

STATEMENT OF OPINION
by prof. Desislava Ivanova Vankova, MD, PhD, MPH, DSc
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Regarding: Competitive procedure for the academic position " Professor" in the higher educational area "2. Humanities", in the professional field 2.1. Philology, scientific specialty "English Language for medical purposes", 1 position for the needs of the Department "Western and Classic Languages", Department of foreign Language Training, Communication and Sports at the Medical University of Varna (MU-Varna), announced in the State Gazette, issue 50 of 02.06.2026.

I was appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury for the present competitive procedure by a decision of the Academic Council of the Medical University of Varna (Protocol № 42 of 29 June 2026) and pursuant to Order P-109-278/30.07.2026 issued by the Rector of the Medical University of Varna. According to Protocol №.1 of 7 August 2026 from the first meeting of the Scientific Jury, I was elected Chair of the Jury and assigned to prepare the present statement of opinion within the competition procedure.

One candidate participates in the announced competitive procedure –
Assoc. Professor Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD

The candidate has submitted all necessary documents for the competitive procedure, corresponding to the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its Application and the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Medical University of Varna.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY AND CAREER PROFILE OF THE CANDIDATE

Assoc. Prof. Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD, was born on 22 February 1967 in Varna. She graduated from the prestigious First Language School in Varna, where she studied English and German, and subsequently from the Faculty of Philology at St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, majoring in Bulgarian and English Language and obtaining the professional qualification of teacher of English and Bulgarian. In 2016, she was awarded the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD) in Germanic Languages (Modern English) by Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen, following the successful defence of her doctoral dissertation entitled "*Adjective Complementation with BE in English and Its Bulgarian Translation Equivalents*".

Her professional career spans more than three decades of teaching, research, expert, administrative, and managerial activity. Her academic career began in 1994 at the University of Economics–Varna, and her professional experience includes teaching English for Specific Purposes, managing language-training units, editing and translating scientific literature, and holding academic positions at higher education institutions in Bulgaria and Germany.

Assoc. Prof. Iliana Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD has been a member of the academic staff of the Medical University of Varna since 2015. In 2018, she was appointed Associate Professor and served as Head of the Department of Western and Classical Languages from 2018 to 2022. Since 2022, she has been Director of the Department of Foreign Language Teaching, Communications and Sport, and since 2025 she has also headed the University's Centre for Medical Pedagogy and Communication.

Assoc. Prof. Doykova's research and professional interests focus on English for Specific and Academic Purposes, medical communication, English-medium instruction, corpus linguistics, and contemporary educational technologies. She is the author of 81 scholarly publications, including monographs, textbooks, and journal articles, and has participated in more than 70 national and international scientific forums. She has undertaken, and continues to pursue, specialist and professional development training at renowned universities and research centres in Bulgaria, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, and the United States. She is actively involved in international and national research and educational projects. The international project Healthcare Language Learning Programme 2 – HELP2, in which she served as a lead researcher and content developer, was awarded the prestigious European Language Label 2022.

Assoc. Prof. Doykova has been a member of the Bulgarian English Teachers' Association (BETA-IATEFL) since 2013, the Bulgarian Union of Scientists since 2019, and the BALEAP Teacher Education and Development in English for Academic Purposes Special Interest Group (TED in EAP SIG) since 2022.

The candidate is proficient in English at C2 level, German at B2 level, and Russian at B2 level. Her overall career profile reflects an accomplished university lecturer, researcher, and academic leader with consistent professional development, a strong commitment to precision in scholarly work, substantial international experience, and significant contributions to foreign language education and medical pedagogy.

GENERAL OPINION ON THE COMPETITIVE PROCEDURE SUBMITTED MATERIALS

This statement of opinion was prepared on the basis of the following scientific works presented by the candidate:

- Dissertation work for educational and scientific degree "doctor" (Indicator A1) – **50 p.**;
- Habilitation thesis - monograph (Indicator B3) – Doykova I., 2026. Академично преподаване на английски език: език и педагогика в медицинското висше образование, Medical University of Varna, ISBN 978-619-221- 593-4 – **100 p.**
- Publications (Indicator G – in total **375 p.**):
 - Publications referenced in WoS – 2 issues – **60 p.**;
 - Publications referenced in Scopus – 2 issues – **60 p.**;
 - Publications in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or collective volumes - 16 – **140т.**;
- Chapter of a collective monograph (Indicator Г9) – 2 issues – **40p.**

The articles and conference papers have been published in reputable scholarly journals and conference proceedings in the humanities and health sciences, in both Bulgarian and English. Assoc. Prof. Doykova has also submitted ten full-text publications in scientific journals and

edited volumes that exceed the minimum scientometric requirements for appointment to the academic position of Professor.

The candidate's publications have received numerous positive citations by national and international research teams under Indicator D. Across all indicators, the scholarly output of Assoc. Prof. Iliana Doykova meets or exceeds the minimum national and institutional requirements for appointment to the academic position of Professor in the field of higher education and the professional field specified in the competition.

EVALUATION OF THE MONOGRAPHIC PAPER SUBMITTED FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITIVE PROCEDURE

The independently authored monograph entitled "*Academic Teaching in English: Language and Pedagogy in Medical Higher Education*" is a timely, in-depth, and interdisciplinary study devoted to the linguistic, pedagogical, and intercultural dimensions of English-medium instruction in medical higher education. The subject is particularly relevant in the context of the increasing internationalisation of universities, growing academic mobility, and the expansion of educational programmes delivered in English in Bulgaria.

