O P I N I O N

By

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Regarding

The competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" (Docent), announced in the State Gazette, Issue 73 of August 14, 2026, within the Higher Education Field 3: "Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences," Professional Field 3.2: "Psychology." The competition covers the following academic disciplines: "Psychology of Terrorism and Negotiation," "Business Negotiations," "Management Psychology," "Psychology," and "Psychological Interviewing, Interrogation, and Confession," within the Department of

"Psychology and Police Management," Faculty of "Police."

Basis for the preparation of this opinion: Order No. 4581z-2169 dated October 14, 2026, issued by the Rector of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior, regarding the appointment of a scientific jury for the announced competition for the position of "Associate Professor." This is issued pursuant to Article 49, Paragraph 4, Item 4 of the Law on the Ministry of Interior, in conjunction with Article 4, Paragraph 2 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and in conjunction with Article 57, Paragraph... ...of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and a decision of the Faculty Council of the "Police" Faculty

(Minutes No. 7/4581p-14888 dated 02.09.2026)

1. General Provisions

One candidate has submitted documents for participation in the competition, in accordance with the procedure and within the timeframe stipulated by law: Inspector Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova, Senior Lecturer in the "Psychology and Police Management" Department at the "Police" Faculty of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior.

In compliance with the minimum national requirements, this opinion has been prepared based on the documents submitted within the deadline for the competition, which was announced on 14.08.2026 in the *State Gazette*, Issue 73. The documents submitted for the competition meet the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB) and the Regulations for its implementation.

Inspector Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova (Senior Lecturer) holds a higher education degree in Psychology. In 1992, she graduated with distinction, specializing in "Psychology" at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," receiving a diploma as a Psychologist with the following qualifications: PSYCHOLOGIST, TEACHER OF PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIAL STUDIES, ETHICS, LAW, ETC. The candidate’s diploma thesis is titled: "Certain Personality Changes in

Patients with Epilepsy." During her studies, she distinguished herself as a diligent student with enduring interests and in-depth knowledge across various fields of psychology and the humanities. In 2024, Diana Ancheva Bozhanova defended her doctoral dissertation titled "Negotiation During Demonstrative Suicide Attempts."

Diana Bozhanova has held the position of Senior Lecturer at the Academy of the Ministry of Interior (AMVR) since 2016. Prior to this, she worked for 23 years—starting in 1993—as a psychologist at the Institute of Psychology of the Ministry of Interior, where she fulfilled both expert and managerial roles.

2. Habilitation Work

The candidate, Dr. Diana Bozhanova, has submitted a habilitation work in the form of a monograph, published in 2026 by the "Avangard Prima" publishing house, titled "Verbal Indicators of Deception." This monograph does not duplicate the work submitted for her doctoral degree ("Negotiation During Demonstrative Suicide Attempts") and aligns perfectly with the subject matter of the announced competition. It is specifically designed for trainees and professionals seeking to develop their skills in detecting deception. The monograph does not claim to offer a universal, all-encompassing approach; rather, it provides guidelines intended to assist police officers in uncovering the lies they encounter daily in the course of their professional duties. This work focuses on the verbal (linguistic) indicators of lying—such as linguistic errors and speech dysfunctions, which are examined in detail in Chapter Three—while taking into account that successful detection results from the combined and sequential analysis of non-verbal, paraverbal, and verbal behavior. This sound, in-depth, and engagingly presented... An overview of the subject matter is made possible by the author’s exceptional professionalism, demonstrated over the years.

This monograph is primarily practical in nature. Its fourth chapter examines tactics for detecting lies in police work, specifically within the context of eliciting information through manipulative techniques during interrogations and/or operational interviews. The expert knowledge presented is intended for various categories of police personnel—patrol officers, investigators, and operational officers—as well as for anyone who wishes to determine whether an interlocutor is telling the truth or attempting to deceive them.

3. Fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor"

Through the publications and citations submitted for this competition, Dr. Diana Bozhanova meets the minimum national requirements for the position of "Associate Professor" within the higher education field of "Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences" (Field 3) and the professional area of "Psychology" (Area 3.2). She has accumulated a total of 432.5 points (across indicator groups A, B, C, and D), exceeding the required 400 points. Specifically, for groups A, B, and C (indicators 1, 2, and 3), a total of 150 points have been calculated, comprising the "Doctor" (PhD) degree (50 points) and the habilitation thesis (100 points). Regarding the publication requirements for the position of Associate Professor under group D (indicators P4 through P10)—as stipulated in the Regulations for the Application of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB)—the candidate is required to have accumulated at least 200

points. According to the submitted report, the candidate has accumulated 212.5 points. This total comprises both sole-authored and co-authored publications of a high scientific standard, as well as two additional monographs published by the Academy of the Ministry of Interior: *Negotiations in Hostage Crises* (163 pages, 2026) and *Conducting Negotiations During Demonstrative Suicide Attempts* (213 pages, 2025). The requirement of 50 points from citations has been exceeded, with a total of 70 points achieved.

