

# **STATEMENT**

**by Prof. Momchil Stefanov Mavrov, PhD**

professional field 3.6 Law, Professor at the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University of  
Sofia

**Subject:** competition to award the academic position of “Professor” in Higher Education Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.6 Law, scientific specialty “Administrative Law and Administrative Process”, published in the State Gazette, Issue No. 98 of 19.11.2024, for the needs of the Faculty of Law of “Paisiy Hilendarski” University of Plovdiv.

## **DEAR MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY,**

The competition to award the academic position “Professor” in professional field 3.6 Law, scientific specialty “Administrative Law and Administrative Process” was announced by “Paisiy Hilendarski” University of Plovdiv for the needs of the Faculty of Law with a term of two months from the promulgation of the announcement in the State Gazette, Issue No. 98 of 19.11.2024. By order of the Rector of “Paisiy Hilendarski” University of Plovdiv No. RD-22-70 of 17.01.2025, I have been appointed to participate in the composition of the scientific jury as an external member. By the decision of the scientific jury, I was assigned to provide a statement in this competition.

### **1. Brief information about the candidate in the competition**

In the announced competition to award the academic position “Professor”, there is one candidate: Assoc. Prof. Bogdan Dragnev Yordanov, PhD. The candidate graduated in Law from “St. Kliment Ohridski” University of Sofia. He is currently a habilitated lecturer at the Faculty of Law of “Paisiy Hilendarski” University of Plovdiv, and the Faculty of Social Sciences of “Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov” University of Burgas. Over the years, Assoc. Prof. Yordanov has accumulated extensive practical experience in the legal area as a consultant on international programs, a lecturer in specialized courses, a legal advisor to municipalities in the Burgas region, and also as a practicing lawyer in administrative legal proceedings in the field of public service and local self-government.

## **2. General characteristics and evaluation of the candidate's research activity and the presented scientific works**

For his participation in the competition, Assoc. Prof. Yordanov has presented the following scientific works: one habilitation thesis – monograph, one published book based on a defended doctoral dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”, and 3 articles. In its entirety, the research activity of Assoc. Prof. Bogdan Yordanov contributes significantly to the development of legal science in the Republic of Bulgaria, in particular within the framework of administrative law and process, to which his scientific interests are directed. His scientific works are cited in national non-refereed journals with scientific peer review.

As evidenced by the attached references, the total number of citations of the author is 21.

The monograph “Regional Development”, submitted for the competition, consists of 206 pages and is organized into five chapters, an introduction, a conclusion, a bibliography, and a list of abbreviations. The monograph can be described as the first comprehensive and in-depth scientific study of the legal framework for regional development.

At the beginning of the monograph, Assoc. Prof. Yordanov lays the groundwork for understanding regional development by defining key notions and examining the concept of regional development in detail. A noteworthy contribution is the combination of theoretical analysis with historical context and analysis of the regulatory framework, which is particularly important for understanding the challenges in the topic of research.

In the second chapter, Assoc. Prof. Yordanov examines the socio-economic zoning in Bulgaria, tracing the historical development and the approaches to territorial division, and focusing on the currently introduced and applied NUTS system. As notable contribution stands out the extensive review of the six regions into which Bulgaria is divided according to the current Regional Development Act (NUTS-2), as they are defined as key instruments for planning, financing, and monitoring regional policies in accordance with European standards. Attention is also paid to the regions of the third hierarchical level (NUTS-3), emphasising the role of the districts in Bulgaria as key administrative-territorial units for implementing regional policy and harmonizing national and local interests.

In the next chapter of the monograph, Assoc. Prof. Yordanov analyses the institutional and legal framework of regional development. A significant contribution is the systematized review of the competences of the competent authorities in the area under consideration, which is of particular importance for achieving coordination and effective interaction in the implementation of regional policy. The analysis of the relevant legal acts and strategic

documents emphasizes the need for an integrated approach to ensure coherence between the different levels of governance.

In the fourth chapter, Assoc. Prof. Yordanov examines the financial aspects of regional development. The author's contribution is underscoring the need for diversified funding to implement the reviewed strategic documents and achieve regional development goals. The various funding sources and their application are examined in detail, while the challenges related to their implementation and control are also identified. Particular attention is paid to the problems of insufficient funding for municipal budgets, which emphasizes the need for more effective coordination and resource management.

In the final chapter, the author studies the causes and consequences of frequent changes in the regulatory framework, focusing on the analysis of the 2020 legislative reform in the field of regional development. Assoc. Prof. Yordanov evaluates the positive aspects of the reform while also identifying certain gaps and ambiguities in the legislation. His contribution lies in the specific *de lege ferenda* proposals for improving the current legal framework, which could provide a stable basis for the proper regulation of relations in the discussed area. Assoc. Prof. Yordanov adroitly addresses each of these challenges by proposing a number of measures, including: precise definition of the levels of hierarchy between the three types of strategic documents and the elimination of contradictions in their mandatory requisites; explicit definition of the legal nature of these planning documents with a view to establishing order and procedures for their appeal; accordance of legislative changes to distinct law institutes with the principles of regional development to ensure compliance with the objectives of regional policy; linking strategic documents to the budget framework; restoration of "targeted development regions", which includes the designation of support zones to overcome disparities in socio-economic development between regions and counteract internal migration to large cities; active participation of NGOs and strengthening the role of local government in state regional policy; consideration of the EU financial framework in the preparation of strategic documents; and others.

The presented monograph undoubtedly has the qualities of a habilitation thesis, distinguished by its originality and numerous scientific and applied scientific results of a contributory nature.

The other submitted scientific works of Assoc. Prof. Yordanov also have original contributions. They contain clear formulations of the examined topics, in-depth analysis of the identified challenges, and constructive proposals for improving the regulatory framework.

Based on the foregoing, I have no critical remarks or recommendations regarding the content of the presented monographic works and scientific publications of the candidate, Assoc. Prof. Bogdan Dragnev Yordanov.

The educational and teaching activities of Assoc. Prof. Bogdan Dragnev Yordanov, PhD, fully meet the requirements for participation in the announced competition for the academic position of “Professor”.

### **3. Conclusion**

After reviewing the submitted materials for the competition, I believe that the candidate, Assoc. Prof. Bogdan Yordanov, meets all the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulations for the DASRBA implementation, and the relevant internal rules of “Paisiy Hilendarski” University of Plovdiv. Given the above, **I confidently give my positive assessment and vote “FOR” the proposal of the candidate – Assoc. Prof. Bogdan Dragnev Yordanov, PhD, for election by the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Law of “Paisiy Hilendarski” University of Plovdiv to the academic position of “Professor” in Higher Education Area 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.6 Law, scientific specialty “Administrative Law and Administrative Process”.**

March 14, 2025

**PROF. MOMCHIL MAVROV, PhD**