OPINION

by **Prof. Irina Aleksandrova Radeva, PhD**
Institute of Information and Communication Technologies – BAS
on the competition for occupying the academic position of **"Associate Professor"**
in professional field 4.6. *"Informatics and Computer Science"*, specialty *"Informatics"*,
announced in State Gazette No. 40/16.05.2025
for the needs of the "Intelligent Systems" Department at the Institute of Information and
Communication Technologies – BAS

By Order No. 151/14.07.2025 of the Director of the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies – BAS, Corresponding Member Sv. Margenov, I was appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury for the competition for occupying the academic position of **"Associate Professor"** in professional field 4.6. *Informatics and Computer Science*, specialty *Informatics*, announced in State Gazette No. 40/16.05.2025, for the needs of the Department "Intelligent Systems" at the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies – BAS.

Only one candidate has applied for the competition – Chief Assist. Dr. Valentina Todorova Terzieva-Bogoicheva, PhD.

As a member of the Scientific Jury, I have received: a request to the Director of IICT-BAS for admission to the competition, a CV in accordance with European standards, a copy of my doctoral degree certificate, a certificate of professional experience in my field, a list of scientific publications for participation in the competition, abstracts of scientific publications for participation in the competition in Bulgarian and English, a reference for original scientific and applied scientific contributions, copies of scientific publications for participation in the competition, a declaration that there is no proven plagiarism in scientific works in accordance with the law, a reference for registration with NACID, a reference for fulfillment of the minimum requirements of IICT-BAS, Reference E 1.3a from Sonix "Scientific publications in journals not indexed in WoS, Scopus, ERIH+...", Reference E 1.1a from Sonix "Scientific publications in journals indexed in WoS, Scopus, ERIH+", Reference A 1.2.2a. from Sonix "Citations in other international publications (including patents)," Reference A 1.2.1. from Sonix "Citations in WoS or Scopus", Reference from Sonix "All international projects", Reference from Sonix "All national projects (excluding internal ones)", evidence of participation in international and national projects, electronic media with information, as required by the ICT.

According to the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ADASRB, and the Regulations for Specific Conditions for the Acquisition of Academic Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at IICT–BAS, candidates for Associate Professor must meet the following requirements:

Art. 24 (1) The candidates for the academic position "Associate Professor" must:

1. have obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor";
2. have held the academic position of "Assistant Professor" or "Chief Assistant" for at least two years;
3. have presented a published monograph or equivalent publications in specialized scientific editions, which do not duplicate those submitted for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" or the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences";
4. meet the minimum national requirements under Art. 26, para. 2 and 3, respectively the requirements under Art. 26, para. 5;
5. have no proven plagiarism in scientific works under the law.

(2) The academic position "Associate Professor" shall be occupied through competition and selection.

(3) A competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" shall be announced if the relevant teaching or research workload can be provided, according to the regulations of the higher education institution or research organization.

Art. 26 (1) Candidates submit a report on the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3, respectively the requirements under Art. 2b, para. 5, and a report on the original scientific contributions, with the relevant evidence attached, as defined in the Act, its Regulations, and the regulations of the higher education or scientific organization.

Chief Assist. Valentina Terzieva-Bogoicheva, PhD **meets the requirements of Art. 24 (1), item 1** of ADASRB, having presented Diploma No. 001581/31.10.2023 for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Informatics from IICT–BAS.

Chief Assist. Valentina Terzieva-Bogoicheva, PhD **meets the requirements of Art. 24 (1), item 2 of ADASRB**, having presented a certificate signed by the Director of IICT–BAS and the HR office (outgoing No. 334/06.06.2025), confirming 9 years and 7 months of experience as Chief Assist.

Chief Assist. Valentina Terzieva-Bogoicheva, PhD **fulfils the requirement of Art. 24 (1), item 3**, having submitted 9 equivalent publications in specialized scientific editions (V1–V9) as per the IICT report on minimum requirements, Group B, indicator 3, item 4.

She also **meets the requirement of Art. 24 (1), item 4, fulfilling the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3, respectively para. 5**.

According to Art. 3 of the Regulations for Specific Conditions for the Acquisition of Academic Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at IICT–BAS, the minimum points by groups of indicators for **Associate Professor** in professional field 4.6. *"Informatics and Computer Science"* are as follows:

GROUP	INDICATOR	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT	CANDIDATE'S RESULTS
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	–	–
C	Indicator 3	100	148
D	Sum of indicators 4–10	260	379
E	Sum of indicators 11–13	70	600
F	Sum of indicators 14 to end	20	150

Total: 500 (required) vs. 1327 (candidate).

I accept the candidate's declaration that there is no proven plagiarism in the submitted scientific works, which **fulfils Art. 24 (1), item 5 of ADASRB**.

