

**STATEMENT**

**FOR A CONTEST FOR TAKING ACADEMIC POSITION “PROFESSOR”  
IN EDUCATIONAL FIELD 3.2. PSYCHOLOGY (GENERAL AND AGE) FOR THE  
PURPOSES OF FESA OF SOFIA UNIVERSITY „ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI”**

**PREPARED THE OPINION: PROF. TATIANA IANCHEVA, DSC**

The contest for the academic position "Professor" in professional field 3.2. Psychology (General and Age) was announced for the needs of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Art (FESA) at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski" in the State Gazette, issue 22 of 16.03.2021, in accordance with the requirements of the Law for the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application.

One candidate participates in it - Assoc. Prof. Margarita Angelova Stefanova-Bakracheva, Ph.D.

**Brief analysis of the career profile of the candidate in the contest.**

M. Bakracheva graduated from Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”, Pedagogy specialty. In 2004 she defended her doctoral degree in Psychology at the Institute of Psychology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Since 2004 she has been an assistant professor, subsequently, in 2011 an associate professor in the Department of Personality Psychology and Methodology of Psychological Measurement at the Department of Psychology, Institute for Population and Human Studies, BAS. Since 2018 she has been working as an associate professor at the Faculty of Philology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, and since 2019 she has been Deputy Dean for Research, Projects, International and Public Relations. She leads courses as a part-time and guest lecturer at the National Academy of Arts, PU “P. Hilendarski”, Rakovski National Defense College.

**General description of the submitted materials for the contest.**

The materials presented for the contest by Assoc. Prof. M. Bakracheva significantly exceed the national and those of Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski” requirements for holding the academic position “Professor” (total 1556.2 points with a minimum required 550 points). The candidate has presented for her participation in the contest an impressive scientific production - a total of 55 scientific papers, 3 of which are monographs, 4 publications in scientific journals, which are referenced and indexed in the world-famous

databases of scientific information, 43 publications in unreferenced journals and 3 book chapters. Assoc. Prof. Bakracheva presented a reference for 52 citations, 5 of which are in referenced and indexed publications in world-famous databases. Under her guidance, three doctoral students have successfully defended their PhD Thesis. Assoc. Prof. Bakracheva also presents evidence for participation in 4 national and 3 international projects.

**Evaluation of the scientific works of the candidate for the overall academic development.**

In thematic terms, the scientific production of Assoc. Prof. M. Bakracheva is focused on several problem areas:

1. Strategies for coping and managing stress (12 publications).
2. Problems of the mental well-being (9 publications).
3. Psychosocial identity (11 publications).
4. Virtual identity (7 publications).
5. Prevention of violence and deviant behavior (5 publications).
6. Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (4 publications).
7. Parenting style and building self-determination (4 publications).
8. Learning in e-environment and crisis management (3 publications).
9. Quality of life and mental well-being of persons with disabilities (3 publications).
10. Practical-oriented publications - building skills for coping with stress and improving adaptability, phototherapy techniques, coping with addictions, etc. (15 publications).

All areas of scientific and pedagogical interests of M. Bakracheva are characterized by relevance, innovation, depth, scientific and applied significance.

The contributions in the works of Assoc. Prof. M. Bakracheva can be considered in theoretical and applied aspect. They can be summarized to the following:

- I. Theoretical contributions:
  1. The complex presentation and analysis of the strategies for coping and management of stress and their connection with the identity, considered through the prism of the influence of the individual factors and the social context. In this regard, the following can be assumed as partial contributions:
    - Considering identity and coping as a process of adaptation.

