



REVIEW

From: *Prof. Dr. Tsvetana Aleksandrova Stoyanova - Department of Management, UNWE - Sofia, scientific specialty "Social Management", professional field 3.7. Administration and Management*

REGARDING: Competition for the academic position of " **professor**" in area 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.7. Administration and management (Human resources management and organizational processes) at the IBS and in accordance with art. 4, para. 2 of the ZRASRB, announced in the State Gazette no. 8/28.01.2025.

1. Competition information

The competition is announced for the needs of the IBS, according to Decision of the Academic Council No. 4/26.03.2025. I participate in the composition of the scientific jury according to Order No. 38/02.04.2025 of the Rector of the IBS.

2. Brief information about the candidate in the competition

According to the announced competition for a "professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, one candidate has submitted documents - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Nikolova Usheva, a lecturer at the IBS. In 1991 she graduated Komi State Pedagogical Institute (KSPI), Syktyvkar - Russia, majoring in Russian Philology, and in 1993 she received a doctorate in Philosophy and Pedagogy from the Ural Pedagogical University, Yekaterinburg - Russia. In the period 2017 - 2024 she held the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the Department of "Management and Marketing", Faculty of Economics at the Southwestern University "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad. Since 26.08.2024 she has held the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the IBS. The information presented in the creative autobiography of Assoc. Prof. Usheva clearly outlines her purposeful pursuit of sustainable professional development, deepening of scientific expertise and establishment in theoretical and applied research in the field of entrepreneurship, managerial psychology, multigenerational human resource management, organizational behavior, motivation and digital transformation.

From the submitted references it is clear that Associate Professor Mariana Usheva is a member of a number of professional and scientific organizations and editorial boards in the country and abroad, including the Society "Knowledge" (from 1997 to the present), the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (section "Economic Sciences"), the New Economic Association - Russia. She is a member of the Editorial Board of the peer-reviewed scientific journal "Fundamental Research" at the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, of THE JOURNAL "INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF APPLIED AND FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH", of " Sovremennyye problems of science and education", of " Pedagogical Education in Russia " "Entrepreneurship" (2016 - 2023) . She is the winner of prestigious scientific awards, has led student teams in international Olympiads. She is the leader and participant in numerous international and national projects.

3. **Fulfillment of the requirements for holding the academic position**

The scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Usheva submitted for review presents her scientific research and teaching activities after holding the academic position of "associate professor", namely the period from 2017 to 2025. The documentation meets all the criteria in the sense of the procedure for conducting the competition for holding the academic position of "professor". The scientometric report, prepared in accordance with the current regulatory requirements of the Law on the Promotion of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria, the regulations for its implementation and the regulations of the International Higher School, certifies that the candidate meets the criteria for the six groups of indicators for participation in the competition. In addition, with the collected 2090 points, he exceeds the minimum required for holding the relevant academic position four times. I did not find plagiarism in the submitted scientific works and I am not aware of any plagiarism proven in accordance with the statutory procedure in the candidate's scientific production.

The familiarization with the scientific works impresses with the achieved purposefulness, analyticality and criticality of the treated issues, primarily related to the above-mentioned issues. In the competition for the academic position of "professor", Assoc. Prof. Usheva has presented the following publications (29 in total):

Table 1 Number and types of publications of the candidate

Year	Number of posts	Types of publications	Total pages
2017	2	Textbook, Report	236
2018	4	Articles, Studies	70
2019	2	Textbook, Articles	80
2020	4	Articles, Report	53

2021	9	Articles, Reports	108
2024	1	Report	13
2025	4	Monographs	2271
TOTAL	29		2831

The development of the leading scientific issues in the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Usheva for the period 2017–2025 follows the following sequence:

Stage 1. Individual-behavioral and managerial aspects (2017–2018). Focus on human behavior and competencies in the managerial context – individual and organizational levels.

Stage 2. Economic and organizational stability (2019–2020). Focus on economic-structural issues, sustainability and strategic management.

Stage 3. Organizational Behavior, Motivation, and Digital Transformation (2021). Focus on the human factor in the organization – especially during crises and digital transformations.

Stage 4. Upgrading through a multigenerational approach and integration of models (2025) with a focus on creating new models for sustainable management.

4. Assessment of teaching and learning activities for each candidate individually

The results of the development of the teaching and learning activities of Assoc. Prof. Dr. M. Usheva practically prove the necessity and effectiveness of a close connection and dependence between research and teaching activities. Her internship as an associate professor started in 2017. Until August 2024, she worked at the Southwestern University "Neofit Rilski". After that, she continued as a lecturer at the International Business School - Botevgrad. Assoc. Prof. M. Usheva teaches the following disciplines: "Human Resources Management", "Supply Chain Management", "Global Supply Chains", "Organization Management", "Innovation and Creativity in Human Resources Management", "Strategic Management and Development of People in the Organization", "Human Resources Management in Healthcare".

