

OPINION

**of Professor Yantsislav Valchev Yanakiev, DSc,
Institute of Defense “Prof. Tsvetan Lazarov”,**

**regarding the materials submitted for the competition for the academic
position of Associate Professor, announced in SG, issue 63/30.07.2021, in the
specialty of Sociology, Professional field 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Culture
Sciences, for the needs of the Centre for Empirical Social Research at the Institute
of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS.**

1. Information on the competition

The competition was announced for the needs of the Centre for Empirical Social Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS, Sofia, and the information about the competition was publicized in State Gazette, issue 63/30.07.2021.

I am a member of the scientific jury for the competition, appointed by Order of the Director of IPS – BAS, № ПД 09-391/28.09.2021 г.

2. Brief information about the candidate for the competition

Only one candidate has submitted documents for participation in the competition: Senior Assistant Professor Petya Ivanova Ilieva-Trichkova, PhD, from the Centre for Empirical Social Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS.

She was born on 30.04.1984. In 2008, she acquired a Master’s degree in Sociology at the University of National and World Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria.

In 2016, Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova acquired the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Adam Mickiewicz University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Poznan, Poland.

Starting from 21.08.2007, she consecutively held the positions of Sociologist and Assistant Professor, and since 2017 until now, she holds the academic position of Senior Assistant Professor at the Centre for Empirical Social Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS.

Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova specialized at the Institute of Education, London, UK, in 2011 and at Internationale de l’Education, Brussels, Belgium, in 2012.

An analysis of the submitted documents shows that the candidate meets the requirements under Art. 36 of the RASDAP – IPS – BAS, as regards 5 years minimum length of service in the specialty.

3. Fulfilment of the minimal national requirements for holding the academic position

The scientometric table presented by Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova shows that she has considerably surpassed the minimal score required by the normative documents for mandatory sections with regard to holding the academic position of Associate Professor. The total score in the table is 832.5 points.

During the term of the scientific jury, it has received no signals of violations under Art. 4, par. 5, point 3 of the DASRBA or under Art. 53, par. 1 point 5 of the RIDASRBA.

Based on the above-listed observations, I believe there is no obstacle to proceeding with the assessment of the results, scientific contribution and originality of the submitted works.

4. General description of the submitted materials

For the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova (Orcid  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2889-0047>) has submitted 17 scientific publications out of the total of 46 of which she was the author or co-author during the period 2015-2021. One of these is a monograph published in English (by Palgrave Macmillan, Palgrave Studies in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning), 10 studies and articles (1 in Bulgarian and 9 in English) published in scientific editions, peer-reviewed and indexed in world-renowned databases for scientific information, and 6 studies, article and scientific reports (1 in English and 5 in Bulgarian) published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific reviewing or published in compiled collective volumes of papers from international scientific forums.

The doctoral dissertation of Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova is on the topic “In Search of Social Justice: Current Developments in Higher Education and the Labour Market in Bulgaria”. It was defended on 30.05.2016.

In comparing the data from the scientometric tables submitted by the candidate, we find that none of the publications submitted to demonstrate fulfilment of the national minimal requirements for the Doctor's degree coincide with those presented for the competition for the scientific position of Associate Professor.

5. General characteristic of the scientific, applied-scientific and pedagogical activity of the candidate.

Analysis of the information contained in the candidate's CV shows that scientific research and expert-consultancy activity are prevalent in her professional work.

Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova has taken part in 16 national and international research projects financed by the Horizon 2020 program, the National Science Fund of the MES, the Polish National Research Council, the Bulgarian-Swiss Scientific Research Program, the Human Resources Development Program, the European Social Fund, the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, the Marie Curie Initial Training Network, the Program for Support for Young Scientists and Doctoral Students of BAS, etc.

She has taken an active part in a number of international social studies, such as the European Social Survey (2008; 2009); the social-demographic longitudinal study on "Connections and Mutual Relations between Generations and Genders" (2004; 2007); "Transitions from Education to Work in Bulgaria: Social Inequalities, Regional Differences, and Comparative Perspectives" (2012-2015), etc.

Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova has received a number of scientific awards and honours, including the Award for Head of the Most Successful Project, funded under the Program for Support for Young Scientists and Doctoral Students in BAS – 2017: Sofia, 2019; the Award for Best Publication by a Young Sociologist 2010-2017 of the BSA, Sofia, 2018, and the Prof. Marin Drinov Young Scientist Award, Sofia, 2017.

Also worth noting is the candidate's exceptionally active participation in international and national scientific forums. She points out that, during the period 2009 – 2021, she has taken part with scientific reports in 58 conferences, symposiums and seminars, at which she has been able to disseminate the results of her research work.

6. *Teaching activities*

The CV does not contain information about the candidate's teaching activity.

