

OPINION

by **Prof. Galina Georgieva Kurteva, PhD**

Professor in Professional Field 3.7 Administration and Management, Burgas Free University

regarding the materials submitted for participation in a competition

for the academic position of “**Professor**”

at **Plovdiv university “Paisii Hilendarski”**,

in: Field of Higher Education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences;

Professional Field 3.7. Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods and Modeling in Management)

In the competition for the academic position of “Professor”, announced in the State Gazette, Issue No. 96 of 11 November 2025, and published on the official website of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, for the needs of the Department of Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, the sole applicant is Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, from the Department of Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By Order No. RD-22-45 of 09 January 2026 of the Rector of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” (PU), I was appointed as a member of the scientific jury in a competition for the academic position of “**Professor**” at PU in Field of Higher Education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods and Modeling in Management). The competition **has been announced for the needs** of the Department of Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences (FESS).

In the announced competition, there is one candidate – **Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD**, from the Department of Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”.

Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, holds a Master’s degree in Mathematics from Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”. In the period 2002–2006, she pursued doctoral studies at the Institute of management and systems research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in the scientific specialty “Automation of Engineering Work and Computer-Aided Design Systems”.

She began her teaching career as a part-time assistant lecturer in mathematical disciplines at Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics (1994–2005). She has also taught at the Technical University of Sofia, Plovdiv Branch (1995–1997); the European

College of Economics and Management – Plovdiv (2004–2011); the University of Food Technologies – Plovdiv (2005–2011); and at Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences (2007–2009).

Since 2009, Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova has been a full-time faculty member at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, progressing successively through the academic positions of Assistant and Chief assistant. Since 2016, she has held the academic rank of Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.8. Economics (Quantitative Methods and Modeling).

The candidate acquired substantial research experience as a Research Fellow at the Institute of Management and Systems Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences during the period 2000–2009. Over the past ten years, she has participated in more than ten national, international, and university research and educational projects. In one of the projects funded by the Research Fund of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova served as project leader.

My overall assessment is that the professional development of Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, encompasses teaching, research, and applied research activities, which are mutually complementary and reinforce one another.

The documentation submitted for the competition complies with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria and its Implementing Regulations, as well as with the requirements of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, as stipulated in the University regulations on Academic Staff Development (Art. 77, para. 1).

The compliance report submitted by Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, regarding the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements (Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 2b, and its Implementing Regulations, Art. 1a, para. 1) ***demonstrates that the overall mandatory number of points required for the academic position of “Professor” has been significantly exceeded (by 51.5%)***, while all specific requirements under Sections A, B, C, D, and E have also been fulfilled. The candidate’s total number of points amounts to 833.125, compared to the required 550 points. The candidate also meets the additional faculty-specific requirements for the academic position of “Professor” at Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”.

I do not have personal impressions of the candidate; however, based on the documentation submitted for the competition, I have formed a highly positive opinion of Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova’s teaching and research activities.

2. General characteristics of the candidate’s activity

Evaluation of Teaching Activity

Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, has more than 16 years of teaching experience at the Department of Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics, Faculty of Eco-

nomics and Social Sciences, Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, over nine of which she has held the academic position of Associate Professor.

She has delivered lectures and seminars in the courses “Applied Mathematics”, “Financial Mathematics,” “Quantitative Methods in Management”, “Mathematics,” and “Operations Research in Economics”. The candidate has independently developed five course curricula – three at the Bachelor’s level and two at the Master’s level.

For the purposes of instruction, Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova has independently authored three teaching manuals, one of which has been submitted for the present competition.

According to the submitted report, the candidate’s classroom teaching workload at Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” over the past five years amounts to 1,733 hours, of which 1,069 hours are lectures and 664 hours are seminars.

For the same period, Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova’s non-classroom academic workload totals 1,465 hours, including 1,155 hours devoted to semester assessment and examinations, and 310 hours related to doctoral supervision and participation in examination committees.

Under her academic supervision, one doctoral candidate has successfully defended a dissertation in the doctoral programme “Economics and Management (Industry)” – Professional Field 3.8. at Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, and since 2025 she has been supervising another doctoral student.

In summary, I would like to emphasize that the teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, is fully aligned with the subject area of the announced competition, and her accumulated teaching experience is entirely sufficient for holding the academic position of “Professor” in Professional Field 3.7. Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods and Modeling in Management).

