

Opinion

by Assoc. Prof. Viliana Eduardova Gugleva-Ruseva, Ph.D.

Department of Pharmaceutical Technologies, Faculty of Pharmacy,

Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna,

member of the scientific jury according to Order No. R-109-
68/28.01.2026

of the Rector of the Medical University - Varna

Regarding: *The competition for the academic position of "Professor", in the field of higher education 7. "Healthcare and Sports", professional field 7.3. "Pharmacy", specialty "Technology of dosage forms and biopharmacy", announced in the State Gazette No. 102/28.11.2025 for the needs of the Faculty of Pharmacy, Department of "Pharmaceutical Technologies".*

On the basis of Order No. P-109-68/28.01.2026 of the Rector of the Medical University of Varna, I was elected as a member of the Scientific Jury, and according to Protocol No. 1/09.02.2026 of the first meeting of the Scientific Jury, I was assigned to prepare an opinion on the procedure for occupying the academic position of "professor" in the specialty "Technology of dosage forms and biopharmacy". The sole candidate in the competition is Assoc. Prof. Velichka Yordanova Andonova, Ph.D. The competition procedure has been followed and the candidate's documents are in accordance with the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna and the criteria set therein for occupying the academic position of "professor".

Biographical data and professional development

Assoc. Prof. Velichka Yordanova Andonova was born in 1973 in Pazardzhik. In 1996 she obtained a Master's degree in Pharmacy from the Medical University of Sofia, and in 2014 she obtained a PhD in Technology of dosage forms and biopharmacy from the Medical University of Plovdiv with the thesis topic "Nanoparticles with indomethacin - drug-delivery systems for ocular administration".

Her academic qualification is complemented by a postgraduate specialization in Drug Technology with Biopharmacy, several additional qualification courses such as "Pedagogical Competence", "Safety Assessment of Cosmetic Products", "Innovative Educational Technologies", "Protection and Humane Treatment of Experimental Animals Used for Educational or Scientific Purposes", as well as a three-month outgoing mobility for research activities, training and exchange of experience at Universitatea Ovidius Din Constanta – Romania, which broaden her

expertise. Her professional path began in 1997 in a community pharmacy, and from 2005 to 2018, she successively held the academic positions of "assistant professor" and "chief assistant professor" in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Medical University - Plovdiv. In 2018, Velichka Andonova was elected as an "associate professor" at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna in the scientific specialty "Technology of Dosage Forms and Biopharmacy", and then as the head of the educational sector "Technology of Dosage Forms and Biopharmacy" at the Department of Pharmaceutical Technologies.

Assoc. Prof. Andonova has extensive management experience: from 2020 to the present, she has served as Head of the Department of Pharmaceutical Technologies, and from 2020 to 2024, she was Deputy Dean for Academic Affairs, Accreditation, and Quality at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Medical University - Varna. Her academic career is complemented by expert activity at the national and international level - she is a member of the Expert Council on Advertising of Medicinal Products at the Bulgarian Association of Pharmaceuticals (2018-2020), of the Supreme Council of Pharmacy (since 2023), of the Standing Commission on Health and Sports at the National Agency for the Evaluation of Pharmaceutical Products (since 2024), of the Editorial Board of Austin Journal of Analytical and Pharmaceutical Chemistry, and participates as a guest editor in the journal *Pharmaceutics*.

Teaching and academic activity

From the presented documents, it is evident that Assoc. Prof. Andonova has serious pedagogical experience and extensive teaching experience - a total of 20 years, of which 8 years at the Faculty of Pharmacy of the Medical University - Varna. Assoc. Prof. Andonova has taught lecture courses to students in the Master's program in "Pharmacy" in the disciplines "Technology of Dosage Forms", "Biopharmacy and Pharmacokinetics", "Radiopharmacy", and to students in the Professional Bachelor's program in "Assistant Pharmacist" in the discipline "Technology of Drugs with Biopharmacy". Actively participates in teaching in the following specialties: "Cosmetology", "Transfer of Technology and Innovation in Pharmacy", "Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare" (in English), "Artificial Intelligence in Biomedicine" (in English). The total teaching load over the last 4 years is 409 teaching hours/year, which exceeds the required norm under the Medical University - Varna regulations many times.

Assoc. Prof. Andonova is the academic supervisor of three successfully defended and seven doctoral students in the process of training (Certificate No. 109-15/07.01.2026), as well as five successfully defended graduate students. She is also the supervisor of postgraduate students in the specialty "Drug Technology with Biopharmacy". Assoc. Prof. Andonova participates in the development and updating of the curricula for the disciplines taught and is a co-author of three university textbooks and two test books with questions for self-preparation of students.