From the disciplines listed above, it is evident that she has many years of teaching experience, covering a wide scientific spectrum of management issues: human resource management; strategic management; managerial psychology; talent management; business communications and etiquette, etc.

My overall rating for the teaching activities of Assoc. Prof. Dr. M. Usheva is that it meets the criteria of the IBS for occupying the academic position of "professor".

5. Brief description of the presented scientific papers/publications

The scientific monographic production of Assoc. Prof. Usheva, published in 2025 in a synthesized form, can be presented as follows:

Table 2. Comparative analysis of the candidate's monographs

Criterion	MONOGRAPHY Multigenerational human resource management: from Generation T to Generation Alpha.			MONOGRAPHY Optimization of organizational processes in the modern work environment
	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	
Title	Individual-personality characteristics of generations	Peculiarities and motivational specificity of generations	Stimulating the motivation of different generations in a work environment	
Year of publication	2025	2025	2025	2025
Volume (pages)	463	793	500	515
Number of heads	7 chapters + introduction and conclusion and bibliography	5 chapters + introduction and conclusion and bibliography	4 chapters + introduction, conclusion, appendices and bibliography	5 chapters + introduction, conclusion and bibliography
Main topic	Personality specifics of generations in the work environment	Detailed motivational analysis of generations	Application of motivational theories across generations	Management and optimization of organizational processes in a modern work environment
Methodology	Surveys (507), panel interviews (573), 6+1 modules	6+1 modules, scenario analysis, quantitative and qualitative data	5-step analysis, two-scenario interpretation + theoretical synthesis	Interdisciplinary approach (management, IT, psychology); literary analysis, comparative analysis, process and conceptual model
Generations studied	T, X, Y, Z, Alpha	T, X, Y, Z, Alpha	T, X, Y, Z, Alpha	Not considered by generation – focus is on organizational structures and processes
Motivational focus	Initial attitudes and motivational drivers	Motivational differences and intrinsic/extrinsic motivation	Strategies and personalized approaches to motivation	Relationship between organizational culture, innovation and employee engagement
Number of motivational theories	0 (theories mentioned but not systematically applied)	0 (analysis through modules, no applied theories)	11 motivational theories	Although the monograph does not systematize a separate chapter with motivational theories, it integrates nine (9) different theoretical approaches that relate to motivation, commitment, and organizational behavior.
Scientific contributions (main highlights)	Typology and generational profiles, primary	Motivational profiles, two-scenario approach,	Theory-practice integration, predictive model for Alpha, HR	Conceptual model for sustainable management, process analysis, integration of innovation

	motivational analysis	predictive conclusions	strategies	and creativity, strategic guidelines for organizational development
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The monograph (book 1) offers an in-depth analysis of generational differences in the context of human resource management, focusing on the individual-psychological characteristics of Generation T, X, Y, Z and Alpha. It examines the social, economic and cultural factors that shape the values, work styles and motivation of different generations, both in a global and in the Bulgarian context.

The study is based on empirical data collected through panel interviews and surveys with 1,080 respondents from 15 professional fields, using comparative analysis, historical and psychological approaches. The concept of a “transgenerational leader” was developed, who effectively integrates employees from different generations and builds an adaptive and sustainable work environment.

The book offers practical guidance for HR professionals, managers, and organizational leaders, including strategies for selection, motivation, training, and intergenerational communication that promote productivity and engagement in multigenerational organizations. The work contributes to a better understanding of generational dynamics and the creation of effective management practices in the modern work environment.

The second book expands the study of generational differences by focusing on the motivational factors of Generation T, X, Y, Z and Alpha and their impact on work engagement, productivity and organizational culture. Financial incentives, personal development, work-life balance, recognition and career opportunities are examined as key elements for engagement and satisfaction across different age groups. Special attention is paid to the dynamic changes in motivational attitudes brought about by socio-economic transformations, technological progress and globalization.

The empirical study covers 1080 respondents from 15 professional fields, using psychological, historical and comparative analysis to identify differences in motivational preferences of generations. The concept of a “transgenerational leader” was developed, who combines adaptability, emotional intelligence and effective communication to manage multigenerational teams and create an environment conducive to long-term engagement and professional development.

The book offers personalized motivation and training strategies that can be implemented by HR professionals, managers, and organizational leaders to improve multigenerational collaboration and team effectiveness. The work contributes to the development of modern management practices by providing a comprehensive model for building a motivated, productive, and sustainable work environment that meets the expectations of each generation.

The third book in the trilogy deepens the study of motivation in the multigenerational work environment, focusing on the specific factors that stimulate the engagement and productivity of Generation T, X, Y, Z and Alpha. Financial incentives, work-life balance, personal development, recognition and career opportunities are analyzed as fundamental elements for the motivation and satisfaction of different generations. Special attention is paid to the dynamically changing attitudes and expectations generated by socio-economic transformations, technological innovations and global trends.

