

# OPINION

BY PROFESSOR ZHIVKO ZHECHEV PH.D.

FOR ASSOC. PROF. VESELINA NIKOLAEVA ILIEVA PH.D.

COMPETITION FOR THE ACADEMIC POSITION OF "PROFESSOR" IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION 3. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND LEGAL SCIENCES, PROFESSIONAL FIELD 3.4. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF SOCIAL WORK) AT KONSTANTIN PRES LAVSKY – UNIVERSITY OF SHUMEN

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

Assoc. Prof. Veselina Nikolaeva Ilieva, Ph.D. was born on February 25, 1985. In 2011 graduated with a degree in "Social Activities", Konstantin Preslavsky – University of Shumen, Faculty of Education, Shumen. She graduated from the master's program "Regulation and control in the system of social activities", Konstantin Preslavski in 2014. In 2018 acquired the scientific and educational degree "doctor" in Theory of Education and Didactics (Social Pedagogy). From 2020 holds the academic position of "associate professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction 3.4. Social activities (Sociological aspects of socio-pedagogical activity at the Faculty of Education of the Konstantin Preslavsky – University of Shumen, Shumen. From July 2008 until December 2011 works as a technical assistant in "Megaboard Bulgaria" Ltd., Sofia. From April 2013 until October 2013 works as a senior inspector in the Metropolitan Inspectorate of the Metropolitan Municipality, Sofia. From May 2015 until April 2016 works as a social worker in the association Information and consultations - Day center for people with mental disabilities "Sveta Marina", Sofia. From May 2016 until now he works as a teacher in the Faculty of Education of Konstantin Preslavsky – University of Shumen. From September 2014 until now, she is the manager of the international scientific refereed online journal "SocioBrains". She is currently the head of the "Social Work" department.

## **2. Meeting the minimum national requirements**

Assoc. Prof. Veselina Nikolaeva Ilieva Ph.D. fully satisfies the required minimum scientometric indicators in professional direction 3.4. Social activities. Of the required 550 points, the candidate applies 650 as follows: group of indicators A - 50 points, group of indicators V - 100 points, group of indicators G - 230 points, group of indicators D - 130 points, group of indicators E – 140 points).

## **3. Analysis of scientific production.**

The opportunity granted to me to write an opinion regarding the scientific production of the only candidate in the competition for "professor" - Assoc. Prof. Veselina Ilieva Ph.D. gives me the opportunity to present my notes in the limited 3 pages, therefore I will focus mainly on her monographs and textbooks. For the competition, she submitted 2 monographs and 2 textbooks. The monographs are: "Socialization in the postmodern

situation", 2022 - habilitation thesis and "Towards the theory and practice of social work", 2022. The textbooks are: "Sociological aspects of social work, Shumen", 2019 and "Futurology. 12 educational lectures", 2022.

In her habilitation thesis "Socialization in the postmodern situation", 2022, the author presents socialization from a starting point of the traditional understanding of it, expanding its understanding by presenting modern concepts about it, relying also on those of her colleagues from the Faculty of Education of Shumensky university. She then analyzes the eras of modernism and postmodernism, delving into Jean-Francois Lyotard's presentation of the postmodern situation. It is in this context that she examines the agents of socialization, who are a natural companion in the development of postmodern society. They have an important role in the growth and development of a person, how his life will go depends on them. In the postmodern situation, these agents are different, as opposed to modernity. The role of the family and educational institutions for the socialization of the individual is different. But in postmodernism, mass media, the Internet, digitalization, social networks, gender ideology, etc. are socializing agents. At the general cultural level, value priorities change, the value of human life increases, there is a movement from publicity to inviolability, the self-realization of the individual acquires a value-oriented character. As a result of social changes, economic and civil emancipation of women, the tendencies accompanying the individualization of men spread to women as well. Various strategies for "non-violent" socialization of children are based on the upbringing of their independence, the ability to solve life problems, difficulties in interpersonal communication.

In the second monograph, which is presented in the competition "Towards the theory and practice of social work" - 2022, Assoc. Dr. Veselina Ilieva builds on the traditional understanding of the spheres of social work by presenting her original views on it. About the 15 paragraphs of this monograph, it can be said that what they have in common is the cardinal understanding of social work - social work as a socio-cultural phenomenon, which is an integral part of the socio-cultural system of our society, as it is one of the main ways of organizational and socio-technological society's reaction to the new social situation. Social work comes from the recognized variety of individual needs, from the idea of the uniqueness of each person, his ability to change, it attracts to his activity, the internal potential of the subject, assistance in the implementation, which returns to a person the ability to change his life in situations, complicates his social functioning, restores the ability to act independently. The first of the textbooks "Sociological Aspects of Social Work, Shumen", 2019 is intended for students in the "Social Activities" and "Social Pedagogy" majors. It builds on the acquired knowledge of the students in the discipline "Sociology" by showing important logical connections between sociological knowledge and social work, which is fundamental in the social sphere. The textbook is structured in 13 lectures and the following 13 exercises. The exercises are provided for the final part of each lecture.

The second textbook "Futurology. 12 educational lectures.", 2022 is the first Bulgarian textbook on Futurology, for which the candidate Assoc. Ph.D. Veselina Ilieva receives admiration. He responds to the fact that since 2015, in the Department of "Social Work" of

the University of Shumen, for the first time in Bulgaria, this scientific discipline began to be taught, with exactly this name, and not the analogue "Social Forecasting". The learning content in the textbook is divided into 12 lectures, each of which has its own specified content, annotation and key words that facilitate the absorption of the intended learning content. Each lecture ends with questions and tasks for self-control and self-examination. After them, a test is presented, through which students can self-assess. At the end of the textbook, three general sample exam tests are also presented, which orient students to how their tests might look when taking a semester exam. And at the end of the textbook, the correct answers to all the tests are indicated.

Associate Professor Dr. Veselina Ilieva participated in the competition with 13 articles and reports, which are mentioned in the previous paragraph of the statement. They are all written to serve the individual majors' curricula of students majoring in Social Work and Social Pedagogy. Written in a professional but accessible language so that they can be accepted by students, building their professional and social intelligence.

#### **4. Critical Notes and Questions.**

I have no critical notes and questions.

#### **5. Conclusion.**

I give my POSITIVE evaluation and recommend to the esteemed Scientific Jury that we extend to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Education of the Konstantin Preslavsky – University of Shumen to elect Associate Professor Veselina Nikolaeva Ilieva Ph.D. to occupy the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, 3.4. Social activities (Sociological aspects of social work).

**Date: 12/10/2022**  
**Shumen**

**Prepared the opinion:**  
**Professor Zhivko Zhechev Ph.D.**