

STATEMENT

for the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in the higher education field 7. Health Care and Sport, professional field 7.1. Medicine, specialty Occupational Diseases, at the Department of Optometry and occupational diseases, Faculty of Public health, Medical university "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna, and the Second Department of Neurology, University Hospital "St. Marina" – Varna, announced in the State Gazette, Issue No. 50/2.06.2026.

by Prof. Silva Peteva Andonova-Atanasova, MD, PhD, DSc
Executive Director of University hospital "St. Marina" - Varna, Bulgaria,
Head of the Department of neurology and neurosciences,
Internal member of the scientific jury, appointed by Order No. P-109-262/30.07.2026 of the Rector of Medical university "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna

General Information

The competition for the academic position of Associate Professor was announced in the professional field 7.1. Medicine, specialty Occupational diseases, and published in the State Gazette, Issue No. 50/2.06.2026. The competition has a single applicant:

Dr. Vladina Miroslavova Dimitrova-Kirilova, MD, PhD, Chief assistant professor at the Department of Optometry and occupational diseases, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

Brief Biographical Information and Professional Career Development of the Candidate

Dr. Vladina Miroslavova Dimitrova-Kirilova, MD, PhD, was born on 24th of September, 1988 in the city of Dobrich, Bulgaria. In 2013 she graduated in Medicine from the Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov” – Varna. In 2019 she enrolled as a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Optometry and occupational diseases, pursuing doctoral studies in Occupational Diseases. In 2020 she obtained board certification in Neurology. In 2023 she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation entitled “Occupational Predisposition in Silent Stroke” and was awarded the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD).

Dr. Dimitrova began her professional career in October 2013 as a physician at the Centre for Emergency Medical Care – Varna, where she worked until 1th of January, 2015. From 5th of January, 2015 to 1th of June, 2015 she served as a physician in the Emergency admission department of University Hospital “St. Marina” – Varna. During the period 2015–2020 she completed her residency in Neurology at the Second Neurology clinic with ICU and Stroke Unit, University Hospital “St. Marina” - Varna, Bulgaria.

Since 2018 she has held the academic positions of Assistant professor and subsequently Chief Assistant professor at the Second Neurology clinic with ICU and Stroke Unit, University Hospital “St. Marina” in Varna, Bulgaria.

Dr. Dimitrova has been a board-certified neurologist since 2020, and since 2023 she has been undergoing specialty training in Occupational diseases. She is proficient in English and possesses excellent computer skills. Her postgraduate professional training includes certification in the highly specialized medical fields

of Clinical Electroencephalography (EEG) and Ultrasound Diagnostics of the Nervous System.

Teaching Experience

Dr. Vladina Dimitrova's teaching career began in 2018. According to the certificate submitted, she has more than nine years of teaching experience, while the teaching activity report for the period 2018–2026 demonstrates a substantial classroom teaching workload that exceeds the minimum requirements for the academic position.

Her teaching responsibilities include conducting practical classes in Occupational Diseases for undergraduate medical students enrolled in both the Bulgarian- and English-language Medicine programmes, as well as practical classes in Neurology for students in the Speech and Language Therapy and Kinesiotherapy programmes at the Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov” – Varna.

In addition, Dr. Dimitrova participates in the assessment of students by serving as an examiner in final examinations for students in the Medicine, Speech and Language Therapy, and Kinesiotherapy programmes.

Clinical and Diagnostic Activities

Dr. Vladina Dimitrova's clinical practice encompasses the fields of Neurology and Occupational diseases. As of the date of the competition, she has accumulated a total of 12 years and 7 months of professional medical experience.

In her daily clinical practice, Dr. Dimitrova independently performs and interprets electroencephalography (EEG) and duplex ultrasonography examinations. In addition to her clinical responsibilities, she is actively involved in the training of undergraduate medical students and medical residents, providing both practical instruction and methodological supervision.

Scientometric Indicators

Dr. Vladina Dimitrova has submitted a total of 31 scientific publications for participation in the competition, 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 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.

In addition, the candidate has submitted one publication exceeding the minimum scientometric requirements for the competition.

Three publications have also been submitted as part of the requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree Doctor (PhD).

Among the publications submitted for the present competition, Dr. Dimitrova is the first author of five, second author of eighteen, third author of six, and fourth author of two publications. The cumulative Impact Factor (IF) of the journals in which the candidate has published is 10.635.

Dr. Dimitrova's scientific work has received eight citations, including five citations in publications indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases or in scholarly monographs and edited volumes, and three citations in peer-reviewed scholarly monographs and edited volumes, corresponding to 105 points.

