

INION

by Prof. Lazar Gruev, Doctor of Law
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regarding: a competition for the academic position of *Professor*, field of higher education: 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; professional field: 3.6. Law (Criminal Procedure) at the Faculty of Law of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, announced in State Gazette, issue No. 96 of 11 November 2025.

The sole participant in the competition is Ekaterina Salkova Getova. I have known the candidate personally for many years, as well as through her scholarly works. We have no joint publications, nor are there any other circumstances that could give rise to doubts regarding a potential conflict of interest.

An opinion in a competition for the academic position of Professor necessarily presupposes a comprehensive analysis of the candidate’s teaching and research qualities, with emphasis on the submitted habilitation thesis. The facts are as follows:

At present, Ekaterina Salkova is **Associate Professor** of Criminal Procedure at the Institute of State and Law of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and at the Faculty of Law of Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” (since 2019), and in the period 2016–2019 she held the same position at Ruse University “Angel Kanchev”. Since 2013 she has been Head of the Section of Criminal Law Sciences at the Institute of State and Law and Chair of the General Assembly of the Institute’s scholars. As a lecturer, she enjoys the respect not only of her colleagues in the department but also of her students, which in itself attests to her professional qualities.

Since the end of 2010 and continuing to the present, she has served as an **ad hoc judge** at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Over the years (including at present) she has held various expert and managerial positions, described in detail in the documentation attached to the competition procedure.

She graduated from the Faculty of Law of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” in 2000. In 2006 she successfully defended a doctoral dissertation at the Institute of State and Law and obtained the educational and scientific degree “**Doctor of Law**”.

The scholarly output submitted for participation in the competition is impressive not only in terms of its volume (1 monograph; 6 studies, one of which is in English; as well as 18 articles and reports)¹, but above all due to the pronounced topicality of the subjects addressed, their in-depth treatment, and the indispensable connection and orientation toward practice, without which any work in the field of criminal law sciences would lose its meaning.

The monograph submitted in the competition, “***Current Issues of Criminal Procedural Functions***”², is not merely a study of “current issues”, but rather a profound analysis of criminal procedural functions—with emphasis on the pre-trial phase, i.e. on principled, fundamental questions of the theory of criminal procedure which, as the author herself notes, have engaged scholars for decades. The essential question sought to be answered is whether the traditional understanding, long adopted, concerning the nature and characteristics of criminal procedural functions corresponds to the contemporary state of criminal procedure and—most importantly—whether changes are required, both from the perspective of their scientifically grounded analysis and with regard to their legislative regulation.

In fact, the idea for the study, prompted by the question as to what precisely is the function of the court when exercising powers assigned to it by the Criminal Procedure Code at the stage of the pre-trial proceedings, serves as a starting point but by no means limits the scope of the inquiry. On this basis, the author develops the work through a comprehensive analysis of procedural functions. This is done in an exceptionally

¹ If we add to the above-mentioned publications of the author during the defense of the doctoral dissertation and in the competition for the academic position of “associate professor”, namely: 2 monographs and a total of 16 articles and reports, then the conclusion about the “productivity” of the candidate, it seems to me, is indisputable. They, of course, remain outside the scope of this opinion, but they help for the overall overview.

² Paisii Hilendarski University Publishing House, Plovdiv, 2026.

methodical and consistent manner and, more importantly, in a thorough and well-reasoned way.

I note briefly: foundational works on the subject have been examined; the polemic with their authors is conducted with academic correctness, yet the substantiation of the author's own views is categorical and convincing; due account is taken of European standards in this field; the conclusions are based on a sound analysis of case law; a broad and systematic perspective on interconnected issues is clearly evident, as is a clear position adopted with regard to them.

The thesis that the function of the court at the pre-trial stage is specific—not supervisory, but protective of rights—does not coincide with the traditionally established understanding; however, it is substantiated in a manner which, even if it does not immediately persuade the reader of its correctness, at the very least provokes discussion, and this is always beneficial for the development of legal scholarship. Personally, I find it persuasive.

No less of „an added value“ are those parts of the study devoted to the two principal opposing functions, as well as the analysis concerning the civil claim within criminal proceedings.

Conclusion: the work is a completed scholarly product by an author who demonstrates not only the ability to select a topical issue but also to present it in an exceptionally well-reasoned manner, with insight and in a way that contributes not only to the advancement of scholarship but also, to a significant extent, to legal practice. A work worthy of a professorship.

Taking the above into account, I reach the following **conclusion**:

I am firmly convinced that the candidate meets the criteria and has fulfilled the requirements laid down in the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for the award of the academic title of Professor. Considering the contributory elements of the reviewed works, the candidate's overall rich and in-depth scholarly production, and her long-standing, fruitful teaching activity supported by proven pedagogical skills, I allow myself to recommend to the esteemed jury that it

adopt a decision proposing to the Faculty Council the election of **Ekaterina Salkova Getova** as Professor in the competition announced by Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

16 February 2026

Signature:

Prof. L. Gruev