

STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihaela Nikolova Nedyalkova, Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem
Research - BAS

on the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" field of higher education 4.3. 4. Biological Sciences, professional field Zoology – zoology of vertebrates.

In the competition for "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette, no. 98 of 19. 11. 205 and in the inter-web-page of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Zoology at the Faculty of Biology, as a candidate participated Assoc. Dr. Vesela Ilieva Mit-kovska from the Faculty of Biology of Paisii Hilendarski University.

Subject:

By Order No. RD-22-440 of 18. 02. 2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU) I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at PU in the field of higher education 4.3. Biosciences, professional field Zoology – zoology of vertebrates, announced for the needs of the Department of Zoology at the Faculty of Biology.

For participation in the announced competition has submitted documents one candidate - Assoc. Dr. Vesela Ilieva Mitkovska from the Faculty of Biology of Paisii Hilendarski University.

The submitted by prof. as. Dr. Vesela Mitkovska's set of materials on paper is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of PU, and includes all necessary documents.

The candidate prof. as. Dr. Vesela Mitkovska has attached a total of 30 scientific papers, 1 book chapter and 2 textbooks. According to the correspondence sheet submitted by the candidate, 21 scientific papers and 2 teaching aids are accepted for review, which are outside the dissertation and the competition for the principal assistant professor. References and documents (in the form of memos) for participation in a number of research projects have also been submitted.

2. Brief biographical data (of the candidate)

Dr. Vesela Mitkovska graduated with a Master's degree from the Paisii Hilendarski University, Faculty of Biology in 1999. In 2014 she obtained a PhD degree from the same university and since 2015 she has been working as a Senior Assistant Professor at the Department of Zoology of the Faculty of Biology.

3. General description of the applicant's activities

As a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Zoology of the Faculty of Biology, the candidate has a remarkable classroom workload which includes: 756 hours of lectures, 101 hours of seminars and 2794 hours of practicals in the areas of zoology, disinfection, dissection and deratization and computer literacy. Dr. Vesela Mitkovska also participated in the competition by co-authoring two textbooks - on zoology and genetic bases of behaviour. She is also involved in the development of curricula and courses 6 of which are for BSc and 3 for MSc. She has also supervised 7 successful graduate students.

In terms of scientific activity, the candidate has submitted 21 publications and one book chapter. They are distributed as follows: for indicator C - 6 issues of which 2 in Q1, 2 in Q2 and 2 in Q3; for indicator D - 2 in Q1, 7 in Q3 and 6 in Q4, as well as 1 book chapter. On both indicators Dr Mitkovska meets and even exceeds the requirements of the RRDA as well as those of the P. Hilendarski". I should note, however, that there is a common confusion in the scoring, which results from an ambiguous interpretation of the Law regarding journals with a quartile in Scopus and without one in WoS. Thus, for publications numbered 7.10, 7.11, 7.12 and 7.13, I am unable to award 12 points each and their assignment to Q 4 and believe that 10 points are appropriate. Following this logic, I assume that the total number of points for indicator C is 120 out of the required 100 and for indicator D is 234 out of the required 200. This finding in no way diminishes the candidate's work, nor the value of the publications, which with their subject matter only confirm my opinion of Dr Vesela Mitkovska as one of the already established and extremely competent specialists not only in the field of zoology, but also in the field of animal ecotoxicology. She also submitted 50 citations in IF and SJR journals, which bring her total to 100 points, thus meeting the requirements for this indicator as well.

The scientific papers submitted for the competition are of scientific, applied and methodological nature. A leading contribution of fundamental importance is a study related to the description of the standard karyotype of two rodent species rare for our fauna - the rice and western broad-toothed mice, and for t The main part of the results of the candidate's research contain contributions of an applied nature and are related to two main areas of her work - 1. bi-markers for the assessment of the genotoxic and cytotoxic potential of different types of zoo-monitors and 2. vertebrates as vectors for the spread of zoonoses and blood parasites. In both areas, Dr. Mitkowska has proven to be one of the best and most competent specialists in the country in recent years.

Particularly valuable are the methodological contributions related to the adaptation and application of the semen comet assay in honey bees - carried out for the first time in the world, as well as the establishment of the effectiveness of the acridine orange dye in the diagnosis of blood parasites.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I would like to express my satisfaction with the candidate's work so far in an extremely interesting and topical area of science. Many of the results of her research are of a contributory nature, some of them even of global significance. All this gives me reason to think that Dr Vesela Mitkovska is an established and well-established specialist in her field and I believe

with conviction that she is fully prepared and deserves to take up the academic position of Associate Professor.

The documents and materials submitted by Dr. Vesela Mitkovska meet all the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LADAPB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LADAPB and the relevant Regulations of Paisii Hilendarski University.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the PhD and the academic position of Senior Assistant Professor. The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition, a representative part of which have been published in journals published by international academic publishers. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, some of them are directly oriented to teaching work. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Dr. Vesela Mitkovska are unquestionable.

The results achieved by Dr. Vesela Mitkovska in teaching and scientific research activities fully comply with the minimum national and supplementary requirements adopted in connection with the Regulations of the PU for the application of the Law on Research and Development.

After reading the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it justified to give my positive assessment and to recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a reportproposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Biology for the election of Dr. Vesela Mitkovska to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at Paisii Hilen-Darski University in: field of higher education 4. 3 Biological Sciences, professional field Zoology – zoology of vertebrates.

04. 04. 2025.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihaela Nedyalkova