

## OPINION

Regarding: the scientific works, educational activity, and contributions of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Ivanka Georgieva Mihaylova, candidate in the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Fundamentals of Management, Organizational Behaviour, Conflict Management in Organizations – in Bulgarian, French and English), announced in SG, issue 103 of December 10, 2021

*Grounds for the opinion:* Order RD 38-95/07.02.2022, issued by the Rector of the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Todorova Bankova,  
Head of the Department of Administration, Management and Political Science at Varna Free University “Chernorizets Hrabar”, Varna  
Field of higher education “Social, economic and legal sciences”, Professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, Scientific specialty “Organization and Management outside the sphere of material production (Administrative Conflictology and Sustainable Development)”.

The present opinion has been written on the basis of the documents submitted for the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Fundamentals of Management, Organizational Behaviour, Conflict Management in Organizations – in Bulgarian, French and English), announced in SG, issue 103 of December 10, 2021, for the needs of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. The documents submitted for the competition meet the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, the Regulations on the Conditions and Procedure for Acquiring Science Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. *The procedure of the competition has been correctly followed.*

### **1. General presentation of the received materials**

Only one candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Ivanka Georgieva Mihaylova. The candidate participates in the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” with a total of 16 publications covering the period from 2010 to 2021. Of these, 10 are independent authorship and the remaining 6 are co-authored, which have not been used for participation in other procedures, including a monograph, a book based on a defended dissertation, a study. The total volume of independent authorship of the submitted publications is 439 pages, of which 30 pages are in English. The given citations are 8, of which 2 are in publications submitted to refereed and indexed editions.

*The submitted scientific works meet the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of “Associate Professor”.*

### **2. Information about the candidate**

The candidate Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova *has the required education and experience in the specialty*. She holds a bachelor’s degree (1998) and a master’s degree (1999) in Business Administration. In 2018 she was awarded the educational and science degree “Doctor” in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Business Administration) with a dissertation on “Managerial Strategies for Dealing with Organizational

Conflicts”. Her teaching experience began in 2000 as a part-time Assistant Professor (2000–2010), in the period from 2010 to 2019 she was a full-time Assistant Professor, and from May 20, 2019, until now – Chief Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

### **3. Evaluation of the candidate’s educational and pedagogical work**

*A) Auditorium and out-of-auditorium classes, including the use of e-learning and the preparation of learning resources*

**Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr Ivanka Georgieva Mihaylova has the required teaching experience**, which is evident from her previous work as an expert and lecturer in the training of specialists with competences in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management. The presented references for pedagogical practices and educational activity are indicative that the candidate has been assigned lectures and seminars as follows:

- Seminars on the disciplines: “Fundamentals of Management” (in Bulgarian, English and French) and “Ecology Management”;
- Lectures on the disciplines: “Fundamentals of Management”; “Conflict Management in Organizations”, “Ecology Management”, “Organizational and Managerial Models of Quality and Organizational Excellence” and “Writing a Master’s Thesis”.

The average annual teaching load of the candidate from the academic year 2016–2017 until now is 445,94 hours, which corresponds to the requirements for holding the academic position of “Associate Professor”.

Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova has developed and published in the e-learning system of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” educational resources for the seminars in the disciplines “Fundamentals of Management” and “Ecology Management”, as well as lecture courses in the disciplines “Conflict Management in Organizations” (independently) and “Writing a Master’s Thesis” (together with lecturers from the Department of Business Administration). Through the platform, she shares learning materials and other resources, publishes current information concerning the disciplines, communicates with students, etc.

*B) Work with students and doctoral students, including cooperation with students in research and creative projects*

**Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova works actively with the students in the bachelor’s degree program “Business Administration”**, as an academic supervisor, systematically conducts individual and group consultations and pre-graduate seminars. She organizes, supervises, and certifies the compulsory student internships. She provides academic supervision of master’s theses and methodological assistance to 68 successfully defended graduates (for the period from 2011 to 2021).

At the same time, Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova has organized visits and seminars (before the pandemic of COVID-19, March 13, 2020) in various companies – IBM Bulgaria, IBM Procurement Center, Cargill, Sutherland, etc. within the discipline “Fundamentals of Management”.

Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova was a mentor to students who participated in the Second and Third National Mediation Competition for students (held in 2018 in Sofia and in 2019 in Plovdiv) and received a certificate for “Coach of a Team with Excellent Participation”, and the team of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” was awarded the prize for “Excellent Team Performance”.

As the administrator of the master’s degree program “Business Administration – Human Resources Development”, she introduces the students to the learning process at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration and the e-learning system of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”; timely advises students on various current issues, providing them with the

necessary assistance to solve current problems related to the learning process or their student status, etc.

Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova has participated as an expert in scientific projects at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, leading to:

- Building a sustainable mechanism for continuous adaptation of the curricula and programs to the real needs of the labour market;
- Improvement of management systems at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, as a key to improving the quality of university activities and services (Key to Quality);
- Building a sustainable capacity for the implementation of electronic distance learning for the students of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

Additional recognition for the high level of professional expertise of Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova is that since July 2020 she is the Scientific Secretary of the Department of Business Administration, a member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, and a member of the team of the Career Center of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.

