

STATEMENT

**In the competition for the academic post "professor",
under professional qualification 1.2. Pedagogics (Special Education)
for the needs of the Faculty of Educational Studies and Arts (FESA) to Sofia University
"St. Kl. Ohridski" (SU), announced in the National Gazette № 49 dated May 29, 2020 and
on the website of Sofia University**

This statement has been prepared by Prof. Dr. Habil Georgi Kolev, PhD, Konstantin Preslavsky
University of Shumen

(academic position, science degree, name, father's name, surname, workplace)

in my capacity as a member of the scientific jury on the competition based on Order № ПД-38-
316/20.07.2020 of the Rector of Sofia University.

For the announced competition, only **one sole candidate** has applied, namely:

Assoc. Dr. Emilia Hinkova Evgenieva, (FESA), SU "St. Kliment Ohridsky"

(academic position, science degree, name, father's name, surname, scientific organization)

I. General Description of the presented materials

1. Candidacy Information

The documents presented by the candidate for the purposes of the competition are in
correspondence with the Law on Academic Composition Development in the Republic of
Bulgaria, the Statute of its implementation, with the internal regulations regarding the conditions
and order for acquiring an academic position at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

For her participation in the competition, the candidate Assoc. Dr. Emilia Hinkova Evgenieva
has presented a list of a total of 21 titles, including 17 publications in Bulgarian and foreign

scientific editions and scientific forums, 1 monograph, 3 chapters in two coauthored monographs.

Other documents have also been attached, including a job certificate and attestations by the employer, contracts from project assignors, and other evidence supporting her achievements.

The general scientific production of Assoc. Dr. Emilia Evgenieva is one (1) dissertation, two (2) monographs, 5 chapters in monographs, 64 publications in scientific editions, 11 reviews and Doctorate statements, 4 book presentations. The scientific production for the competition for a professor is part of the candidate's overall scientific work and is different from that presented for the previous competition for the post of associate doctor in 2007.

The documents have been structured based on the requirements and are made easy to follow and assess.

2. Candidate Information

Short professional and biographic data of the candidate

Assoc. Dr. Emilia Evgenieva has been a member of the academic staff at Sofia University for over twenty years, starting as part-time in 1997 and then as an assistant in 1998. This stage of her professional development begins after she has accumulated enough teaching experience as she had developed and defended her dissertation research in 1996 – a path that can be defined as professionally correct and motivated. What makes an impression is that during the period of her work at school, she has walked the stairway to professional development, receiving first and second degrees in professional qualification. This way the development of a dissertation related to direct school teaching is a logical research conclusion of the gathered teaching experience from 1987 through 1996.

Beginning work as an assistant does not end the process of knowledge accumulation, and in 2005 Assoc. Dr. Evgenieva adds a Master's program on Special Education to her qualification profile.

In an academic frame, we notice that almost every decade, she receives a new title: Assistant in 1998, Assoc. Dr. in 2007, and in 2020 she presents her documents to participate in the competition for Professor.

This gives me ground to believe that – from a factual aspect – the candidacy for this academic growth is systematic in the candidate’s professional development. The resilience and purposefulness of her academic development is impressive, in spite of the significant changes in the overall public environment, which we have witnessed and participated in.

3. General Characteristics in of the Candidate’s Scientific Works and Accomplishments

The scientific production presented at the competition has been accurately selected and covers the requirements of the department 1.2. Pedagogics (Special Education). The main works presented have a direct relation to the topics and problems of the academic subjects in her work as a teacher. The symbiosis between her work as a teacher and her work as a researcher represent the ideas in the defended dissertations of her Doctorate students. The scientific scope of the project activity presented corresponds directly to the problems in the educational system, also illustrating a practical application of her theoretical developments.

The main fields in which she presents her work are as follows: language teaching of children and pupils with special educational needs; structure, organization and realization of the process of including children and pupils in a mainstream educational medium and the community of their peers; teacher training and qualification.

The main approach to motivate her ideas is positive analysis and defining the productive interaction between traditions and innovation, theory and practice, consistency and sustainability of the conducted research.

Her monograph entitled “Inclusive Education – Innovations and Paradoxes” (2020) is an interesting attempt to show the prerequisites for change in the educational system, the labyrinths of contradictions that every event born within it undergoes, and the effects of accepting and rejecting the practice. The monograph is also a genuine research retrospection of her personal scientific work, which I consider a successful self-evaluation. I note this fact specifically, not by chance. In the educational system, there is an ongoing process of completing the administrative reform on the decentralization of preschooling and schooling institutions in its final stage, namely the evaluation and self-evaluation at institutional level, in addition to the evaluation and

self-evaluation of at a personal level by means of attestations from educational specialists. The immaturity of the community to realize this stage and the system of formality problems in the content of the regulations has imposed to prolong the period to conduct them. In the given postponement, it is important to also find the form, structure and content of the educational self-evaluation – something that Assoc. Dr. Evgenieva has already achieved and demonstrated in her monograph.

