

OPINION

By Prof. Dr. Hristo Bozov, PhD

"Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas
Internal Member of the Scientific Jury, Appointed by Order RD-260/30.08.2024 of the
Rector of "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas

Regarding: Competition for the academic position **"Associate Professor"** in the scientific field **"General Medicine"**, Higher Education Area 7. Healthcare and Sports, Professional Direction 7.1 Medicine, for the needs of "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University.

This opinion has been prepared in accordance with the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, the Rules for the acquisition of academic degrees and positions at "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas, Order RD-260/30.08.2024 of the Rector of "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas for the appointment of the Scientific Jury, and following the first meeting.

1. General Overview of the Procedure

Dr. Nevena Georgieva Ivanova, PhD, has submitted all the necessary documents required for participation in the competition, in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations. The requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, its Regulations, and the Rules for the acquisition of academic degrees and positions at "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas, have been met.

Biographical Data and Candidate Overview

Dr. Nevena Ivanova was born in Plovdiv and began her education in Tripoli, Libya. She graduated from a high school specializing in English language and earned her higher education degree in medicine at the Medical University of Plovdiv in 1998 with honors.

She continued her specialization and obtained the following specialties:

- Internal Medicine (2004)
- Cardiology (2006)
- General Medicine (2018)

In 2015, Dr. Ivanova defended her dissertation and was awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor."

She has progressively held academic positions at the Medical University of Plovdiv:

- Assistant (2000)
- Senior Assistant (2004)
- Chief Assistant (2007, 2016)

Dr. Ivanova started her clinical career at the First Municipal Hospital of Plovdiv as a resident in the Cardiology Department with an intensive care unit in 1998. In 2004, she joined the Cardiology Clinic at "St. George" University Hospital, Plovdiv, for her cardiology specialization until 2006.

Since 2011, she has been working as a cardiologist at the "Caridad" Diagnostic and Consultation Center and as the chief consultant at "St. Caridad" Hospital, Plovdiv. As of 2024, she also practices as a general practitioner in the accredited practice "Dr. Ivan Nastev 2015 – Ambulatory for Individual Primary Medical Practice," Plovdiv.

Dr. Ivanova has participated in over **100** international and national congresses, conferences, and scientific meetings, delivering more than 60 scientific presentations in countries such as India, Italy, France, Slovenia, Turkey, Ireland, North Macedonia, Belgium, Israel, Portugal, Greece, the Netherlands, Denmark, and others.

She is a reviewer for journals with Impact Factor (Springer Nature Netherlands, Springer New York). The reviews she has completed have not been included in the overall points tally.

She has received numerous awards and recognitions for her scientific achievements:

- Certificate of Achievement with a very high score from Harvard Medical School - Genetics (2024).
- Recognition from Harvard Medical School for the significance of a scientific discovery (2024).
- Acknowledgment from Sigma Xi, one of the oldest and most prestigious global scientific societies, for scientific achievements and contributions to the advancement of knowledge (2024).
- Recognition from journals indexed in global databases for high author evaluation and contributions to science (2024).
- Certificate for the best scientific development and presentation at the Fourth World Congress on Tobacco or Health, Delhi, India (2005).
- Certificate from the Ministry of Health for "Contribution to Health Policy and the Modernization of Bulgaria's Healthcare System" in the "White Paper on Value-Based Healthcare" (2014).
- Certificates and a plaque from National Congresses and Conferences on General Medicine (2014, 2016).
- Proficient in English, holding a C1 Certificate from Cambridge.

Representation and Membership in Scientific Organizations

Dr. Ivanova served as the National Representative of Bulgaria in the European Academy of Teachers in General Practice/Family Medicine (EURACT) (2010–2012) and in the World Assembly "Tobacco or Health" (WATCH) (2004–2008).

She is a member of numerous organizations, including:

- European General Practice Research Network (EGPRN)
- Bulgarian Society of Cardiology (BSC)
- National Association of General Practitioners in Bulgaria (NAGPB)
- Union of Scientists in Bulgaria (USB)

- Bulgarian Medical Association (BMA)
- The Scientific Research Honor Society Sigma Xi, where she was invited as a member due to the significant contributions of her scientific work.