The monograph is distinguished by its clear and logically coherent structure. The discussion progresses from an examination of the nature, development, and terminological and methodological framework of academic teaching in English to an analysis of the linguistic, pedagogical, and professional competences of university lecturers. It systematically addresses teaching and learning styles, organisational forms of instruction, the rhetorical structure of the academic lecture, linguistic and metadiscursive devices, and strategies for effective interaction with an international student audience. The theoretical framework is skilfully combined with practical examples, comparative tables, and specific recommendations, thereby enhancing the applied value of the work.

A particular strength of the monograph is the precisely presented research methodology and the use of a specially compiled corpus comprising 50 authentic academic video lectures, organised into the MULEB and MULEF subcorpora, in the fields of medicine, dental medicine, pharmacy, psychiatry, psychology, and public health. The corpus contains 385,000 words. The comparison of lectures delivered by Bulgarian and international academics with a reference corpus of academic discourse provides a reliable empirical basis for the analyses and conclusions presented. The scholarly style is clear, terminologically precise, and appropriately adapted to the interdisciplinary nature of the subject matter.

In conclusion, the monograph constitutes a comprehensive, original, and practically oriented scholarly study that advances knowledge of English-medium academic teaching in Bulgarian medical higher education and provides a convincing foundation for the further development of lecturers' competences and institutional educational practices. In its completed form, the habilitation monograph reflects the candidate's characteristic meticulousness, consistent pursuit of excellence, and refined writing style.

In my capacity as a university lecturer delivering lectures and seminars in English, as well as a physician with a recognised specialty in medical pedagogy, I consider the monograph particularly valuable and directly applicable to academic practice. It offers systematic, research-based, and practically oriented guidance for effective teaching and interaction with an international student audience.

COMPLEX EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES, INCL. TRAINING AND MENTORING PHD CANDIDATES, UNDER-GRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE COURSES FOR STUDENTS, MEDICAL AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS.

Assoc. Prof. Doykova has extensive teaching experience accumulated over more than three decades at various higher education institutions in Bulgaria and abroad. Her teaching activities encompass English for Specific Purposes, English for Academic Purposes, Bulgarian as a foreign language, medical communication, and academic writing. At the Medical University of Varna, she develops and updates curricula and electronic learning resources for a broad range of programmes, including medicine, dental medicine, pharmacy, midwifery, medical cosmetology, optometry, physiotherapy, public health, and health management, integrating language training with the specific communication needs of future healthcare professionals.

A significant demonstration of her teaching and methodological competence is her authorship and co-authorship of a series of five university textbooks on professional communication in English in the fields of medicine, pharmacy, eye care, cosmetology, and midwifery. The textbooks are clearly structured, professionally oriented, and based on the integrated development of specialised terminology, grammatical competence, and reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The wide range of case studies, dialogues, role-playing tasks, clinical scenarios, and critical-thinking exercises encourages active student participation and the application of language skills in authentic professional contexts.

I particularly value the involvement of students in the piloting and development of teaching content, which reflects a dialogic and student-centred approach. Assoc. Prof. Doykova has a substantial teaching workload; she organises and supervises the language practice of students enrolled in English-language programmes, teaches doctoral students within the Doctoral School of the Medical University of Varna, and delivers lecture courses in Academic Language and Professional Communication and Academic Writing in English. She also provides methodological and research supervision to doctoral students and develops resources applicable to the postgraduate training of medical specialists and practising healthcare professionals.

In conclusion, her teaching and methodological activities are characterised by consistency, innovation, strong practical orientation, and clear alignment with the contemporary requirements of medical higher education.

CONCLUSION AND GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CANDIDATE'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE MANDATORY CRITERIA AND SCIENTOMETRIC INDICATORS FOR ACCOMPANYING THE ACADEMIC POSITION "PROFESSOR".

The evidence submitted by Assoc. Prof. Ilina Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD, regarding her research and teaching activities meets and exceeds the mandatory quantitative and qualitative criteria for appointment to the academic position of Professor, in accordance with the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the institutional requirements of the Medical University of Varna, and the additional conditions stipulated in the competition procedure.

The candidate's principal scientific contributions are related to research and publications in the humanities, with a particular focus on academic communication and university pedagogy in medical education, contrastive linguistics, corpus-based genre analysis of medical academic communication, and the methodology of teaching and assessing English for medical purposes.

The overall assessment of Assoc. Prof. Iliana Tsvetanova Doykova's research and career profile, teaching activity, scholarly achievements, and original contributions provides sufficient grounds for me to express a **positive opinion** regarding her candidacy. I therefore propose that the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury elect **Assoc. Prof. Iliana Tsvetanova Doykova, PhD**, to the academic position of **Professor** in area of Higher Education 2. Humanities, Professional Field 2.1. Philology, specialty "English for Medical Purposes", for one full-time position at the Department of Western and Classic Languages within the Department of Foreign Language Teaching, Communications and Sport at the Medical University of Varna, announced in the *State Gazette*, Issue No. 50 of 2 June 2026.

Заличено на основание чл. 5,
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28.08.2026

Member and Chair of the Scientific Jury

Varna

prof. Desislava Ivanova Vankova, MD, MPH, PhD, DSc

