

OPINION

By: *Prof. Yuliya Trifonova Yorgova-Ford, PhD, Burgas Free University*

Scientific specialty "Management"

Professional field 3.7 Administration and Management

Regarding: competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” for the professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Human Resources Management and Organizational Management) at Burgas Free University (BFU).

1. Competition information

The competition is announced for the needs of the Faculty of Business Studies at Burgas Free University and published in State Gazette No.89/24.10.2025.

2. General information about the candidate in the competition

Vilyana Ruseva acquired a PhD degree in the “Economics and Management (Industry)” doctoral program at Burgas Free University in 2019 and successively holds the academic positions of “Chief Assistant Professor” in 2021 and “Associate Professor” in 2023 in the professional field 3.8. Economics. She received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in the field of finance and accounting at the University of Economics – Varna and a second master’s degree in “Tourism Management” at the University “Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov” – Burgas. Over the years of her work, she has gained significant practical experience in banking and tourism. From 2017 to the present, she has successfully implemented herself in the teaching profession at BFU, in secondary education, as well as a lecturer and consultant in various organizations.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Yankova Ruseva is the only participant in this competition.

3. Fulfillment of the requirements for holding the academic position

The analysis of the submitted materials for the competition clearly shows the fulfillment of the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at BFU. The following findings can be cited in support of this:

3.1. Quantitative requirements

- the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" have been exceeded, with a total score of 448.8 points being recorded, with a required minimum of 400 points;
- there is a monographic work on the topic of the competition;
- a book based on the candidate's PhD thesis has been published;
- a total of 14 publications outside the dissertation work have been presented, of which 2 studies, 10 articles and reports from scientific forums, 2 chapters from collective monographs;
- the candidate has published an electronic textbook in a discipline from the field of the competition.

The conclusion that must be drawn is that the quantitative requirements for all indicators have been exceeded.

3.2. Quality requirements

- the presented habilitation monographic work on the topic of the competition - Ruseva, V., The integration of sustainable development in human resources management. ESG strategies and social responsibility of the employer, BSU, 2025 is a current, meaningful and in-depth independent study of the author;
- the second monographic work is developed on the basis of the candidate's PhD thesis and shows the ability for development, rethinking and upgrading an already researched problem from theory and practice;
- four of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva's publications are in scientific publications, refereed and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information Scopus and Web of Science;
- the remaining 10 publications submitted for the competition (studies, articles, conference reports, chapters of collective monographs) are in peer-reviewed publications or in edited collective volumes and are distinguished by their relevance and scientific value;
- a total of 8 citations in scientific publications are presented, 2 of which in publications referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information, which confirms that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva is known to the research community;

- in accordance with the Additional Requirements of the Burgas Free University, the candidate has submitted a peer-reviewed textbook on the topic of the competition;
- participation in 17 projects, 8 of which are international, is proof of the quality and active project work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva.

From the presented scientific production, as well as in the other mentioned appearances of the candidate, it is evident that the fulfillment of the qualitative requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" is present.

The result of the analysis carried out so far allows the conclusion that the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Ruseva fully meets the mandatory quantitative and qualitative requirements under the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at BFU.

4. Description and evaluation of the candidate's teaching activities

The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Ruseva started in 2017 as a part-time lecturer at BFU and continues in parallel with the scientific and development as a "Chief Assistant Professor" and "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.8. Economics to the present. In recent years, some of the courses taught by the candidate have been in the field of management, namely Human Resources Management, Service Management, Project Management, Innovation and Investment Management, etc., which fully corresponds to the thematic area of the current competition. In accordance with the Additional requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" at BFU, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva has also presented evidence of the courses she has developed in whole or in part in the Moodle platform, as well as an electronic textbook on Human Resources Management.

The candidate's teaching activity is not limited to the BFU. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva successfully works as a teacher of entrepreneurship in secondary education and as a lecturer and consultant in practical organizations.

From my joint work with my colleague, I can confidently confirm that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva maintains a high quality of her teaching work, shows responsibility and communicates very well with students, pupils and colleagues. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva has great potential and will for teaching and scientific work, which is also evident from the materials submitted for the competition.

The information presented above gives reason to conclude that the candidate possesses the teaching competencies and experience necessary for the position of "Associate Professor".

5. Synthesized assessment of the candidate's main scientific and practical contributions

I consider the theoretical and practical contributions presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Ruseva to be credible and significant. They are contained in the scientific production submitted for the competition. The achievements of the candidate confirm her in-depth knowledge and ability to research and solve scientific and practical problems in the field of organizational management and human resources management. Particularly valuable in the scientific research work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruseva is the interdisciplinary focus.

Among the stated theoretical and practical scientific contributions, the following can be distinguished:

- creating a comprehensive theoretical framework for integrating ESG principles into human resources management;
- development of the theory of management consulting, professional training and know-how in organizations;
- enrichment of scientific models for innovation, organizational development and digital transformation in SMEs;
- development of applicable models and indicators for the introduction of ESG strategies in Bulgarian organizations;
- development of pedagogical solutions for entrepreneurship training and for the implementation of Design Thinking in education and business;
- practical guidelines for the use of artificial intelligence for conflict management and training.

6. Critical notes and recommendations

Based on the findings already made regarding the fulfillment of the quantitative and qualitative requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" and my personal impressions, I have no critical comments or questions regarding the materials presented in the competition and the overall presentation of the candidate. I recommend that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Ruseva continue to work confidently and share her results with the scientific community in our and international publications.

7. Plagiarism

There is no plagiarism proven in accordance with the statutory procedure in the scientific papers submitted to the competition by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Ruseva.

8. Conclusion

Based on the assessments of the presented scientific works, the teaching and research activities and the main theoretical and practical scientific contributions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Ruseva, it can be stated that they fully satisfy the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at BFU.

The above overall positive assessment gives me reason to confidently support the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilyana Yankova Ruseva for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Human Resources Management and Organizational Management) at Burgas Free University.

20.01.2026

Burgas

Signature:

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