Participation in Qualification Courses

Dr. Ivanova has completed over 100 qualification courses (both theoretical and practical), including:

- Academic writing
- Preparation of Cochrane systematic reviews
- Quality in general medical care
- Conducting scientific research
- Courses accredited by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME)
- Continuing education in Bulgaria and abroad (conferences, symposia, scientific meetings, scientific sessions, and courses) in the following areas:
 - General Medicine
 - Cardiology
 - Invasive Cardiology, including myocardial revascularization, bifurcation and complex coronary interventions
 - Non-invasive imaging diagnostics
 - Echocardiography in emergency conditions
 - Echocardiography
 - Stress testing (ergometry)
 - Holter ECG
 - Holter blood pressure monitoring

Additionally, Dr. Ivanova has served as:

- Trainer at the Simulation and Training Center of the Medical University – Plovdiv
- Trainer in management in general practice (in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and The British Council)
- Participant in a training program at the **University of Leicester, School of Medicine, Clinical Division of General Practice and Primary Health Care, UK**

She is a holder of **Cambridge English certificates (FCE, CAE) and** completed a her studies at **Harvard Medical School (Genetics)**

This extensive and consistent qualification enhancement demonstrates Dr. Ivanova's dedication to continuous professional development and serves as a strong testament to her high level of expertise.

2. Research Activity and Publication Evaluation

In the current competition, Dr. Nevena Ivanova participates with:

- **Dissertation** titled *“Professional-Behavioral and Motivational Profile of General Practitioners”*.

- **Habilitation work – monograph** titled “*Arterial Hypertension – A Current Perspective. Part 1*”.
- **Three additional monographs**, not submitted as the primary habilitation work (one authored independently and two co-authored).
- **One published book** based on her defended dissertation for the educational and scientific degree "Doctor."
- **73 publications and reports** in periodic scientific journals:
 - **33 publications** in journals indexed in globally recognized scientific databases (Scopus, Web of Science), of which:
 - **23 full-text articles**, including:
 - **10 articles with Impact Factor** (total IF: 14.919).
 - **13 articles indexed in Scopus.**
 - **10 publications** are sole-authored, of which:
 - **5 articles with Impact Factor.**
 - **5 articles indexed in Scopus.**
 - **10 reports** in journals with Impact Factor (total IF: 11.511), where she is the first author in **3 reports**.
 - Total Impact Factor of articles and reports: **26.43**.
 - H-index: **3**.
 - **40 publications** in refereed journals or edited collective volumes.
- **A published chapter** in two collective monographs.
- **52 publications** in proceedings of national and international congresses, conferences, and other scientific events.

Dr. Ivanova presents a significant volume of publications in **general medicine** and various other scientific fields. She is a sole author in prestigious journals with high Impact Factor and Q1 quartile rankings. Notably, **Publication 21** represents a **world discovery in the field of genetics**, which has been recognized by **Harvard University (Harvard Medical School)**. Dr. Ivanova completed her training at Harvard Medical School with excellent results and received a **Certificate of Achievement**. **Summary of Minimum Requirements**

Table 1 outlines the minimum required points for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Area 7 "Healthcare and Sports," Professional Direction 7.4 "Public Health," as per:

- The **Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB)**.
- The **Internal Rules for Academic Development** at "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas.

Group of indicators	Associate professor according to ZRASRB and PAPS RB	Associate professor according to the internal rules of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University, Burgas.	Chief assistant Nevena Ivanova
A	50	50	50
B	-	-	-
C	100	100	100
D	200	220	1828,2

E	50	60	1500
F Sum of indicators from 13 to the end		20	574,86
Total	400	450	4053,06

From the provided data, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The total number of points earned by Dr. Nevena Ivanova significantly exceeds the minimum requirements, surpassing them **ninefold** compared to the standards set by both the **Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB)** and the **Internal Rules for Academic Development** at "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas.