7. *Analysis of the candidate's scientific achievements*

Of preponderant importance among the submitted scientific works is the monograph by Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova entitled "Adult Education as Empowerment: Re-imagining Lifelong Learning through the Capability Approach, Recognition Theory and Common Goods Perspective", written in co-authorship.

The submitted division protocol shows that she is the author of chapters 3. "Heuristic potential of the capability approach and possibilities for realization in the study of (adult) education", 4 "Adult education as an activity and empowerment process", and 5. "Social embeddedness of capacities and possibilities for participation in adult education", as well as parts of chapters 6. "Continuous striving for recognition: Adult education in the perspective of recognition", 8. "Justice for whom, what and where: The multi-dimensional nature of social justice in adult education", and 9. "Fragile sociality: Inequalities in access to adult education and social trust".

I would assess this monograph as the high point in the work of Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova in the field of studies on *lifelong learning and higher education*, which is one of the most important areas of her scientific activity.

Other important scientific works in this field are her publications under numbers 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 14 on the list of works offered for reviewing; in these, the author analyses various aspects of lifelong learning, and, in particular, informal education, its empirical study, and the factors determining participation in it. These publications also emphasize the importance of education for the registered differences between European countries with regard to how young people experience job insecurity during the transition from education to work. Thirdly, the publications ground the understanding of social justice in adult education and define two of its basic dimensions: inclusion in adult education and equality of different social groups in the framework of adult education.

The second group of works submitted for review by Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova can be classified as *studies in the field of educational inequalities, including the role of*

gender differences in education and the possibilities for subsequent realization on the labour market.

Here, I would include publications under the numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 15 and 16. In these texts, the candidate analyses important social issues, such as the connection between educational inequalities and the possibilities for human capital development, some basic aspects of social justice in access to and participation in education, possible approaches to reducing inequalities, the differences and similarities between young men and women with regard to how education influences their work-life balance, etc.

A third group of publications is focused on the topic of donation to education. Here, I would include publications under numbers 12 and 13. They analyse donation to education as a specific expression of activity for the benefit of others; its aim is to support the individual, a group of people or a given institution with regard to their educational possibilities. The author grounds the need to develop the specific culture of donation.

To sum up, I would highlight the following scientific and applied-scientific contributions by the candidate:

First, she has systematically analysed the capability approach and realization possibilities approach in her study of adult education; she has presented fundamental critique of these approaches and elaborated an integral model of participation in adult education.

Second, three new methodological instruments have been constructed for measuring inequalities in adult education and higher education: (1) Index of inclusion in adult education; (2) Equality index, and (3) Index of adult education as a generally accessible good.

Third, based on an elaborated theoretical framework for the role of adult education for empowerment and for reducing inequalities in social recognition, the author has empirically analysed aspects of the correlation between adult education and recognition.

Fourth, based on her theoretical analyses and her empirical research, the author has formulated some important recommendations for improving policies in the field of adult education.

I support the candidate's self-assessment regarding the scientific and applied-scientific contributions made in the reviewed works and believe the contributions are entirely her own.

8. The candidate's contribution in collective publications

Of the scientific works submitted for reviewing, 5 are independent and the other 12 are written in co-authorship.

The candidate has submitted a division protocol for joint publications, which clearly defines the contribution of each co-author.

9. The candidate's scientific publications cited in national and foreign literature

The candidate has presented a list of citations, noticed to date, of her publications and research; the total number is 29. Of these, 18 are from scientific publications, peer-reviewed and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes. The other 11 are from reviewed monographs and collective volumes.

The submitted scientometric table indicates the total score from citations of the works of Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova is 380, which far surpasses the minimal requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor. The list demonstrates that the candidate's publications are accessible, often cited and have had an influence on studies by other scientists in our country and abroad.

There is no overlap between the list of citations for the academic position of Senior Assistant Professor and that of Associate Professor.

10. Critical remarks on the submitted works

I have no concrete critical remarks to make about the works submitted by Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova.

I would recommend that, in her future capacity as habilitated scholar, she would endeavour to produce more independent publications. I would also recommend to the future associate professor to expand her teaching activity, using her rich experience and knowledge accumulated from research to train young colleagues.

11. Personal impressions of the candidate

I have never worked jointly with Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova and have no joint publications with her. My impressions of her were acquired from my participation in the scientific jury for awarding her the academic position of Senior Assistant Professor in 2017. One is impressed by her in-depth approach, and devotion, to scientific research and the precision with which she prepares and conducts her scientific studies.

I am convinced that the election of Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova to the position of Associate Professor will strengthen the habilitated staff of the Centre for Empirical Social Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS.

12. Conclusion

Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova meets the legal requirements and possesses the necessary qualities, a fact well-demonstrated by the documents submitted for the competition.

As a member of the scientific jury, I vote “yes” to awarding Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova the academic degree Associate Professor in Sociology, Professional field 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Culture Sciences, for the needs of the Centre for Empirical Social Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS.

01.12.2021

Respectfully,

Prof. Yantsislav Yanakiev, DSc.