

## REVIEW

of the submitted papers for participation in the competition for the academic position of PROFESSOR, announced by the International Higher Business School - Botevgrad in SG, No. 8/ 28.01.2025

*Reviewer:* Prof. Dr. **Mariana Toneva Kuzmanova**, UNWE, Sofia,  
Scientific specialty "Social Management"

*Member of the Scientific Jury* in a competition for the academic position of PROFESSOR in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Human Resources Management and Organizational Processes)

*Reason:* Order No. 38/ 02.04.2025 of the Rector of the International Business School - Botevgrad

*Candidate:* Assoc. Prof. Dr. **Mariana Nikolova Usheva**, International Business School - Botevgrad

### I. *Brief biographical information about the candidate*

The only candidate in the said competition for the academic position of "Professor" is Assoc. Dr. Mariana Nikolova Usheva. For this purpose, she has submitted all the necessary documents. She was born on 01.11.1970 and graduated in 1991 Komi State Pedagogical Institute (KGPI), Komi Syktyvkar – Russia, majoring in Russian Philology, and in 1993 he received a PhD in Philosophy and Pedagogy at the Ural Pedagogical University, Syktyvkar. Yekaterinburg - Russia. In the period 2017 - 2024 he held the academic position of Associate Professor at the Department of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Economics at SWU "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad. From 26.08.2024 he has held the academic position of Associate Professor, PN 3.7. Administration and Management (Management) at the International Business School - Botevgrad.

He speaks Russian and English.

Ass. Dr. Mariana Usheva is a member of the Knowledge Society (from 1997 to the present), of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (Department of

Economic Sciences) - Moscow, Russia (from 2009 to the present), of the New Economic Association - Moscow, Russia (from 2010 to the present).

He is a member of the Editorial Board of the peer-reviewed scientific journal "Fundamental Research" at the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Moscow, Russia (from 2011 to the present), of the Editorial Board of the peer-reviewed scientific journal THE JOURNAL "INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF APPLIED AND FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH" (from 2011 to the present), of the Editorial Board of the peer-reviewed scientific journal "Modern Problems of Science and Education" (from 2011 to the present), of the Editorial Board of the peer-reviewed scientific journal "Pedagogical Education in Russia" (from 2011 to the present), of the Editorial Board of the peer-reviewed scientific journal "Entrepreneurship" (2016 - 2023). In addition, he is a member of the Organizing Committee for Scientific Projects at the Institute for Personnel Development and Management and the Scientific and Educational Center for the Study and Design of Professional Competencies of Specialists at the Ural State Pedagogical University (from 2010 to the present). Ass. Dr. M. Usheva conducted a two-week short-term specialization in 2023 at Spiru Haret University, Romania.

*Based on the above statement, it can be concluded that the candidate fully meets the requirements for participation in a competition for the academic position of "professor".*

II. *Characteristics of the scientific and scientific-applied production of the candidate*

In the competition for the academic position of Professor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Usheva participates with scientific and scientific-applied production, which fully meets the quantitative and qualitative requirements in accordance with the Law on the Prevention of Discrimination and Discrimination and the Rules for its Implementation.

*Fulfillment of quantitative requirements.*

The list of publications of the candidate for participation in the competition shall include 29 titles (2831 pages), the structure of which is as follows: 4 stand-alone monographs; 2 textbooks, of which 1 is independent; 1 co-authored studio; 5 co-authored articles published in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases; 17 articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review or published in edited collective volumes, of which 1 individual report. Most of the publications are in Russian and English.

Information is presented on 124 citations, of which 1 citation in WOS.

Ass. Dr. Mariana Usheva is a supervisor of four successfully defended PhD students.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the candidate for the academic position of "professor" exceeds the normative requirements for occupying this position (550 points) many times by achieving 2090 points.

*Fulfillment of quality requirements.*

Ass. Dr. Mariana Usheva skillfully combines her work as a lecturer and researcher in the field of human resource management, management psychology, corporate governance and sustainability, human resource management in tourism. She is the author of significant publications in these areas that arouse serious reader interest.

The applicant actively participates in projects. 6 projects under the Erasmus+ Programme, the European Programme for Territorial Cooperation "Greece – Bulgaria 2014 – 2020", etc. are indicated. On one of the international projects, Assoc. Dr. M. Usheva is the head of the project "E-Quality – Digital education for social and financial inclusion and gender equality", European Union grant agreement No CSO-LA 2020/419-493).

The candidate's internship as an associate professor is from 2017 and until August 2024 she works at SWU "Neofit Rilski". After that, he continued as a lecturer at the International Business School - Botevgrad. Ass. M. Usheva teaches the following disciplines: "Human Resources Management", "Supply Chain Management", "Global Supply Chains", "Organization Management", "Innovation and Creativity in Human Resource Management", "Strategic Management and Development of People in the Organization", "Human Resources Management in Healthcare".

*Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a complete correspondence between the quantitative and qualitative assessment of the scientific and scientific-applied production of Assoc. Dr. Mariana Usheva and the requirements for occupying the academic position of "Professor". The candidate demonstrates interests and professional competencies that fully correspond to the announced competition for the International Business School - Botevgrad.*

### III. *Main contributions to the scientific, applied and teaching activities of the candidate*

#### *Main directions in scientific production.*

In the competition for Professor Assoc. Dr. Mariana Usheva participates with publications that are evidence of her research potential to discover and offer useful solutions in the field of management theory and practice.