Evaluation of the candidate’s research and applied research activity

The research focus of Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, is on quantitative modeling, decision support systems, digital transformation, and intelligent analysis of socio-economic systems.

For the purposes of the competition, Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova has submitted a total of 22 publications of diverse nature, including: 1 monograph; 17 articles and studies published in scientific journals indexed in internationally recognized databases of scientific information (Scopus and Web of Science), all co-authored; 3 papers published in peer-reviewed, non-indexed scientific editions (2 of them co-authored); and 1 published teaching manual used within the university network. For all co-authored publications, the relevant authorship contribution statements have been provided. Of the submitted publications, 19 are in English.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no legally established evidence of plagiarism in the scientific works submitted by the candidate for the present competition.

Two of Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova's publications have been cited in the works of other researchers, which attests to the positive reception of the theses and results of her scientific research. The total number of citations amounts to 47, of which 39 are in articles and conference papers published in scientific journals indexed in internationally recognized databases of scientific information (Scopus and Web of Science).

Particular attention should be given to the author's monographic study by Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, entitled **“Mathematical Modeling in Economic Research – Selected Methods and Approaches”**.

The monograph places emphasis on exploring the possibilities of applying mathematical modeling to the study of various economic processes, objects, and phenomena. The subject of the research encompasses different mathematical methods and techniques for modeling and optimization, with a focus on their application to the solution of specific economic problems. Through this monographic work, the author aims to propose a theoretical and practical framework within which key models for optimization, forecasting, and decision-making are analyzed, with a view to their adaptation and application in the study of managerial and economic issues.

In my assessment, the achieved results, as well as the generalizations and conclusions presented in the monograph of Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, enrich the body of knowledge in the field of economic mathematics and applied methods, thereby expanding the toolkit for managerial decision-making.

The publications of Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, beyond her habilitation work, fall within several interrelated research areas that are directly relevant to the scope of the announced competition in Professional Field 3.7. Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods and Modeling in Management).

Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova demonstrates a solid command of the theoretical foundations and the ability to interpret and apply conceptual frameworks in the field of applied quantitative modeling and digital decision support. Wherever appropriate, her research endeavors are substantiated by practical studies and empirical analyses.

The review of the publications submitted for the competition provides sufficient grounds for me to highly evaluate their scientific merit and practical relevance, in view of the achieved results and their full compliance with the requirements for holding the academic position of “Professor.” A number of the presented concepts, ideas, and proposals may be regarded as contributions of both scientific-methodological and applied scientific character. I accept the candidate's self-assessment regarding the nature of the contributions in her scholarly works.

3. Critical Remarks and Recommendations

In the reviewed scientific output, I do not identify any erroneous statements or significant omissions that would diminish its overall quality.

In addition to the classification of the scientific works according to the nature of their contributions, I believe that the contributory elements could also be systematized according to the research objectives and the results achieved – for example, contributions in the field of applied quantitative modeling and contributions related to digital decision support. Such an approach would further substantiate the clear correspondence of the candidate’s publications with the specific scope of the professional field of the announced competition (3.7. Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods and Modeling in Management)).

In her capacity as a future Professor, I recommend that Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, make targeted efforts toward publishing independent research articles in a greater number of reputable international peer-reviewed and indexed journals.

With regard to her future teaching activity, I consider it advisable for Assoc. Prof. Yankova-Lilova to develop independent textbooks, including ones based on the monograph submitted in the present competition, for the courses she teaches (Operations Research in Economics and Quantitative Methods in Management).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, based on the overall evaluation of the materials presented, I am convinced that the candidate in the competition, Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, satisfies the requirements for holding the academic position of “Professor” in accordance with the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria and its Implementing Regulations, as well as the relevant regulations of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”.

With full conviction and a strong sense of responsibility, ***I propose that Assoc. Prof. Tanya Petrova Yankova-Lilova, PhD, be elected to the academic position of “Professor” in Professional Field 3.7 Administration and Management (Quantitative Methods and Modeling in Management) at the Department of Management and Quantitative Methods in Economics, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”.***

26 February 2026

Prepared by:

(Signature)

Prof. Galina Kurteva, PhD