The empirical study covers 1080 respondents from 15 professional fields, using psychological, historical and comparative analysis to identify individual and generational motivational preferences. The concept of "transgenerational motivation management" is introduced, which combines adaptability, emotional intelligence and effective communication, with the aim of optimally leading multigenerational teams and creating a sustainable and motivating work environment.

The book offers personalized motivation and development strategies applicable to HR professionals, managers, and organizational leaders aimed at improving intergenerational cooperation, work engagement, and team effectiveness. The work contributes to the development of contemporary management practices by presenting a comprehensive model for building a productive, satisfying, and sustainable work environment tailored to the specific expectations of each generation.

I define the approach presented in the three books as a novelty in the specialized scientific literature. The achieved results deserve a high academic assessment and have scientific and practical applicability in education and business.

The monograph entitled: "Optimization of organizational processes in the modern work environment" examines an extremely significant issue in the context of the dynamic, changing, digitalized work environment. It focuses on the search for sustainable, adaptive and strategic solutions in the management of organizations - in response to challenges such as digital transformation, intergenerational work environment, changes in work behavior and new forms of employment. The monograph falls at the intersection of management theory, organizational sociology and practical HR policies, filling an important gap in the scientific literature,

especially in the Bulgarian context.

Of the remaining publications, articles in refereed scientific journals that address issues related to: team effectiveness and human resource management; stress as a major management problem in modern organizations, significantly impacting the effectiveness and well-being of staff; strategic management for the sustainable development of small businesses; the role of the modern leader in the Bulgarian economy and the effectiveness of leadership in achieving strategic goals in a Bulgarian and global context deserve attention.

Of the mentioned textbooks, the one on "Management Psychology: Skills, Diagnostics, Impacts" is impressive. It is a comprehensive and in-depth study of the psychological aspects of management, focusing on the development of management skills, diagnostic methods and the impact on human behavior in an organizational context. Combining academic precision with a practical focus, it offers a sustainable model for understanding the relationship between the personality of the manager and the effectiveness of management processes.

It is structured in five chapters, which cover: the theoretical foundations of managerial psychology, the role of personality in management, the emotional-volitional aspects of leadership, managerial impact and approaches to conflict management. The last part includes test methodologies and creative tasks that support self-knowledge and stimulate managerial effectiveness. Particular attention is paid to self-knowledge as a basis for the development of personal and professional potential.

The textbook combines theoretical analysis and practical approaches, examining the psychological mechanisms of decision-making, motivation, communication and team management. The main socio-psychological factors that influence leadership, organizational climate and conflict resolution are studied. The author's approach creates an opportunity for the development of soft skills, empathy and behavioral flexibility - key qualities for the modern manager .

The candidate's reference for citations by other authors is correct – 124 issues for the period.

In summary, it can be said that the scientific output of Assoc. Prof. Usheva is of a markedly interdisciplinary nature, with original contributions in theoretical and practical aspects, which can benefit both students and teachers interested in the topic, as well as the wider professional community.

6. Synthesized assessment of the main scientific and applied scientific contributions of the candidates

I accept the systematized reference for scientific, applied scientific and applied contributions. The reference for contributions correctly presents the scientific achievements in the publications that are the author's merit, namely:

- Development of a concept for a transgenerational leader in human resources management. (M1, M2, M3, U1, P6)
- Development of a conceptual model for sustainable management and optimization of organizational processes. (M4, P4, P6, D4)
- Building typologies for motivational profiles and personalizing motivational strategies in a multigenerational environment. (M2, M3, P7, P8, P9, W1)
- Optimization of the socio-psychological climate and organizational culture. (M3, U1, P2, P3, P4, W 5)
- Development of models for organizational diagnostics and strategic decision-making. (M4, P4, P6, D3, D4)
- Research on the impact of digitalization on human resources. (M4, P11, D6)
- Assessing the financial dimensions of human capital management and sustainability. (M4, D4, D5)
- Analyzing the international applicability of management models. (P3, P5, D2, D5)
- Offering innovations in management training and development of future leaders. (L1, L2, P2, P11) .

7. Main critical notes and recommendations

I have no objections to the scientific theses expressed and defended in the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Usheva. With regard to her future teaching work, it is appropriate for her to continue developing and publishing independent teaching materials (handbooks and textbooks) in the disciplines she teaches.

I also recommend that he continue his participation in international scientific forums and research projects, because his proposals for improving management science and practice are also useful for the international scientific community.

8. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the candidate's pedagogical, scientific and applied scientific activities, I believe that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Usheva fully meets the requirements of the

Law on the State Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Law on the State Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations on the Conduct of Competitions for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and for the Occupancy of Academic Positions at the International Business School. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Usheva, as a candidate in the competition, significantly exceeds the national requirements for the occupation of the academic position of "professor". She has clearly expressed public, administrative and institutional activity.

All this gives me reason to categorically evaluate her overall activity **POSITIVELY** . I would like to propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to also vote positively, and the Academic Council of the International Business School to elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Nikolova Usheva for **the academic position of "PROFESSOR"** in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Human Resources Management and Organizational Processes).

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