

## STATEMENT

For the election of Associate Professor in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in (Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language and literature in the primary stage of education), announced for the needs of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". In the course of the study, the teacher was appointed to the position of the post-graduate teacher in the Faculty of Literature and Literature of the University of St. Kliment Ohridski

Author of the opinion Prof. Dr. Tatyana Angelova

Only one candidate - Associate Professor Dr. Maya Sotirova Sotirova - was admitted to the competition announced for the needs of the Faculty of Pedagogy. The competition was announced in Official Gazette No. 56 of 30.05.2023. There were no violations of the procedure and the submitted set of documents complied with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Sofia University. The candidate meets the national requirements for participation in the competition.

### **Biographical data and teaching status**

Maya Sotirova was born. She graduated from the Faculty of Primary and Preschool Pedagogy of Sofia University "St. Kl." She graduated from the Faculty of Primary School Pedagogy of Sofia University in 1992. In 1997 she successfully acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" with a dissertation on "Non-standardness as an educational phenomenon" with scientific supervisor Prof. Dr. Maria Belova. M. Sotirova has an additional one-year pedagogical qualification "Intercultural Education". She has undergone a number of trainings on working with cloud technologies, with vulnerable communities, language courses as well as a qualification in STEM ( Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

She is fluent in Russian and English. She has an impressive teaching experience as a university lecturer at Southwestern University and as Deputy Director of the Continuing Education Center at the same university.

The competition is provided with the required number of hours and lecture courses.

### **Scientific creativity and contributions of the candidate**

Maya Sotirova has a significant scientific output - 42 scientific publications, including 3 books. She is also the author of 33 textbooks, manuals and teacher's books for the primary stage. In the competition she participated with her habilitation thesis *Personalized Bulgarian Language Teaching in the Primary Stage of Education*. Sofia. 10 articles published in refereed and indexed scientific journals were submitted for the competition. Three of these publications are in English. There are also 11 publications of articles in peer-reviewed journals, two of which are in English and the other two in Russian.

The main contributions are outlined in three problematic areas - *the communicative-speech competence of primary school students, ethno-cultural aspects of intercultural education and personalized learning of Bulgarian language and literature in the primary stage*. The scientific and theoretical contributions can be grouped around the notions of constructing personalized education in Bulgarian language and literature in the primary stage, as well as the application of ethno-psycho-pedagogy (the term is Prof. Irina Koleva's) in the teaching of Bulgarian language and literature implemented in the primary stage. The practical-applied contributions are related to the clarification of the specifics of the use of information technologies in a multicultural environment, in the education of bilingual children for whom Bulgarian is not the first language. The very good scientific preparation and awareness find their practical realization in the articles submitted for review, as well as in the numerous textbooks and teaching aids for the primary stage students.

Special attention should be paid to the monograph - habilitation thesis, dedicated to the concept of personalized learning in Bulgarian language and literature at the primary stage, considered in a systematic plan. In order to explicate this concept, the following approaches are used: competence-oriented, personality-oriented and value-oriented. This decision can be evaluated as a serious scientifically sound methodological decision. A productive aspect is the emphasis on "the active involvement of the student in the design of his/her own educational trajectory". (See Appendix 13) As a theoretical contribution can be qualified the clarification of the semantic scope of the concepts: personalized learning/teaching, personalized learning environment, personalized learning spectrum. No less important contribution is the derivation of two types of personalized learning - transformative and adaptive, corresponding to institutional policies and practices in Bulgarian education, to provide support for students' personal development. A particularly important result of the research is the explicated

conceptual framework for the development of didactic technology of personalized learning in Bulgarian language at the primary stage.

The articles proposed for the competition outline the profile of a contemporary researcher in the field of the primary stage who renews the teaching of Bulgarian language and literature, seeks modern methodological solutions and applies them in practice. I have a question for the candidate related to her understanding of the personalisation of teaching in the primary stage. In her opinion, how is personalisation achieved in the case of objectives and teaching content that are standardised? I have no recommendations and critical comments.

**Conclusion:**

On the basis of the above scientific achievements, the position of the candidate among the academic community, her overall teaching activity and academic activity, I give my positive assessment and propose Maya Sotirova to be elected to the academic position of Associate Professor at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". I would like to nominate Maya Sotirova for the post of Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education of the University of St. Ohridski", in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education (Methodology of teaching Bulgarian language and literature in the primary stage of education).

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