

STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Kosta Dimitrov Kostov, MD, PhD

Member of the Scientific Jury appointed by Order No. P-109-262/30.07.2026 of the Rector of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna

Subject

Competition procedure for the Academic position of Associate professor in the higher education area 7. Health care and sport, professional field 7.1. Medicine, specialty Occupational diseases, Department of Optometry and occupational diseases, Faculty of Public health, Medical university "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

The competition was announced in the State Gazette, Issue No. 50/2.06.2026. A single applicant, Vladina Miroslavova Dimitrova-Kirilova, MD, PhD, Chief Assistant Professor at the Department of Optometry and occupational Diseases, Faculty of Public health, Medical university "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna, submitted an application and was admitted to participate in the competition.

The documentation submitted by the candidate complies with the requirements of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

Professional Qualifications

Dr. Vladina Miroslavova Dimitrova-Kirilova, MD, PhD, was born on 2th of September, 1988 in the city of Dobrich, Bulgaria. She graduated in Medicine from the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna in 2013.

Her professional career began in 2013 as a physician at the Centre for Emergency Medical Care – Varna. In 2015 she was appointed as a resident physician at the Second Neurology Clinic with ICU and Stroke unit at University Hospital "St. Marina" – Varna. She obtained her specialty qualification in Neurology in 2020 and, in 2023 commenced residency training in Occupational Diseases.

Dr. Dimitrova's academic career began in 2018 when she was appointed as an Assistant professor at Department of Physiotherapy, rehabilitation, thalassotherapy and occupational diseases, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

In 2023 she was awarded the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD) following the successful defence of her doctoral dissertation entitled „Occupational Predisposition in Silent Stroke“.

Since 2024 Dr. Dimitrova has held the academic position of Chief Assistant Professor at the Department of Optometry and occupational diseases, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

Dr. Dimitrova is a member of the Bulgarian Medical Association, the Bulgarian Society of Neurology, the European Stroke Organisation (ESO), and the Bulgarian Scientific Society of Occupational Diseases.

Teaching experience

According to the certificate provided, Dr. Vladina Dimitrova has been actively engaged in teaching for more than nine years. Based on the submitted report covering the period 2018–2026, her annual classroom teaching workload has ranged between 181 and 300 academic hours, thereby exceeding the minimum statutory requirements.

Dr. Dimitrova conducts practical classes in Occupational diseases for medical students enrolled in both the Bulgarian- and English-language programmes. She also teaches practical classes in Neurology for students enrolled in the Speech and Language Therapy and Kinesiotherapy-programmes at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

Research Activities

Dr. Vladina Dimitrova participates in the competition with a total of 31 scientific publications, distributed as follows:

1. Indicator A1 – Doctoral dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree Doctor (PhD), entitled "Occupational Predisposition in Silent Stroke" – 50 points.
2. Indicator B4 – Full-text articles published in journals indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases – 11 publications - 140.5 points.
3. Indicator G7 – Publications and conference papers published in scientific journals and proceedings indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases – 14 publications - 200 points.

4. Indicator G8 – Publications and conference papers published in peer-reviewed scientific journals not indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases – 6 publications - 42 points.

Of the publications submitted for evaluation in the present competition, Dr. Dimitrova is the first author of five publications, second author of eighteen, third author of six, and fourth author of two.

Significance of the Scientific Publications

The scientific publications submitted by Dr. Vladina Dimitrova have been published in well-established, peer-reviewed scientific journals of international and national standing, including Movement Disorders, Neurology International, Journal of Neurosciences in Rural Practice, European Stroke Journal, International Journal of Stroke, Electronic Journal of General Medicine, Neurology India, Turkish Journal of Neurology, Romanian Journal of Neurology, Russian Neurological Journal, Folia Medica, Neurosonology and Cerebral Hemodynamics, Varna Medical Forum, and others. This publication record provides convincing evidence of the scientific quality, visibility, and relevance of the candidate's research output.

The cumulative Impact Factor (IF) of the journals in which the candidate has published is 10.635, further attesting to the scientific merit and international recognition of her research.

Dr. Dimitrova maintains active researcher profiles in Web of Science, Scopus, ORCID, and Google Scholar, ensuring the visibility and accessibility of her scientific contributions.

Scientific Contributions

The scientific work of Dr. Vladina Dimitrova is fully aligned with the field of the present competition and may be classified into four principal research areas:

1. Occupational risk factors in cerebrovascular diseases;
2. Cerebrovascular diseases: etiology, treatment, prognostic factors, complications, and quality of life;
3. Sleep neurology and occupationally related sleep disorders;
4. Parkinson's disease and deep brain stimulation in Parkinson's disease.

Among the most significant scientific contributions of Dr. Dimitrova's research are the following:

- For the first time in Bulgaria, the association between occupational stress and asymptomatic cerebrovascular disease has been systematically investigated, demonstrating the role of occupational stress as a cofactor in the etiopathogenesis of asymptomatic cerebrovascular disease.
- The first national study evaluating the impact of occupational risk factors on the epidemiology of stroke in the working-age population has been conducted. The findings confirmed the synergistic interaction between traditional vascular risk factors and occupational exposures in the epidemiology of stroke.
- The clinical, laboratory, and neuroimaging characteristics, together with the prognostic factors associated with various forms of cerebrovascular disease, including rare etiological variants, have been identified, thereby contributing to the optimization of diagnostic and therapeutic strategies.

- The international RES-Q (Registry of Stroke Care Quality) has been implemented for the assessment of the quality of care provided to patients with acute ischemic stroke, enabling international benchmarking of performance indicators and supporting improvements in the organization of stroke services.
- For the first time in Bulgaria, a polysomnographic study evaluating sleep quality and sleep disorders among shift workers has been performed, confirming the impaired sleep quality associated with shift work.
- The national clinical experience in the management of advanced Parkinson's disease has been enriched through the evaluation of the effectiveness of bilateral subthalamic deep brain stimulation on motor symptoms, quality of life, and sleep disturbances.
- A multidisciplinary algorithm for the selection of patients eligible for bilateral subthalamic deep brain stimulation in Parkinson's disease has been developed and implemented in clinical practice.

Citations and Scientific Impact

The candidate has provided evidence of eight citations of her scientific publications, including five citations in scientific journals indexed in internationally recognized bibliographic databases and three citations in peer-reviewed monographs and edited scientific volumes.

The citation record demonstrates that the candidate's research has achieved an appropriate level of scientific visibility and recognition within the academic community, providing further evidence of the significance and impact of her scientific contributions.

Conclusion

Having carefully reviewed the documentation submitted by Dr. Vladina Miroslavova Dimitrova-Kirilova, MD, PhD, the sole applicant in the present competition, I conclude that her research, clinical, and teaching activities demonstrate the qualities of a highly competent and accomplished researcher, an established clinician, and a dedicated academic educator. The scientific publications and supporting evidence submitted by the candidate fully satisfy the scientometric criteria and statutory requirements for appointment to the academic position of Associate Professor, as stipulated in the Regulations for the Implementation of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

In light of the above, I give my unequivocally positive evaluation and respectfully recommend that the distinguished members of the Scientific Jury vote in favour of the appointment of Dr. Vladina Miroslavova Dimitrova-Kirilova, MD, PhD to the academic position of Associate Professor in Occupational Diseases, Professional field 7.1. Medicine, Higher education area 7. Health care and sport, at the Department of Optometry and occupational diseases, Faculty of Public health, Medical university "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna, and propose her appointment to the Rector of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

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Varna,Bulgaria

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/Assoc. Prof. Kosta Dimitrov Kostov, MD, PhD/