

OPINION

by Prof. Tzvetan Davidkov, DSc, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

for the competition announced in State Gazette, issue no.105 of 13.12.2024 and in accordance with Protocol No. 3 / 04-02-2025 of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences to occupy the academic position "Professor" in the Professional field 3.1. Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Sciences (Public Opinion Survey on the Contemporary Identity of Bulgarian Citizens and Refugees) for the needs of the Centre for Empirical Social Surveys at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

The opinion is based on the Order RD 09-42.1/05-02-2025 of the Director of the IPS on the constitution of the jury for the competition and the Protocol of the first meeting of the scientific jury (21-02-2025).

Applicants. The only applicant in the mentioned competition for Professor is Associate Professor PhD. Albena Nakova. Associate Professor A. Nakova is well known and highly respected in the sociological collegium. According to her scientific CV she: a) has a solid scientific and professional background; b) has a long research experience - with numerous presentations at scientific forums and publications; c) has a successful project experience, including at international level; d) participates actively and successfully in various formats as an expert and consultant to support the work of scientific and professional communities, including social and public policy-making bodies. The scientific work of the colleague Albena Nakova is at a high level. The above gives me reasons to assert that she is a proper candidate to participate in the announced competition for the academic position of Professor.

Does the applicant meet the formal requirements for participation in the competition?
- YES. Reasons: She meets the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation; she meets the requirements of the Regulations of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology - BAS for the conditions and procedure for the acquisition of scientific degrees and for the occupation of academic positions, as follows: article 5, paragraph 4; article 6 (2), (3); article 41; article 42; article 43; article 44; article 45; article 46; article 47; article 48.¹

¹ By mentioning the relevant texts of the Institute's Regulations, I refer both to the fact that the applicant meets the requirements and to the correctness of the procedures carried out so far.

According to the evidences provided, the applicant meets and exceeds the minimum national requirements as well as the requirements of BAS (including scientific metrics) for participation in the competition and for holding the academic position of "Professor"².

Assessment of publications submitted to the competition. The applicant participates in the competition for Professor with 17 publications, as follows: a) two monographs (published in 2024 - №№ 1, 2 in the list of publications); b) 15 (fifteen) articles (№№ 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 in the list of publications)³. Assoc. Prof. A. Nakova is an author of the two monographs and of 14 (fourteen) of the presented articles; one of the articles is co-authored (there is a protocol for the contribution of the co-authors). The monographs and some of the articles are in Bulgarian. Six of the articles are in English. Article No. 6 is in Russian. The publications in a foreign languages should be positively appreciated, because it contributes to the recognition and evaluation of the work of Assoc. Prof. Nakova in the wider professional community. Some of the texts have been presented at scientific forums. The publications presented (in accordance with the requirements) have not been used in previous competitions. The articles were published relatively rhythmically over the period 2013 - 2024. It is logical that the monographs (as a summary of the author's work) have been published most recently.

My main conclusions based on the review of the publications mentioned are as follows:

- - There is scientific conscientiousness - this is an important prerequisite with significant potential for producing valuable scientific results.
- - The author's work is multidirectional and at the same time consistent; it is focused exclusively in the fields of *ethnosociology* and *ethnopsychology*; in the axis of *migration - refugees - demographic policy*. The participations of Assoc. Prof. A. Nakova at scientific forums and her participations in scientific projects confirm this fact and at the same time broaden the perimeter of her interests (incl. informal economy; quality of life; human resources development and talent management; education and educational policies, etc.). It is within this broader perimeter of her research where there is a significant number of publications in journals refereed in global databases, including Scopus and WoS, including publications in Q2, Q3 and Q4, which is evident from the attached CV of the author and the list of her all publications.

² This is evident from the attached tables for meeting the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the BAS for obtaining the degree of Doctor of Science; for holding the academic position of Professor; for holding the scientific position of Associate Professor.

³ In the attached list the articles are not divided according to the type of publication.

- There is no doubt that the author is competent and experienced (with serious accumulations) in the field of her scientific interests and research.
- The above mentioned and the content of the presented publications give reasons to conclude that the author has a clearly defined field of research interests. She works purposefully and systematically develops the methodology of scientific research in the mentioned fields. The themes and issues studied show *continuity* and *upgrading* and are a logical development of previous research..
- Through her specific publications, the author identifies and puts on the "agenda" of researchers and society new and less studied phenomena and relationships (which is evident from the reference of contributions).
- The publications quality is high - the author works according to high standards of scientific and publication activity.
- In general the texts interpret the results of a serious research work. This enhances its worth and strengthens the synthesis between theoretical-methodological and empirical-applied.
- The results achieved can be used in many different purposes.
- The monographs are mature works in which the author synthesizes her many years of professional and research experience. My assessment of the monographs is definitely positive.

Assessment of scientific contributions. In the reference on scientific contributions they are defined in twelve points.

- I accept the scientific contributions - they are real and well described.
- The contributions can be classified as follows: (a) **theoretical and methodological** (here I refer to the contributions described under No. 1, 4, 8, which correspond to publications No. 1, 2, 11, 13, 16 and projects No. 7, 13, 16, 20, 24,); (b) **related to the definition and development of research tools** (here I refer to the contributions under No. 5, 6, 11, which correspond to publications No. 1, 5, 6, 10, 12, 17 and projects No. 11, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24, 25); (c) **new knowledge and results that confirm existing theses and test hypotheses** (I am referring to contributions No. 2, 3, 9, 10, which correspond to publications No. 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 13 and projects No. 13, 16, 24, 25); (d) **results of an applied nature** (i.e. contributions No. 7, 12, corresponding to publications No. 1, 2, 7, 9, 14, 15 and projects No. 7, 8, 11, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24); these can be used by a wide range of stakeholders).

The contributions are enough convincing as an argument for the quality of the candidate's research, publication and academic activity.

Critical remarks. Recommendations. I have no critical remarks. Recommendations: Assoc. Prof. Nakova's academic expertise can be useful for different groups of students at Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral level. I recommend to find opportunities for her to systematically transmit her experience to a wider audience of students.

Personal impressions. I know Assoc. Prof. Albena Nakova as a colleague and member of the Sociology Section of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria. I closely follow her professional development. I highly value her professional and human qualities. I am convinced that her professional activity is very useful for the development of science and the scientific community.

Conclusion. Based on the above, it can be concluded that the candidate Associate Professor Albena Nakova, in the competition for the academic position of Professor in Professional field 3. 1 Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Sciences (Study of Public Opinion on the Contemporary Identity of Bulgarian Citizens and Refugees) - for the needs of the Center for Empirical Social Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, meets all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology - BAS for the conditions and procedure for the acquisition of scientific degrees and for the occupation of academic positions. This gives me reason to support the decision to appoint the colleague Associate Professor Albena Nakova to the academic position of PROFESSOR.

I wish her success.

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