

STATEMENT

on the scientific and teaching activity of **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lilyana Strakova** for participation in a competition for the academic position "Professor" in professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Civic Education, Anti-Corruption Education)

by **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Silvia Tsvetanska** - Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski", member of the Scientific Committee, appointed by the Rector's decree № RD 38-181/7.04.2021 by the Rector of Sofia University

The procedure for conducting the present competition, announced in SG, issue 22/16.03.2021, is in full compliance with the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and with the Regulations for the conditions and the order of acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The only candidate is allowed to participate in the competition - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lilyana Strakova. The materials submitted by the applicant comply with the requirements.

Professional profile of the candidate

The candidate in the competition, Lilyana Strakova, was trained at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and graduated in Pedagogy in 1981. At the same University she was a PhD student and obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in 1990. She began her academic career as a lecturer in 1991 in the capacity of assistant at the University of National and World Economy. In 1993 she became a Senior assistant at Sofia University. From 2000 until now Lilyana Strakova is an Associate professor.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lilyana Strakova is an established lecturer in the specialties of Pedagogy, Non-formal Education and Social Activities. She has her own approach in the development of lecture courses related to civic and anti-corruption education, managing to integrate value, philosophical, legal, social and pedagogical aspects of the issue. In her teaching work she is cooperative and is able to attract like-minded people and practitioners. She is the supervisor of two doctoral students - one has successfully defended, the other is in the process of training.

Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova is a recognizable specialist not only as a university lecturer, but also as an expert and a member of project teams. Her work as an expert in a number of MLSP and MES programs deserves high praise. She has made a significant contribution to the establishment of the position of the Academic ombudsman at Sofia University, she has participated in conducting numerous studies at national level. In her expert and research work, Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova demonstrates a high degree of commitment to the study of the current situation on important social issues, such as early school leaving; sexual education of young people, including those from vulnerable social groups; education in democratic values,

etc. She has proven expertise and practical experience in research work on anti-corruption education and the formation of civic consciousness and behavior in students.

The professional profile of the candidate and her research activity are highly relevant to the profile of the competition. My personal impressions of the professional performances of Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova confirm her strong commitment to the cause of civic and anti-corruption education. In recent years, she has worked diligently to promote democratic values in education. As Dean of Faculty of Pedagogy and as a colleague, she is tolerant and ready to support students and faculty for any meaningful initiative.

General characteristics and scope of scientific works

According to the information provided, the applicant meets and exceeds the minimum national requirements. The distribution by groups of indicators is as follows:

- 50 points per group of indicators A;
- 100 points per group of indicators C;
- 517.5 points per group of indicators D;
- 245 points per group of indicators E;
- 540 points per group of indicators F.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lilyana Strakova is participating in the competition with a total of 47 publications. Among them, the following stand out: 1 monograph, 9 studies, 1 article in a referenced and indexed edition in world-famous databases; over 20 articles and reports in non-refereed publications; 3 chapters from collective monographs. For the sake of precision, I note that the publications in referenced and indexed editions in world-famous databases are not three, as indicated in the report, but one, as the "Pedagogy" journal was indexed after 2018 and earlier publications in it should be included in the group of non-referenced publications. The list of publications also includes a manual and a textbook with a practical orientation in the field of anti-corruption education. The content of the majority of the publications is focused on the issues of the competition. Some of the publications refer to value aspects of social work and the preparation of students in social activities.

The monograph "Civic Values and Civic Education" (2021) carries the main messages and vision of Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova on the nature and benefits of promoting civic education in the Bulgarian school. Based on a historical overview of the emergence and development of the idea of civic education, it defines approaches and models for value-based civic education. The understanding of civic education in the Bulgarian educational context is linked to some conceptual theses about European citizenship. The monograph has value from the point of view of the global perspective for the citizen and the benefits for the society from the formation of civic consciousness from an early age. Of interest is the description of the goals of civic education based on the known taxonomies of Bloom and Krathwohl in connection with the so-called "Citizenship education", as well as the differentiation of individual content areas in civic

education. The intersections between civic education, human rights, democratic values and civic competences in a pedagogical context are also found in the candidate's other publications (№ 3, 5, 6, 16, 17, 31). There is a logical upgrade of theoretical concepts that relate to clarifying the meaning of civic education and the role of educators in promoting democratic citizenship.

Publications (№ 30, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46) are dedicated to the issue of anti-corruption education, in which its applied aspects stand out. In the form of reports with analyzes of research data, handbooks and manuals, attention is paid to the need to form attitudes towards intolerance to corruption and anti-discriminatory behavior among adolescents and young people.

The research issues that Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova deals with are also expanded through studies related to social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education, reflected in publications № 9, 10, 26.

Scientific contributions

I accept the four directions of scientific contributions outlined by the candidate. I would like to highlight as significant, above all, the contributions related to the enrichment of the theoretical models of civic and anti-corruption education. I find it valuable to interpret civic values from an interdisciplinary perspective. In her works, Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova successfully combines educational, legal, economic and sociological aspects of civic education. She demonstrates her own point of view on the interpretation of the essence and goals of civic education, without duplicating and repeating already known paradigms. In addition, her publications contribute to the establishment of anti-corruption education as a relatively separate area of research and practice.

Notes, questions and recommendations

With respect to the achievements of Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova in her work, I would like to recommend her in the future to focus more on her own empirical research in a pedagogical context and on presenting methodological solutions for applying the value approach in civic education in high school. Given that the research published so far is co-authored and focused on a more global level of analysis of the issue, I think it will be interesting and useful for her to continue with applied research among teachers and students on specific topics of civic issues and anti-corruption education.

Conclusion

The review of the scientific production, as well as the demonstrated expert and teaching activity of the candidate show the presence of scientific and research experience, adequate to the requirements of the competition. The achievements and professional commitment of Assoc. Prof. Lilyana Strakova with the problems of pedagogical knowledge and in particular of civic and anti-corruption education give me reason to express my positive assessment of her candidacy in this competition.

I recommend the esteemed members of the scientific jury to support the choice and to propose to the Faculty of Education Faculty Council of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" to elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lilyana Strakova to take the academic position of "Professor" in professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Civic Education, Anti-Corruption Education).

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Statement drawn up by:

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