#### **4. Evaluation of the candidate’s research and work**

The scientific works and contributions presented for the competition fully meet the requirements for academic publications and the specific scientific and metric indicators determined in accordance with Art. 26 (2) of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation. The candidate, ***Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova meets the requirements for entry in the public register of academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, maintained by NACID.***

The main results of the candidate’s scientific research correspond directly to the scientific specialty and thematic area of the announced competition, namely: management of organizational conflicts, management of organizations and organizational behaviour. The presented scientific works are oriented in these three areas, as follows: (1) Management of organizational conflicts (№№ 1, 2, 4, 13, 14, 16 – in Bulgarian and №№ 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 – in English); (2) Management of organizations (№№ 3, 4, 11, 13, 14 – in Bulgarian) and (3) Organizational behaviour (№№ 8, 12 – in Bulgarian and № 15 – in English).

Various aspects of management of organizational conflicts, management of organizations and organizational behaviour are thoroughly studied and analyzed in the presented scientific works. On this basis, theoretical concepts in the considered problem areas are systematized, basic notions are conceptualized, theses on the researched issues (on the nature of organizational and managerial conflicts, the need to introduce conflict management procedures in Bulgarian organizations and organizational networks (clusters), as well as the need to increase the conflict management competence of managers in order to select the appropriate tools, especially when they have to intervene as a third party in a conflict between employees) are argued.

The scientific works of the candidate proves the abilities of Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova to conduct independent research on current and significant issues in the field of management of organizational conflicts, management of organizations and organizational behaviour. Many of the works have been presented at prestigious, international, scientific, and academic forums, as well as in refereed and indexed editions and the scientific community is familiar with them.

***From the analysis of the presented scientific works for participation in the competition, I find that there is no plagiarism (according to Art. 4 (11) of the Law for the***

*Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria) and the publications are original work of the author.*

## **5. Research and applied scientific contributions of the candidate**

The candidate Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova declares the main scientific contributions in the problem-thematic areas of the management of organizational conflicts, management of organizations and organizational behaviour. *I accept the formulated contributions as authentic and personal work of the candidate, they are aimed at enriching and complementing the existing knowledge on conflict management in organizations and organizational behaviour, the contributions are in the field of the announced competition and meet the formal and scientific requirements for holding the academic position of “Associate Professor”.*

The theoretical concepts, views, and discussions on conflict management in organizations are systematized by arguing the author’s theses. An appropriate tool for research of strategies for managers’ intervention in conflicts between employees in the Bulgarian socio-cultural environment is proposed, in accordance with the main types of managers’ behaviours in the conditions of conflicts between employees. The personal work of the candidate is the developed and approbated methodology for research and systematic observation of interpersonal conflicts in Bulgarian organizations, deriving their distinctive features in comparison with other studies.

The candidate’s research on issues related to the readiness of organizations to manage conflicts through the use of conflict resolution procedures and to increase the conflict competence of employees and managers has a contributory nature. The significance of conflict management that arise in the joint work of organizations – members of organizational networks, and in particular of clusters, is emphasized.

The developed theoretical approaches and original views on the role of work values as an important guideline for understanding organizational behaviour are scientifically substantiated.

I accept the research and applied scientific contributions of the candidate, I believe that they enrich the existing knowledge with new research, which are of interest to those working in the field of conflict management in organizations, organizational behaviour and management of organizations, as well as the curriculum of academic courses such as Fundamentals of Management, Strategic Management, Conflict Management in Organizations, Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management. At the same time, the results obtained can contribute to the selection of adequate approaches to conflict resolution, the development of training programs on conflict management in organizations and the establishment of appropriate work values. Last but not least, the findings can serve as a starting point for future research in these areas.

## **6. Remarks and recommendations**

I have no remarks on the presented scientific works for participation in the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor”, it meets the legal and academic requirements. Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova creates a coherent scientific system for conducting theoretical and practical research, and for presenting correct, comprehensive, and clear results. The critical and evaluative analyses of the candidate, the conclusions and proposals deserve high praise. The literature and information sources are correctly used, they are up-to-date and correspond to the researched areas.

The achieved applied results are a reason to recommend their forming into manuals with methodological guidelines and procedures for conflict management in organizations and for

training of managers and employees in conflict management. I recommend the candidate to continue her research activities by deepening them in the field of organizational behaviour.

### **CONCLUSION**

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works submitted for participation in the competition and analyzing their significance and the research and applied scientific contributions contained in them, I give my *positive* assessment and with conviction *recommend* the Scientific Jury to propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Mihaylova to hold the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Fundamentals of Management, Organizational Behaviour, Conflict Management in Organizations – in Bulgarian, French and English).

March 14, 2022

Member of the Scientific Jury:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivanka Bankova