Finding the structure to present the sustainable processes in the system of inclusive education is preceded by a study and analysis of the processes of mainstream education and teacher training for higher educational institutions, presented in to co-authored monographs: *A Practical Training (for Pedagogy Students) (2008)* and *A Test to Diagnose Literacy: Reading Comprehension (2007)*. It is necessary to note that the time these studies were conducted coincides with the beginning of the decentralization process in the educational system. In this period, the development and discussion of the new law also begins, which confirms what I already emphasized on earlier, namely a professional engagement and a sustainable development of the interests of the candidate.

In the remaining scientific publications, I turn your attention to a topic that has been rarely touched or developed from the theoretical-practical aspect: national security and education. The candidate conducts an interesting analysis in her article entitled *The Formation of a Culture of Security as One of the Priorities of Contemporary Education*, where she makes an attempt to find the tangents between contemporary policies and educational innovations. I hope that Assoc. Dr. Evgenieva will continue to develop this niche in the years to come with the problems arising in this context for children and students with developmental disorders.

4. Characteristics and Evaluation of the Candidate's Teaching Activity

An evaluation of the teaching activity of the candidate.

The candidate's teaching activity is presented in the three stages of university education – Bachelor's, Master's and Doctor's. Her auditory workload is very large, and the courses she leads are covered by her publishes developments.

I point out to her activity in preparing Doctorate students. In the reference presented, she has 11 Doctorate students, 7 of which are foreign students. The topics of their dissertations are directly related to the candidate's fields of research: organizing and managing the process of inclusion, reduction of the learning content, methodological models for teaching different subjects to children and students with special educational needs. In the topics developed, I highlight the problem of the role and place of the schoolyard and the cultural aspects of integration. Extracting the problems of inclusive education from the private-school space is specifically contemporary to our day, when a global restricting learning process takes place in the conditions of a pandemic. Finding the pulse of the educational environment in an open social space will certainly contribute to decreasing the tension generated by the change. These two topics of Assoc. Dr. Evgenieva's Doctorate students most surely have a prognostic character.

What is also important in the reference presented on teaching activity is also the mentorship of the Master's program on Special Education. This is an activity that requires administrative experience and most of all the skills to work in a team, a good knowledge of the system and the proposal of contemporary forms of education.

The wide range of Assoc. Dr. Evgenieva's teaching activity profile is worth every respect.

5. Content Analysis of the Candidate's Scientific and Applied Scientific Achievements in the Materials Presented for the Participation in the Competition

The candidate's contributions are described in three fields: scientific, scientific-practical and practical. They follow the logic of her scientific production and her work as a teacher. One of them significantly worth pointing out her work on developing and enriching the methods and application of the distant learning form and the problems related to the implementation of anti-plagiarism systems. The period of their fulfillment within the frame of the entire preceding decade, as seen by the reference of Prof. Forsait. This shows the candidate's innovative orientation and her contribution to contemporary practices.

The numerical indicators for the candidate's achievements are as follows:

h-index: 1 in Web of Science Clarivate Analytics /1995 / – a total of 10 citations;

19 citations of two indexed documents;

h-index: 1 in Scopus ELSEVIER /1960 / – 10 citations of two indexed documents;

a total of 44 citations, 14 of which of publications participating in this competition.

The scientific works presented are correctly described in the scientific metered list. The publications in co-authorship have been distributed as a 50:50 ratio.

6. Critical Notes and Recommendations

The main critical note in relation to the candidate's presented scientific production and her teaching activity is with regard to the development of books and teaching aids. In the reference on the overall publishing activity, we can see that the preceding period of academic development has had a significantly larger activity on this topic. There are some developed books and teaching aids that are defined for schools. At the moment the process of inclusion, alongside introducing the new requirements, require more active work in this direction. I strongly hope that Assoc. Dr. Emilia Evgenieva will take active participation in the preparation of methodological and other literature, which would have a direct practical application and will be the means to achieve the sought cultural factor of accepting the different in our community.

7. Personal Impressions of the Candidate

I have known Assoc. Dr. Evgenieva for over ten years and I highly appreciate her position in the field of Special Education, in the development and execution of the policy of including the different, as important and productive. Her customary positivity and constructiveness when deciding professional and administrative cases makes collaboration with her easy. Her professional responsibility and the sustainability of her interests have a contributing character, which makes her a community factor.

8. Conclusion on the Candidacy

After I have been introduced to the materials and scientific works presented for the competition, and based on the conducted analysis on their significance and their scientific-applied contribution, I **confirm** that the scientific achievements correspond to the Law on Academic Composition Development in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Statute of its implementation, and the corresponding internal regulations regarding the conditions and order for acquiring the academic position Professor at SU “St. Kliment Ohridski” in the scientific field and professional qualification of the competition.

In particular, the candidate complies with the minimal national requirements in the professional department and no plagiarism has been constituted in the scientific works presented for the competition.

I give my **positive** evaluation of the candidacy.

II. GENERAL CONCLUSION

Based on all the above, I **recommend/do not recommend** to the scientific jury to propose to the competent authority for the selection of the Faculty of Mathematics and Information Technologies at SU “St. Kliment Ohridski” to choose Assoc. Dr. Emilia Hinkova Evgenieva to take the academic post of Professor under the professional qualification 1.2. Pedagogics (Special Education).

14th September 2020

Statement prepared by:

(Prof. Dr. Habil Georgi Kolev, PhD)