Of her 31 publications, 12 are published in Bulgarian and 19 in English.

The candidate maintains active researcher profiles in Web of Science, Scopus, ORCID, and Google Scholar.

General Overview and Main Contributions of the Candidate's Scientific Research

Dr. Vladina Dimitrova's scientific publications are focused on the following main research areas:

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

The scientific publications submitted by Dr. Vladina Dimitrova address important, contemporary, and insufficiently investigated issues in the fields of Occupational Diseases and Neurology, with particular emphasis on the impact of occupational risk factors on cerebrovascular disease and sleep disorders. Several of these studies represent the first investigations of their kind conducted in Bulgaria, providing systematic data that have previously been unavailable for the Bulgarian population.

The principal scientific contributions of Dr. Dimitrova's research in the field of occupational risk factors and their association with cerebrovascular diseases and sleep disorders include the first demonstration in Bulgaria of the relationship between occupational stress and silent cerebrovascular disease. Her research has established the role of occupational stress as a co-factor in the etiopathogenesis of silent cerebrovascular disease, thereby contributing original evidence to the understanding of occupational influences on cerebrovascular health.

Dr. Dimitrova's research into the impact of occupational factors on occupational stress has demonstrated a significant association between higher levels of occupational stress and longer working hours, greater duration of professional employment, and shift work. For the first time in Bulgaria, she conducted an epidemiological study investigating the influence of occupational risk factors on the occurrence of stroke among the working-age population, thereby providing original data on the occupational determinants of cerebrovascular disease.

With regard to occupationally related sleep disorders, Dr. Dimitrova conducted the first polysomnographic study in Bulgaria evaluating sleep quality and the prevalence of sleep disorders among shift workers. Her findings confirmed the reduced quality of sleep in individuals engaged in shift work. Furthermore, her investigation of the effects of occupational factors associated with shift work on sleep quality, together with the demonstration of the adverse impact of longer employment duration in shift work on sleep quality, represents a significant original contribution to this field of research and constitutes one of the major scientific achievements of the candidate.

Another major area of Dr. Dimitrova's scientific research is cerebrovascular diseases, with particular emphasis on their etiology, treatment, prognostic

factors, complications, and quality of life. Her publications have characterised the clinical, laboratory, and neuroimaging features, as well as the prognostic factors, associated with various forms of cerebrovascular disease, including rare etiological subtypes, thereby contributing to the optimisation of diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. Her research has demonstrated the independent prognostic value of C-reactive protein (CRP) levels and leukocytosis as predictors of in-hospital mortality among young and middle-aged patients with acute ischaemic stroke. Dr. Dimitrova has further expanded current knowledge regarding the early functional outcome after acute stroke by establishing the frequency, spectrum, and risk factors for the development of in-hospital complications and post-stroke epilepsy, as well as by investigating the trajectory of recovery in patients' quality of life following stroke. A significant scientific and applied contribution of her work is the implementation of the RES-Q (Registry of Stroke Care Quality) international registry for the assessment of the quality of care provided to patients with acute ischaemic stroke. This approach enables international benchmarking of quality indicators and contributes to the optimisation of stroke care organisation and clinical practice.

An important component of Dr. Dimitrova's scientific activity is her contribution to the introduction of deep brain stimulation (DBS) for the treatment of Parkinson's disease at University Hospital "St. Marina" – Varna. Her research has expanded the Bulgarian clinical experience in the management of advanced Parkinson's disease through the evaluation of the effectiveness of bilateral subthalamic deep brain stimulation (STN-DBS) on motor symptoms, quality of life, and sleep disturbances. Furthermore, Dr. Dimitrova has developed and implemented a multidisciplinary patient selection algorithm for bilateral subthalamic deep brain stimulation in patients with Parkinson's disease,

representing a valuable scientific and clinical contribution to the optimisation of patient selection and the delivery of advanced neuromodulation therapy.

Based on the foregoing assessment, including a comprehensive evaluation and analysis of the candidate's academic, scientific, teaching, and clinical achievements, and in accordance with the established requirements and evaluation criteria of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna, I consider it fully justified to recommend that

Dr. Vladina Miroslavova Dimitrova-Kirilova, MD, PhD, be appointed to the academic position of Associate Professor in the higher education field 7. Health Care and Sport, professional field 7.1. Medicine, specialty Occupational diseases, for the needs of the Faculty of Public health, Medical university "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna, and the Second Neurology clinic, University hospital "St. Marina" – Varna, in the competition announced in the State Gazette, Issue No. 50/2.06.2026.

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/Prof. Silva Andonova-Atanasova, MD, PhD, DSc/