

STATEMENT

By Associate Professor, PhD Dimitar Vassilev Dimitrov
Department of Plant Protection, Botany and Zoology
at the Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen

Regarding: the research and teaching activities of Chief Assistant Professor PhD. Maria Zhivkova Kaschieva, participant in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at Konstantin Preslavski University of Shumen

Scientific field: 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine

Professional area: 6.2. Plant Protection (Herbology, Physiological and Phytopathological Mechanisms in Plant Protection)

Higher school: Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen

Announcement: State Gazette, issue 63 of 01.08.2025

Basis for the statement: Order of the Rector University of Shumen No. RD-16-238/31.10.2025 „Konstantin Preslavski“ University of Shumen in connection with determining the composition of the scientific jury for conducting the competition

1. Competition data

The announcement of the competition was published in the State Gazette (issue 63 of 01.08.2025) on the University's website. The only candidate who submitted documents for participation within the established deadline is Chief Asst. PhD. Maria Zhivkova Kaschieva.

The procedure for conducting the competition complied with all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations on the Terms and Procedure for Holding Academic Positions at University of Shumen "Konstantin Preslavski". It is evident from the materials provided that Chief Assistant PhD. Maria Zhivkova Kaschieva has fulfilled the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Education of the Republic of Bulgaria and the additional university requirements.

2. Data about the candidate

The candidate, Chief Assistant PhD. Maria Zhivkova Kaschieva, graduated from the University of Shumen "Konstantin Preslavski" in 2000, majoring in "Agrochemistry with Farming and Agribusiness". In 2002, she was accepted as a full-time doctoral student at the Agricultural Institute - Shumen in the system of the Bulgarian Agricultural Academy. She successfully defended her dissertation in the field of "Selection and Seed Production of Cultivated Plants" code 04.01.05. She obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in 2006. In 2011, she was elected as a Chief Assistant PhD at the University of Shumen "Konstantin Preslavski". She is very fluent in Turkish, French and English.

3. Description of scientific works

The list of publications submitted by Chief Assistant PhD. Maria Zhivkova Kaschieva for participation in the competition includes 21 scientific works, of which: • habilitation work – monograph (121 pages) – 1 pc.; • monograph that is not presented as a habilitation work (154 pages) – 1 pc.; • articles – 19 pcs.

- Habilitation work – published monograph 1 pc.
- Monograph that is not presented as a habilitation work 1 pc.
- Scientific articles published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information – 7 pcs.
- Articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes - 12 pcs.
- According to the report on compliance with the national minimum scientometric requirements, the candidate fully covers them and has the required number of points for all indicators, as follows:
 - For the indicator from group A – 50 points /out of 50 required/
 - For the indicators from group B – 100 points /out of 100 required/
 - For the indicators from group D – 230.4 /out of 200 required/
 - For the indicators from group E – 100 /out of 50 required/

The materials submitted for the competition fully cover the national minimum requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University of Shumen. From the submitted report it is evident that the candidate covers the required number of points for the individual groups, and for the indicator E he exceeds by more than 2 times the required number of points. The total number of points collected by the candidate is 480.4 with a required number of 400. In the 19 scientific papers submitted for the competition, Chief Assistant PhD Maria Kaschieva is the lead author in 4 of them (21.10%), second author in 10 articles (52.63%), third author in 1 of them (5.26%), fourth author in 3 of them (15.79%), sixth author in 1 of them (5.22%). The candidate has also submitted 2 monographs for consideration. The submitted scientific papers were checked through the anti-plagiarism system "StrikePlagiarism". After the check, no evidence of plagiarism was found.

4. Main scientific contributions of the candidate

Theoretical contributions

A weed inventory of arable agricultural areas in protected area BG0000573 "Kaliakra Complex" was conducted. Heterogeneity of the weed composition was established, which is a prerequisite for high ecological value of the arable areas. Protected plant species were identified, such as fragrant mattiola (*Matthiola odoratissima*), thin-veined wormwood (*Artemisia lehriana* Weber syn. *Artemisia*

fragrans Willd.) and Dobrudzha oats (*Avena eriantha* Dirieu), in this regard they have adaptation mechanisms and therefore develop well in the arable areas.

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6. Critical notes, questions and recommendations to the candidate

I recommend that Dr. Kaschieva focus her efforts in the field of herbology, where she has the potential to write both a textbook and teaching aids.

7. Conclusion

After reviewing the documentation and scientific production presented by the candidate, I believe that the research and teaching activities of Chief Assistant PhD Maria Zhivkova Kaschieva fully meet the requirements for holding the academic position of "associate professor". This gives me reason as a member of the scientific jury to vote positively for Chief Assistant PhD Maria Zhivkova Kaschieva to hold the academic position of "Associate professor" in the field of higher education 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine. 6.2. Plant Protection (Herbology, physiological and phytopathological mechanisms in plant protection).

Date 12.12.2025.

Shumen

Prepared by: 

/Assoc. Prof. PhD Dimitar Vassilev/