Research activity

In the competition for the title of "Professor", Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova participated with a scientific production according to the following indicators:

- **B4** 10 full-text scientific publications in journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information, equivalent to a monographic work, from which **4** have an **IF (165.81 points)** with a required minimum of 100 points).
- **D7** 17 scientific publications, published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (WoS and Scopus) with an **IF (218.72 points)** with a required minimum of 100 points).
- **D8** 3 scientific publications published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes (**23.5 points**). The total number of points for indicators **D5 - D9** is **242.22 points** with a mandatory minimum of 200 points.
- 3 full-text publications in scientific journals and collections are presented, beyond the minimum scientometric requirements for holding the title of "professor", indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (WoS and Scopus).
- 30 citations are presented, all in indicator **D10**. The sum of points under indicators **D10 - D12** is **450 points** with a required minimum of 300 points.
- The total number of points under indicator **E14** Supervision of successfully defended doctoral students is **80 points**.
- Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova has a specialty in Drug Technology with Biopharmacy (**E15 - 40 points**) and is the supervisor of six postgraduate students in the discipline, three of whom have successfully acquired the specialty "Drug Technology with Biopharmacy" (**E22 – 30 points**).
- Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova is a co-author of a total of 5 university textbooks (**E21 – 27.33 points**).
- **E16** – evidence of participation in a national project has been presented (Certificate No. 110-90/12.01.2026) (**E16 – 15 points**).
- **E18** – Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova is the leader of three successfully completed projects, funded by the Science Fund of MU-Varna (Certificate No. 110-2537/22.12.2025), with two of them submitted for participation in the competition (**E18- 60 points**). The total sum of points on indicators **E13- E22** is **252.33 points** with a mandatory minimum of 100 points.

As a supplement to the scientific research activity of Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova, the list of 55 participations in scientific forums should be accepted, of which 12 are abroad, as well as her participation in three ongoing and one completed projects funded by the Science Fund of MU-Varna (Certificate No. 110-2537/22.12.2025).

Of the submitted publications (33 in total) with which Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova participated in the competition for the title of Professor, 30 of them are in refereed and indexed scientific journals in the global databases Web of Science and Scopus, and 24 of them have an impact factor. The **total impact factor** for the entire scientific career of Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova is impressive – **104.669**, of which **93.10** is after assuming the title of Associate Professor. As of March 16th, her scientific publications are the subject of more than **650 citations** in **Scopus (h-index 14)** and more than **520 citations** in **WoS (h-index 14)**, which testifies to high scientific value and authority.

Overall assessment of the candidate's compliance with the mandatory conditions and quantitative criteria and scientometric indicators according to the Law on the Development of Academic Staff at MU-Varna and the criteria set therein for occupying the position of "Professor".

Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova presents evidence of the fulfillment of the mandatory conditions and quantitative criteria and scientometric indicators according to the Law on Academic Staff Development of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at MU-Varna and the criteria set forth therein for occupying the position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. "Healthcare and Sports", professional direction 7.3. "Pharmacy" (total of **1160.36 points**), as the provided materials exceed the minimum national requirements and those of the Regulations of MU-Varna (**750 points**).

Evaluation of scientific contributions

The research activities of Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova are focused on the development, characterization, and application of nanoscale drug delivery systems designed to improve the unfavorable physicochemical characteristics of medicinal or biologically active substances of natural origin, ensuring controlled release and improved pharmacotherapeutic effect. The research covers the following main scientific areas:

I. Biologically active substances of natural origin - challenges in their formulation in dosage forms for dermal application and cosmetic products;

II. Nanoscale drug delivery systems;

- Sub-area "Lipid-based nanoscale drug delivery systems."

- Sub-area "Silver nanoparticles and their conjugates".

III. Nasal and oromucosal drug delivery;

IV. Biologically active substances from aquaculture - methods for extraction and application;

V. Ensuring the physical stability and rheological characteristics of liquid and semi-solid dosage forms by using natural polymers and lipids.

I believe that the scientific works of Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova possesses scientific and applied merits and has made an original contribution in the field of the announced competition for "professor" in the specialty "Technology of Dosage Forms and Biopharmacy".

CONCLUSION

Based on the materials provided to me for the competition, demonstrating high scientific value and professionalism, as well as my personal impressions of Assoc. Prof. Velichka Andonova, PhD I believe that she fully meets the requirements for holding the academic position of "Professor" in accordance with the Act on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the

Regulations for its Implementation, and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna.

In connection with the above, I confidently give my positive assessment and recommend to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to vote positively for Assoc. Prof. Velichka Yordanova Andonova to occupy the academic position of "Professor" in the specialty "Technology of Dosage Forms and Biopharmacy".

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Varna, Bulgaria

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