The submitted **List of Publications** contains 33 works. A brief analysis shows:

- Publications in journals and series – 12: Scopus (5 - №№ В2, Г1, Г8, Г9, Г24); Web of Science (7 - №№ В4, В5, G4, G5, G6, G7, G10).
- Publications in conference proceedings – 20: Scopus (5 - №№ В1, В3, В6, Г21, Г22); Web of Science (15 - №№ В7, В8, В9, Г2, Г3, Г11, Г12, Г13, Г14, Г15, Г16, Г17, Г18, Г19, Г20).
- 1 chapter from a collective monograph Scopus (№ Г24);
- 1 independent publication (№ Г17);
- All publications are in English.

Chief Assist. Valentina Terzieva, PhD has submitted two reports on her scientific publications, based on the information entered in the SONIX system of BAS. Report **E1.1a** "Scientific publications in editions indexed in WoS, Scopus, ERIH+ (published)" includes 65 publications, of which 6 are in journals with IF and 32 are with SJR. Report **E1.3a** "Scientific publications in editions not indexed in WoS, Scopus, ERIH+ or other profiled databases, thematic collections, including proceedings of international and national scientific forums (published)" includes 61 publications.

According to the SONIX reports – **A1.2.1** "Citations in WoS or Scopus" and **A1.2.2a** "Citations in other international editions (including patents)", a total of 407 citations are recorded. Of these, 266 citations to 52 publications are in documents indexed in the global databases Web of Science or Scopus, and 141 citations to 47 publications are in other international editions.

In accordance with Art. 10 (1) of the Regulations for the Specific Conditions for the Acquisition of Academic Degrees and Occupation of Academic Positions at IICT–BAS, **"Abstracts of the scientific publications"** in Bulgarian and English, as well as a **"Information on original scientific and applied scientific contributions"** have been submitted.

In **"Abstracts of Scientific Publications"**, Assoc. Prof. Valentina Terzieva presented the main results of her 33 works included in the list for participation in the competition. The publications cover a wide range of research in the field of informatics and computer science, with a specific focus on e-learning, intelligent educational systems, gamification, and the application of ICT in school education. The abstracts demonstrate a research focus on the development of models, methodologies, and applied solutions for personalized and adaptive learning, as well as the implementation of modern technologies in the educational process.

Assuming that Assoc. Prof. Valentina Terzieva participated equally in the works presented, I accept the four groups of scientific and scientific-applied contributions described in the **"Information on original scientific and applied scientific contributions"** (page 1). However, I note that the candidate has not distinguished between "scientific" and "scientific-applied" contributions. While this distinction would have facilitated a more objective assessment, its absence does not affect the value of the results achieved.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valentina Terzieva demonstrates active project activity with participation in 12 documented projects. International projects include 3 projects with a total value of 165,770 BGN, funded by European programs (DG ECHO, INTERREG-IPA CBC) and including collaboration with the German company EUROS Embedded Systems. National projects encompass 6 projects with a declared value of 1,465,215 BGN, including projects funded by the Science Research Fund (ISOSeM, SHAPES), the National Scientific Program "Smart Crop Production" and the ministerial project ICTinSES. Additionally, 3 projects in collaboration with Sofia University (APOGEE, e-CREHA, MOTIVATE) under the leadership of Prof. Boyan Bonchev are documented. Thematically, the projects concentrate on intelligent educational systems, e-learning, gamification, sensor networks and ICT applications in education, which demonstrates consistency in research interests. Participation in diverse consortiums with partners from academic institutions, universities and private companies testifies to the ability to work in multidisciplinary teams. Chronologically, the project activity spans the period 2010-2028, with more intensive activity observed after 2016.

As a critical remark, it should be noted that some of the documents related to the competition contain inconsistencies—some of the reported projects have no actual funding or no clearly traceable link to the publications presented. These omissions do not diminish the overall scientific output, but they create difficulties in accurate assessment.

For future work, I recommend that the candidate focus on linking project results more clearly to publication activity and taking on leadership roles in projects, which will strengthen her academic profile.

I know Assoc. Prof. Valentina Terzieva personally and can confirm that she is a productive researcher with proven qualities—hard work, diligence, and precision, as well as the ability to work successfully in a team.

CONCLUSION

All requirements and criteria under the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), its Regulations, the regulations of BAS, and the specific regulations of IICT–BAS are fulfilled.

I give a **positive conclusion** for the election of Chief Assist. Valentina Todorova Terzieva-Bogoicheva, PhD to the academic position of **Associate Professor** in professional field 4.6. *Informatics and Computer Science*, specialty *Informatics*.

I propose that the Scientific Jury unanimously vote to submit a proposal to the Scientific Council of the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies – BAS to elect Assoc. Prof. Valentina Todorova Terzieva-Bogoicheva, PhD to the academic position of "associate professor" in the *professional field 4. 6. "Informatics and Computer Sciences," specialty "Informatics".*

Sofia, 25.08.2025

Member of the Scientifi

На основание

ЗЗЛД