- Considering the construction and development of adaptive capabilities to deal with the requirements of the context as a personal resource.
  - The derivation of accommodative coping as a mechanism of adaptation, independent of individual and personal differences, as a basis for developing interventions in the predictive and proactive direction and as an effective response to the process of self-regulation in conditions of uncertainty and insecurity.
  - The conceptualization of identity from the position of maximum identity and in connection with coping strategies and mental well-being.
  - A new approach to the study of virtual identity as a component of general self-determination has been introduced. A program for stimulating prosocial behavior among students through virtual interactive interaction has been proposed. Important from the point of view of future research and analysis is the outlined trend that the theory of social norms can be enriched in terms of a wider range of risk and problem behaviors and age groups.
2. The hedonistic and eudemonic approach is integrated into the analysis of mental well-being from the perspective of the theory of prosperity. Proactive mindfulness is presented as active cognitive, emotional and behavioral self-reflection, aimed at finding the most effective individual choices. Happiness, life satisfaction and prosperity are presented as interrelated, but determined by various factors. Programs for building proactive mindfulness are proposed.
  3. Models for sustainable prevention of violence and deviant behavior are proposed, related to the construction of attitudes, distinguishing between assertive and aggressive behavior, building soft and transferable skills through active involvement and generation of ideas.
  4. The influence of the parental style on the psychosocial development of the child and his development as an autonomous person, on the academic success, the risky behavior and the use of psychoactive substances is analyzed. A theoretical model for the effect of parenting style on identity style is presented.

5. A new perspective has been outlined in the analysis of the quality of life of people with disabilities with a focus on mental well-being, related to the unification of the efforts of different sciences. Social entrepreneurship is considered from the position of changing the model of professional development with the model of career development.
6. The e-learning and distance learning and the possibility for stimulating the individual development trajectories by maintaining the interest, personal activity and motivation are considered. It has been found that in a vague and unpredictable environment, learners feel secure when they have a sense of control over their lives and know that they can achieve their short- or medium-term educational goals, and this can be achieved through positive, supportive and providing flexibility environment.

## II. Practical contributions:

1. A number of psychodiagnostic tools have been developed - scales for measuring experienced derealization using social networks, for measuring national identity, motivation for learning, stereotypes and social attitudes, methodology for visual content analysis, etc.
2. Approaches to work with different profiles of dependencies based on the developed innovative typology are proposed.
3. Models for developing programs and interventions to improve stress management skills and increase adaptability to environmental requirements and changes are proposed.
4. Phototherapy techniques stimulating empathy, tolerance, emotional intelligence and social inclusion are presented.

### **Complex, qualitative assessment of the teaching-methodical and teaching activity.**

Assoc. Prof. M. Bakracheva, according to the attached reference, leads compulsory courses in General and Age Psychology, General Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Crisis Psychological Intervention and an optional course in English in Arttherapy in bachelor's and master's programs at FESA at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". She leads courses as a part-time lecturer in master's programs at the Department of Psychology and

Leadership of the Rakovski National Defense College, in the specialties of Psychology and Social Pedagogy at the Department of Psychology of the Faculty of Philology, University of Plovdiv “Paisii Hilendarski”, in the master's program “Art Therapy” at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the National Academy of Arts.

Assoc. Prof. Bakracheva presents a reference for 5 courses, 3 consulting programs, guided trainings and trainings, of which she is the author. Under her guidance, 9 graduates and 3 doctoral students successfully defended their works. Under her leadership, 12 national scientific forums have been successfully held. She is a member of 6 Editorial Boards of Bulgarian and international scientific journals. She is a member of the Society of Psychologists in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Association for Training and Development, the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Assoc. Prof. Margarita Bakracheva is an established, erudite and respected specialist in the field of psychology. She is a respectable figure among the academic and professional community. She is distinguished by its depth and sensitivity to the most current scientific problems. With her scientific developments she makes significant contributions in the field of theory and practice of psychology. Тематиката на публикациите е в съответствие с тематиката на обявения конкурс. The scientific and pedagogical activity of the candidate and the presented scientometric data fully satisfy the requirements of the Law for the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application.

No reports of plagiarism have been reported and no such cases have been identified. All these make me fully convinced in the scientific and pedagogical merits of Margarita Angelova Stefanova-Bakracheva - Associate Professor in the Department of Social Pedagogy and Social Affairs at the Faculty of Science, Education and Arts at Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski” to suggest to the Scientific Jury to grant her with the academic title “Professor” in the professional field 3.2. Psychology (General and Age Psychology).

Sofia, 16.07.2021

The statement is prepared by:

(prof. Tatiana Iancheva, DSc)