ASSESSMENT REPORT

Assessor: **Professor Katya Georgieva Stoycheva, PhD**
Department of Psychology
Institute for Population and Human Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Professional area: 3.2. Psychology

Evaluation of the scientific production submitted for consideration in the competition for promotion to the level of Associate Professor in the professional area: 3.2. Psychology (disciplines "Psychology of Terrorism and Negotiation", "Business Negotiation", "Psychology of Management", "Psychology" and "Psychological Interview, Interrogation, Confession")

for the needs of the Department of Psychology and Police Management of the Police Faculty of the Academy of the Ministry of the Interior,
announced in the State's Journal, Issue 73 from 14 August 2026

Candidate**: Senior Lecturer Diana Ancheva Bozhanova, PhD**

Only one candidate has submitted their application for promotion to the level of Associate Professor under the abovementioned competition. This is Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Psychology and Police Management, Faculty of Police, Academy of the Ministry of the Interior.

Dr. Diana Bozhanova is participating in the competition with the following **scientific works**:

- 1 single-authored peer-reviewed monograph, which is the main habilitation work ("Verbal Indicators of Deception", Avangard Prima Publishing House, Sofia, 2026);
- 1 single-authored peer-reviewed monograph, which is not the main habilitation work ("Negotiation in Hostage Crises", Academy of the Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, 2026);
- 1 book based on her PhD dissertation ("Negotiation in Demonstrative Suicide Attempts", Academy of the Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, 2026);

- 4 scientific articles and reports in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals and edited collective volumes in Bulgarian.

The **professional background** of Dr. Bozhanova is characterized by consistency and persistence of interests and results. She completed her higher education in psychology in 1992 at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". In 1993, she started working as a psychologist at the Institute of Psychology of the Ministry of the Interior, and in 2016 she became a senior lecturer at the Academy of the Ministry of the Interior, where her teaching and academic career has been developing so far. She teaches courses in police psychology, criminal psychology, psychology of management and business negotiations, psychology of terrorism and counter-terrorism, negotiations, psychological support of operational investigative activity and lie detection in undergraduate and graduate programs and in continuing professional education. In 2024, she successfully defended her PhD thesis on "Negotiation in Demonstrative Suicide Attempts". Her work has been repeatedly recognized with written awards. Her participation in the current competition is a justified step in her professional career.

The candidate's statement on **the original scientific contributions** of Senior Lecturer Dr. Bozhanova is well-founded and reflects the main directions in the development of her research interests and work. Dr. Bozhanova's work is aimed at a specialized audience and combines empirical data, theoretical concepts, and practical observations. Such types of work are valuable to both the academic and scientific-practical spheres, as they "bridge" the gap between abstract theory and real practice. Turning scientific concepts into action algorithms, policies, or optimizations that the specialized audience can apply immediately in the workplace is one of the most significant results of this approach.

Thus, the contribution of **the monograph** "Verbal Indicators of Deception" (Avangard Prima Publishing House, Sofia, 2026) lies in demonstrating the value of using appropriate scientific methods and techniques in an area of high social value such as law enforcement work. Its content is structured into four chapters, which sequentially present understandings of deception and its variations across different eras, cultures, and disciplines; the definition of deception and its types; and lie detection. The main emphasis of the work is the analysis of verbal indicators of deception, as well as the synthesis of knowledge into strategies and techniques for uncovering deception in the context of police work. The development of a questionnaire to determine the age

of immigrants, verified in practical exercises with security officers, demonstrates the effectiveness of the approach in finding scientifically grounded solutions to real, severe problems faced by practitioners in the field. The rich illustrative material in the text, which supports and clarifies the author's position, also deserves attention.

Dr. Bozhanova continues to explore the advantages of the "negotiation" method as a crisis resolution method in police practice. Following the analysis of negotiations in demonstrative suicide attempts (the subject of her PhD dissertation, on the basis of which a book was also published), in her new monograph the analysis extends to hostage crises ("Negotiation in Hostage Crises", Academy of the Ministry of the Interior, Sofia, 2026). Significant attention is devoted to summarizing the behavioral and psychological characteristics of hostages and abductors, deriving the core principles of the negotiation process and of the bargaining strategies in various hostage-taking crises, as well as crises' effective management from the standpoint of their peaceful resolution.

This approach of linking theory and practice, as well as the interest in the professional challenges facing security professionals, is also realized in Dr. Bozhanova's scientific articles and reports. They present its effective application for analyzing phenomena such as burnout among fire and emergency safety employees, hate speech, the personality of the terrorist, and the vulnerability of elderly people as witnesses and victims of crime.

Testimony to the current relevance and importance of Dr. Bozhanova's work are the 11 **citations** of her publications in peer-reviewed editions. Out of these, 3 citations are in an international scientific journal, and 3 other citations are in a national monograph.

The statement submitted by Dr. Diana Bozhanova about the compliance with the minimum national requirements does attest to **the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for the scientific production of the candidate aiming at the academic position of Associate Professor in domain 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional area 3.2. Psychology, according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the ADASRB.**

CONCLUSION

Senior Lecturer Dr. **Diana Ancheva Bozhanova** is an effectively working scientist who has consistently established their area of research in the field of police psychology. Her publications reflect a systematic research activity leading to significant results with substantial scientific and applied contributions.

Based on my high appreciation of the candidate's academic performance, I propose that Senior Lecturer Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova be elected to the academic position of Associate Professor by the Faculty Council of the Police Faculty of the Academy of the Ministry of the Interior.

Sofia, 10 November 2026 Signature: *Professor Katya Stoycheva, PhD*