periods and events but gives a different interpretation and provides new examples and historical information. When mentioning Owen Young, the author describes him as the President of General Electric in the dissertation and an American businessman involved in the Committee of Experts in the habilitation book. As a member of the committee Gutt managed to reach a settlement on the German reparations and debt to Belgium as a result of the occupation during the First World War. When referring to the competition between the two big copper cartels Rokhana and Anaconda Dr. Crombois mentions Union Miniere and the African Metals Corporation in the book while discussing Camille Gutt's participation in 1926 in the creation of the latter company in the dissertation. The monograph contains 136 pages of text of which less than 5-6 pages represent reference to the same historical events and figures. This makes Dr. Crombois' monograph innovative, contributing and revealing new historical facts and interpretations. This may also be due to the very nature of historical research where new facts and examples are given which are not known to the public. This historical approach differs a great deal from the analytical and technical approach of economics as a social science but is interesting on its own. Much of the works discuss the history of the European Union which is Dr. Crombois' main field as well as economic history. It was extremely interesting from the economic point of view to learn about Germany's reparations after the First World War, John Mainard Keynes's participation in the negotiations, the Great Depression, the devaluation of the Belgian franc to cover the Belgian debt (something which Bulgaria also experienced during its transition), the negotiations with Britain on lending Belgian gold reserves, Belgian rule of the Belgian Congo as a colony, etc. The discussion on the Belgian franc reminds somewhat of the removal of the Bulgarian lev presently and its substitution with the euro, a currency which modern Belgium adopted much before Bulgaria.

The discussion of the economic events and crises which resulted from the wars and economic policy of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century render both works by Dr. Crombois extremely valuable to economic history and the history of economic thought. As a successful lawyer, man of letters and negotiator Camille Gutt played a key role in shaping the postwar landscape and the Bretton Woods system. It was not without his participation that Belgium managed to obtain much of its reparations from Germany.

Not only do Dr. Crombois' works reveal Belgium as a modern country which has been an active part of the build-up of the contemporary European Union and the world economic and financial order but also Dr. Crombois himself as a dedicated historian, political scientist, economist and analyst.

At the AUBG Dr. Crombois runs and organizes European Studies as a major affiliated with the Political Science Department. He offers various courses related to European Studies such as EU Integration and the Transformation of Diplomacy: from 1945 to present (Jean Monnet Module), EU Project Writing and Management, EU Russia/China Relations and the Foreign Policies of the EU Member States, EU Politics, EU since 1945, National Security, etc. Dr. Crombois regularly organizes trips to Brussels for European Studies students which represent part of the curriculum for the major. The trip is a great practical experience outside of the

classroom and the students are excited to visit some key places such as the European Parliament, and other EU-related institutions based in Brussels. Dr. Crombois advises student theses in the field of European Studies. Dr. Crombois is the recipient and fellow of the Jean Monnet fund, a prestigious and very competitive award which few scholars manage to get.

#### **4. Critical remarks and recommendations**

I am curious to what extent new member states are valued in the European Union especially when it comes to the Schengen agreement and the Eurozone. Does Bulgaria's adoption of the euro have a favorable effect on the Eurozone? How does Dr. Crombois view the future of the Union and the euro now that Donald Trump wants to acquire Greenland and there is a change in the world balance of power? There are dramatic shifts in world politics – does the world move from a bipolar model of the hegemony of the USA and Russia to a tripolar model with the USA, Russia and China as the leading powers?

#### **5. Conclusion and recommendation**

Dr. Crombois has monographs on the economic history of Belgium and publications on contemporary EU policy, the new member states, the war in Ukraine, etc. He is a scholar with diverse academic and research interests. I full-heartedly vote "in favor" of appointing Dr. Jean Crombois to the position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.3 Political Science.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: ...January 19, 2026.....

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*Requirements for the Academic Position of Associate Professor at the American University in Bulgaria Other than the National Minimum Requirements*

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- (1) The Candidate has a Ph.D.;
- (2) The Candidate has teaching experience from recognized and accredited higher education liberal arts institution(s);
- (3) The Candidate has teaching experience in a student-centered environment;
- (4) The Candidate has undergone at least one successful evaluation in teaching, research, and service at a recognized and accredited higher education liberal arts institution, including positive student evaluations of teaching;
- (5) The candidate has at least two years of experience in teaching in English at a higher education institution with English language instruction;
- (6) The candidate has at least five years of experience as Assistant Professor or Senior Assistant Professor<sup>2</sup> at a recognized and accredited academic institution in Bulgaria or abroad, OR,
- (7) If internal to AUBG, the Candidate has received a positive final decision for promotion to Associate Professor after evaluation according to the internal AUBG rules based on the US traditions as defined in the Faculty Handbook;
- (8) The Candidate has published a monograph or publications of equal standing in specialized academic editions;
- (9) The Candidate has original research works and publications and other academic and applied works, which are evaluated in their entirety;
- (10) None of the publications presented for the current procedure repeat publications used for the acquisition of the educational and academic degree of "Doctor", the academic degree of "Doctor of Sciences", or a previous academic rank according to the Bulgarian legislation;
- (11) The Candidate has not been found responsible for plagiarism in their works under a statutory procedure.

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<sup>2</sup> As defined by the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act.

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*Specific AUBG Requirements for the 2025–2026 Habilitation Procedure —  
Associate Professor, Professional Field 3.3. Political Sciences*

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Additional specifications: European Union (EU) Politics and History. EU Foreign Policy and Foreign Policy of the EU Member States.

**Research focus on:**

- R1. European Integration: History and Theory, with a Focus on Early European Integration During the Cold War.
- R2. New Developments in European Integration.
- R3. European Union Policy Towards the European Union's Eastern Partnership and European Union Enlargement.
- R4. EU Foreign Policy and the Foreign Policy of the EU Member States with a Focus on Bulgaria's Foreign Policy Since 2014.

**Teaching experience in:**

- T1. European Integration: History and Theory Since 1945.
- T2. European Integration: Policy-Making Processes.
- T3. European Union's Foreign Policy and Diplomacy.
- T4. European Union's Foreign Policy Towards China and Russia and the Foreign Policy of the Member States with a Focus on Central and Eastern European Member States.

*Bulgarian Minimum National Requirements for an ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR Academic  
Position in Professional Field 3.3. Political Sciences*

Indicator Group	Indicator #	Indicator	Number of Points	
			Eligibility	Required by Group
A	1	Doctoral (Ph.D.) dissertation	50	Group A: 50
C	3	Habilitation work – monograph <i>see DEFINITION<sup>A</sup> C3 under the table</i>	100	Group C: 100
D	4	Published monograph that has not been presented as primary habilitation work	100	Group D: 200
D	5	Published book based on defended Ph.D. or Doctor of Science dissertation N/A	75	
D	6	Articles and reports published in academic editions that are indexed in world-renowned academic databases	30/n	
D	7	Articles and reports published in non-indexed peer-reviewed editions or edited collective volumes	10/n	
D	8	Studies published in academic editions that are indexed in world-renowned academic databases	45/n	
D	9	Studies published in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals or edited collective volumes	15/n	
D	10	Published chapter in a monograph with multiple authors	20/n	Group E: 50
E	11	Citations or reviews in academic editions, monographs or collective volumes indexed in world-renowned academic databases	15	
E	12	Citations or reviews in [non-indexed] peer-reviewed monographs or collective volumes	10	
E	13	Citations or reviews in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals	5	