

REPORT

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marina Georgieva Pironkova

For the teaching and research performance of

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maya Lyubenova Tcholakova

in a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in a professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Social pedagogy), published in the State Gazette no. 21 of March 15, 2022 for the needs of FNOI - Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

1. Compliance with regulations.

The competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Social Pedagogy for the needs of the Faculty of Science, Education and Arts, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" was legally announced in the State Gazette, issue 21 / 15.03.2022. The competition was announced and held in compliance with all clauses of ZRASRB and the Regulations for its application. This entitled the Scientific Jury to evaluate the candidate according to Art. 29 of ZRASRB, art. 60 of the Regulations for its implementation and the internal rules for development of the academic staff of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". Only one candidate took part in the competition, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maya Lyubenova Tcholakova, who is at present a teacher at the South-West university "Neofit Rilski". The candidate has submitted the whole set of documents required for the procedure.

2. Details of the candidate.

Assoc. Prof. Maya Tcholakova graduated from the VPI - Blagoevgrad with a degree in Defectology and works at the "Otets Paisii " school in Blagoevgrad. She began her academic career at the South-West University, where she worked from

1992 to 1999. In the period from 1999 to 2006, she worked as an inspector of international treaties and programs at Sofia University, where she was a doctoral student and defended her dissertation in 2004 on "Socio-pedagogical dimensions of learning potential for children from ethno-minority communities".

Maya Tcholakova's teaching career started in 2009 at the South-West University where she is still teaching at present and was habilitated as an associate professor in the scientific specialty 05.07.01 Theory of Education and Didactics (social work with ethno-cultural communities) in 2009. She delivers lectures in social pedagogy and social work; she leads six courses at the bachelor's level, three at the masters' level, and one at the doctoral level. At the same time, the candidate delivered lectures in English as a part-time lecturer in master's programs at NBU (2000, 2008) and at Sofia University (2012).

3. Research activity

According to scientometric indicators, Assoc. Prof. Maya Tcholakova meets and exceeds the requirements for obtaining the academic position of "Associate Professor" - with a minimum national requirement of 400 points, the candidate has 605 points, which testifies to serious and consistent research.

The scientific contribution of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maya Tcholakova comprises a total of 49 publications, 17 of which were submitted for review in this competition.

The publications were distributed by type as follows: 2 monographs, 4 articles and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (3 co-authored), 9 articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific peer-reviews or published in edited collective volumes (4 co-authored), 2 studies published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific peer-reviews or published in edited collective volumes.

The work presented as a habilitation for the current procedure is "Cultural Humility", published in 2022. It deservedly piques the interest and was the result of ongoing research by Assoc. Prof. Tcholakova on humility in a philosophical, social and pedagogical discourse. It had been developed as a work of 270 pages in length and summarizes the theoretical and empirical research of the author in a field that is new not only to Bulgaria. The habilitation monograph makes a contribution to academia in several aspects.

- First of all, I see an in-depth theoretical analysis of the understanding of humility in its development in religion, philosophy and psychology, as well as other areas, such as education and social work. This direction is also observed in publications № 3, № 7 and № 12 of the list of publications submitted for participation in the competition (document 10C).

- A valuable contribution is the study of training in bachelor's programs in Social Pedagogy and Social Activities in Bulgarian universities through the prism of the possibility of applying cultural humility in the training of professionals for helping professions.

- It enriches the theoretical research of values and virtues in the context of helping professions. This direction is also developed in publication № 16.

The publications submitted for participation in the competition testify to the research interests of Assoc. Prof. Tcholakova, outlining several main thematic areas. In addition to cultural humility, a subject of consistent research is the problem of the empowerment of professionals from helping professions, presented in publications № 13, № 14, № 17.

The focus of Assoc. Prof. Tcholakova's research is social support and social services for different groups of users. The analysis of community-based services for people with disabilities (№ 8 and 11), for a family-oriented approach to social

work (№ 6), for support for families with children at risk (№ 11) is of a contributing nature. An integrated approach to the needs of at-risk populations through social and health services is examined in publications № 5 and № 15.

The modernization of higher education and the development of distance learning has been studied in relation to evidence-based practice (№ 4).

Evidence of the candidate's achievements are the citations of her publications (presented in document № 13) in Bulgarian and foreign scientific journals and collections.

Assoc. Prof. Tcholakova's research activity has been implemented over the years through a number of projects, in 2018-2019 she was a Fulbright Scholar, and in the last ten years she has been a participant, coordinator and leader of 13 projects at a national and international level. Her election as a member of the Management Board of the Bulgarian Association for Social Work, the Academic Council for Refugees at UNHCR - Bulgaria and the Board of the NGO "Zona Family" reflects the assessment of professional qualities and qualifications.

4. Teaching activity

Assoc. Prof. Tcholakova is an established lecturer with extensive experience. In recent years, her annual workload exceeds 500 hours per year. She participates in the evaluation of the academic documentation and curriculum development. She participates in ERASMUS + activities, works with students and PhD students. She is the supervisor of 5 doctoral students, 2 of whom have already defended their dissertations.

Conclusion

After having gotten acquainted with all the submitted documents and especially with the scientific papers, I strongly support and recommend to the academic board the choice of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maya Lyubenova Tcholakova for "Associate

Professor" in field 1.2. Pedagogy (Social Pedagogy) at the Faculty of Pedagogical Sciences of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ”.

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Prepared the report:

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