The main directions of the presented scientific production can be systematized as follows:

- human resources management;
- management psychology;
- corporate governance and sustainability;

- management of human resources in tourism.

*Evaluation of the monograph submitted as a habilitation work for participation in this competition, an independent subject of peer review.*

The monograph "Multigenerational Human Resource Management: From Generation T to Generation Alpha. Features and Motivational Specifics of Generations" was published in 2025 by IBS Publishing House/IBS Press.

A key topic in the monograph is the motivational specificity of five different generations in the conditions of the modern working environment (generations T, X, Y, Z and Alpha). This issue is especially relevant due to the intensive changes related to the processes of digitalization and the need for flexible approaches to human capital management. The methodology is based on two interpretation scenarios: positive and negative and includes seven analytical stages for each generation group.

The structure of the entire publication, as well as that of each chapter, is original: a "business card" of the generation, a hypothesis, a structural analysis of demographic and professional data, the results of a survey on 6+1 motivational modules, a comparative analysis with the panel interviews (conducted in the period 2019 - 2024), conclusions and recommendations.

The literature used includes more than 200 sources. The study includes 573 panel interviews and 507 completed surveys in 2024.

The presentation uses original and accurate definitions and a variety of analytical apparatus, and the author correctly defines the limitations associated with the conducted research.

The results of the monographic research can be successfully used in practice in the development of motivational solutions for different generations, in the implementation of communication organizational strategies, in the training

process and in the selection of talent retention strategies.

*Assessment of the other monographs with which the candidate participates in the competition.*

- Usheva, M. (2025) Multigenerational Human Resource Management: From Generation T to Generation Alpha. Individual Psychological Characteristics of Generations, Book 1, Sofia, IBS Press.

The monograph is dedicated to the study of current issues related to multigenerational human resource management, sustainable development, as well as social adaptation to technological and cultural changes. Especially valuable are the author's efforts to point out the Bulgarian aspects in the specifics of each generation against the background of its global characteristics. The proposed conceptual model for the interpretation of generational differences and their role in human resources management deserves high praise. The study covers the period 2019 - 2024 and includes 573 participants in panel interviews, 507 completed surveys and 15 professional fields. More than 400 sources are included in the literature used. The monographic research allows us to derive strategies for motivation and communication of different generations.

- Usheva, M. (2025). Multigenerational Human Resource Management: From Generation T to Generation Alpha. Stimulating the motivation of different generations in a work environment, *Book 3, Sofia: IBS Press.*

The monograph examines the processes of changes in motivation according to different generations and on this basis offers strategic approaches to human resource management. The theoretical apparatus includes 11 motivational theories adapted to different generational profiles. On this basis, a new analytical model based on scenario and theoretical analysis is proposed. The exhibition allows for the formulation of effective strategies for human resource management

in relation to individual generations and their appropriate linkage to organizational policies.

- Usheva, M. (2025) Optimization of organizational processes in the modern work environment. Sofia: IBS Press.

The changes in the business environment related to digitalization and new forms of employment pose serious challenges to modern organizations in the field of organizational process management. The author's critical analysis of the different management paradigms deserves high praise. The monograph offers useful practical solutions regarding the assessment and optimization of organizational processes, the introduction of new forms of work organization, stimulation of organizational flexibility, etc.

The publications of Assoc. Dr. Mariana Usheva contain a number of scientific and applied scientific contributions, the result of her in-depth research activities. They can be systematized as follows:

1. Development of a concept for a transformational leader in human resource management. (M1, M2, M3, U1, P6)
2. Development of a conceptual model for sustainable management and optimization of organizational processes. (M4, P4, P6, D4)
3. Building typologies for motivational profiles and personalization of motivational strategies in a multigenerational environment. (M2, M3, P7, P8, P9, W1)
4. Optimization of the socio-psychological climate and organizational culture. (M3, U1, P2, P3, P4, W5)
5. Development of models for organizational diagnostics and strategic decision-making. (M4, P4, P6, D3, D4)

6. Study of the impact of digitalization on human resources. (M4, P11, D6)
7. Assessing the financial dimensions of human capital management and sustainability. (M4, D4, D5)
8. Analysis of the international applicability of management models. (P3, P5, D2, D5)
9. Offering innovations in management training and development of future leaders. (U1, U2, P2, P11)

*It can be concluded that the mentioned contributions in the publications of Assoc. Dr. Mariana Usheva directly correspond to the serious results achieved by the candidate in the research and teaching work.*

#### IV. *Critical notes and recommendations*

I have no critical remarks on the submitted materials for participation in this competition. I recommend the candidate to use all opportunities to enrich the lecture courses with up-to-date results from empirical research, as well as to continue his participation in international scientific forums and research projects.

#### V. *Conclusion*

The submitted materials for participation in this competition fully comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application. This gives me grounds to positively evaluate the candidacy of **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Nikolova Usheva** and to recommend to the members of the scientific jury to propose to the Academic Council of the International Business School - Botevgrad to choose the candidate for the academic position "*Professor*" in the



professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Human Resources Management and Organizational Processes) at the university.

Sofia, 02.05.2025

Member of the scientific jury:



/Prof. Dr. Mariana Kuzmanova/