3. Citations

Dr. Ivanova's works have been cited **88 times**, as follows:

- 15 citations in Bulgarian sources indexed in Scopus or Web of Science.
- 53 citations in international sources, of which:
 - 28 citations in Scopus (Elsevier).
 - 25 citations in Web of Science (Clarivate).

4. Participation in Projects

Dr. Nevena Ivanova has participated in two projects at the Medical University – Plovdiv:

- "COVID-19 HUB: Information, Innovations, and Implementation of Integrative Scientific Developments".
- "OMNIA".

5. Published University Textbooks

Dr. Nevena Ivanova has contributed to **eight textbooks** (on general medicine and cardiology), including "**Introduction to General Medicine and General Medical Practice**", which is the first textbook on general medicine at the Medical University – Plovdiv.

6. Published Educational Materials

Dr. Nevena Ivanova is the author and co-author of **12 university teaching aids** for students and residents specializing in general medicine. Of these, **8 are sole-authored** and have been published in both Bulgarian and English.

Dr. Ivanova's active involvement in the preparation of materials used in the education of students and residents in general medicine provides a solid basis for assigning her a **very high evaluation** of her teaching activities.

Key Directions of Research Activity and Contributions from Scientific Works

Dr. Nevena Ivanova's research activity aligns with the field of the announced competition. The contributions from her scientific works, as listed in the provided documentation, span **10 thematic areas**:

1. General Medicine
2. Cardiology
3. Internal Medicine
4. Epidemiology and Infectious Diseases
5. Oncology
6. Vascular Medicine
7. Palliative Care
8. Public Health
9. Medical Education
10. Genetics

Dr. Ivanova has detailed the key scientific and practical contributions of her works in each of these areas, emphasizing the significance and applicability of her findings.

Contributions of Dr. Ivanova's Works

Dr. Ivanova's contributions are in the following areas:

1. Scientific research on the reform of primary healthcare and access to primary care in Bulgaria.
2. Scientific research on cardiovascular diseases, their risk factors, and management in primary care.
3. Scientific research on COVID-19 complications and their management in primary care.
4. Scientific studies on professional stress and burnout among general practitioners.
5. Scientific studies on screening and prevention in primary care.
6. Scientific research on quality of care and evidence-based practice in primary care.
7. Scientific studies on specific patient groups, such as the elderly and adolescents, in primary care.
8. Clinical cases of rare or complex medical conditions.
9. Development of educational materials in general medicine in Bulgarian and English.

A **globally significant contribution** is the publication of the **only known case of a novel gene mutation** leading to an extremely rare genetic disorder, complicated by multiple vascular aneurysms.

7. Evaluation of the Monographic Work

For the competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor**, Dr. Ivanova presents her monographic work titled "**Arterial Hypertension – A Current Perspective. Part 1**" (2019).

This work is a systematic and accessible resource for a broad audience, including cardiologists, general practitioners, residents, and medical students. It examines contemporary definitions of arterial hypertension, as well as its diagnosis and treatment, within the context of modern medical advancements.

The monograph provides data and evaluates the available scientific evidence to assist medical professionals in their practice and facilitate the selection of the best strategies. It is a valuable and practical resource for the healthcare community.

CONCLUSION

Dr. Nevena Ivanova is an accomplished teacher in general medicine and clinician, recognized for her achievements both in Bulgaria and internationally. She has presented significant scientific work that exceeds the requirements for the academic position of **Associate Professor**, as outlined in the **Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB)** and the **Internal Rules for the Acquisition of Academic Degrees and Positions at "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas**.

I confidently cast my **positive vote ("YES")** for her candidacy.

I strongly recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury vote in favor of Dr. Nevena Georgieva Ivanova, PhD, for the academic position of **Associate Professor** in the scientific specialty "**General Medicine**", professional field **7.1 Medicine**, higher education area **7. Healthcare and Sports** at "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University – Burgas (competition announced in the **State Gazette, Issue No. 55/28.06.2024**).

23.11.2024
Burgas

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