

# REVIEW

by Prof. Georgi Stoyanov Karastoyanov,  
Professional field: 3.2. Psychology,

**Subject:** competition for an associate professor in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology (Work and organizational psychology).

## **1. Information about the competition**

The competition is announced for the needs of the International Business School - Botevgrad and is published in the State Gazette, issue 8 of January 28, 2025. The review was assigned according to Protocol No. 1 / 04.04.2025 of a meeting of the Scientific Jury, appointed by Order No. 32/31.03.25 of the Rector of the International Business School - Botevgrad.

## **2. Brief information about the only candidate in the competition**

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Irina Topuzova, International Business School

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

### **3.1. Fulfillment of the quantitative requirements**

The minimum required points by groups of indicators for holding the academic position of "associate professor" for professional field 3.2. Psychology according to the Regulations for the implementation of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria are as follows: A - 50 points, B - 100 points, Г - 200 points, Д - 50 points. The candidate has published scientific works that provide her with the following number of points: A - 50 points, B - 100 points, Г - 248 points, Д - 145 points or a total of 563 points with a required 400 points. My conclusion is that the candidate meets the minimum national

requirements for the scientific and teaching activities of candidates for holding the academic position of "associate professor" according to Art. 2b to the Regulations for the implementation of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

### 3.2. Fulfillment of quality requirements

I believe that the candidate Dr. Irina Topuzova is an established researcher and lecturer with contributions, both nationally and internationally. The total list of her scientific activity includes 25 publications, half (12) of which are in English and have been noticed and appreciated by the scientific community. This is evidenced by the total number of citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes, which are impressive - 187, of which in Scopus – 114 and Web of Science – 73.

In addition to teaching, the candidate is actively engaged in expert, research and public activities:

She participates as an expert (external evaluator) of project proposals under the Erasmus+ Programme, Human Resources Development Centre /HRDC/ - Sofia, National Agency for the Republic of Bulgaria of the European Commission /EC/ under the Erasmus+ Programme and is an Institutional Erasmus+ Coordinator for the Ministry of Education and Culture.

She participated as an Expert - Trainer under the Operational Programme "Science and Education for Smart Growth", as well as under the Operational Programme for Administrative Capacity (OPAC).

She was the editor-in-chief of the journal "Psychological Thought" and is a member of the Society of Psychologists in the Republic of Bulgaria and secretary of the section "Work and Organizational Psychology".

Taking into account the above, I believe that the candidate meets the quality requirements for occupying the academic position of "associate professor".

#### **4. Assessment of teaching and learning activities**

The candidate has sufficient professional teaching and practical experience, acquired as a part-time assistant, assistant and chief assistant at the South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad (2011-2021), as well as as a chief assistant at the International Business School - Botevgrad from 2021 to the present. Her annual teaching hours meet and exceed the requirements.

She was the head of the master's programs in "Business Psychology", and "Human Resources Management and Labor Psychology" and "Organizational and Business Psychology" (in English), International Business School - Botevgrad.

#### **5. Brief description of the submitted scientific works/publications**

Dr. Topuzova has submitted a total of 14 publications for the competition, including: two monographs, two studies, eight articles in scientific journals, one chapter of a collective monograph, as well as a book based on the dissertation work. All publications presented in this list for participation in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" meet the requirements of Art. 24, para. 1, item 3 of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and do not repeat evidence on the various indicators submitted for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor". Half of the submitted publications are independent, and the remaining seven are co-authored, which demonstrates both individual scientific contribution and the candidate's ability to work in a team with other scientists, enabling multifaceted research of problems.

Of the publications presented in this list for participation in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor", 2 articles and 1 study have been published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus & WoS) and have an impressive 190

citations in scientific publications referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases (Scopus & WoS), which suggests that the scientific community has appreciated the contributions in them, and accordingly the qualities of the candidate Doctor Topuzova as a competent researcher.

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

I believe that the main achievements of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Topuzova in the field of scientific specialty in professional direction 3.2. Psychology - Labor and Organizational Psychology, are related to clarifying the psychological aspects of the functioning of organizations with an emphasis on leadership, organizational culture, specific motivational factors and management strategies. They have both a scientific and scientifically applied nature because on the one hand they deepen our understanding of current changes in the functioning of organizations, on the other hand they allow this knowledge to contribute to the generation of management strategies that increase the effectiveness, commitment and productivity of employees. After analyzing the texts submitted for review, I accept the contributions in the way they are formulated by the candidate Dr. Topuzova, and I would like to emphasize the formulation and validation of the concept of a cultural leadership code, which, in my opinion, has serious potential for practical application for optimizing management processes.

#### **7. Main critical remarks and recommendations**

I have no critical remarks and recommendations regarding the candidate's work.

#### **8. Conclusion**

I believe that the candidate meets all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application and the specific requirements of the University of Botevgrad.

I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to elect the candidate, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Irina Topuzova, as Associate Professor in the professional field 3.2. Psychology (Work and organizational psychology).

April 25, 2025

Sofia

Signature: .....

(Prof. Georgi Karastoyanov, DSc)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops and lines, positioned above the printed name of the signatory.