Although points for indicator E have not been calculated, the biographical information indicates that Diana Bozhanova actively participates in scientific forums of significant public and national importance, including: the 9th International Congress of Psychology (2020); the congress "30 Years of the Psychology Major" at St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo (2022); and the international scientific conference "Social Changes in Post-Communist Eastern Europe" at UNIBIT (2024).

The submitted report is comprehensive and provides all necessary information. The requirements for the mandatory bibliographic description of publications and citations have been met. 4. Publications

The list of scientific works submitted by Dr. Diana Bozhanova for the competition includes a total of 6 scientific publications: one monograph based on her defended dissertation; one monograph authored by her and published for educational purposes at the Academy of the Ministry of Interior; and 4 articles presented at scientific forums within the country. All of these appear in peer-reviewed publications or edited collective volumes.

Diana Bozhanova's publications should be presented and evaluated both in terms of their content—specifically their scientific contributions—and from a strategic, applied perspective, given their significant relevance to the practical work of personnel within the Ministry of Interior system. In terms of content, these publications reflect the scope and direction of her research interests, focusing on three main areas: 1) the detection of deceptive behavior through a systematized set of verbal indicators, along with a model featuring specific tactics and strategies for conducting interrogations and operational interviews; 2) the fundamental principles of the negotiation process and strategies for handling hostage-taking crises, including the development of a predictive profile of the perpetrator; and 3) suicidal behavior and the appropriate response by authorities in cases of demonstrative suicide attempts.

Thematically and substantively, all the publications fall within the scope of the announced competition. The works selected for the competition are representative of the specific scientific field and the quality of the candidate's research. 5. Research Activity and Scientific Contributions

In the statement of original scientific contributions submitted by the candidate, nine interrelated contributions are listed and substantiated—points which I accept and support.

...the view that they represent an original contribution to scientific knowledge within the scope of the subject matter of the announced competition for the position of Associate Professor. It is important to highlight that, for the first time, a systematized set of verbal indicators—manifesting

in the speech of individuals exhibiting deceptive behavior—has been presented. Identifying and clarifying these indicators aids in detecting lies, not only in operational contexts but also in everyday life. Furthermore, the newly developed "Questionnaire for Determining the Chronological Age of Illegal Immigrants Apprehended within the Country" constitutes an original research approach. This is the case even though the approach relies on the conceptually imprecise application of cognitive-load-based lie detection techniques; specifically, the assessment of the veracity of statements cannot serve as a basis for determining biological or legal age, given the lack of a scientifically proven link between the two.

Another significant contribution to psychological practice involves the identified indicators of suicidal behavior. These indicators serve to assist police officers working in the field who encounter individuals engaging in demonstrative suicide attempts. Drawing upon the practical experience of police units in managing critical incidents involving demonstrative suicide attempts, the potential of "negotiation" as a method for resolving such incidents has been summarized, analyzed, and systematized.

A fundamental contribution also lies in the formulation of core principles for the negotiation process, as well as negotiation strategies applicable to various crisis situations involving hostages. For the first time, a distinction has been made based on specific personality traits of perpetrators and leaders within terrorist organizations, in an effort to develop a predictive profile of individuals engaged in terrorist activity.

Furthermore, a significant aspect of the research work involves a theoretical interest—supported by empirical study—in the often-overlooked issue of addressing the specific characteristics of elderly individuals (senior citizens) who are either perpetrators or victims of crimes; this insight is intended to assist police officers in their practical handling of such offenses.

6. Teaching Activities

Dr. Diana Bozhanova carries a full teaching load. She delivers lectures on "Psychology of Terrorism and Negotiation" and "Business Negotiations," and conducts practical seminars on "Introduction to Police Psychology," "Introduction to Criminal Psychology," "Psychology," and "Management Psychology" within the Master’s and Bachelor’s degree programs at the Academy of the Ministry of Interior (AMVR). Additionally, she teaches "Police Psychology," "Psychological Aspects of Management," and "Lie Detection" as part of initial professional training courses and professional qualification update programs.

All courses are supported by specially developed training materials and curriculum documentation.

CONCLUSION

Inspector Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychology and Police Management at the Faculty of Police within the Academy of the Ministry of Interior, meets all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the regulations for its implementation. Her scientific and professional development, as well as her teaching and research practice since 1993, have taken place exclusively within the system of the Ministry of Interior. The candidate’s overall scientific work is

characterized by a consistency of interests and a combination of imagination and analytical abilities. Dr. Diana Bozhanova possesses extensive research and practical experience in the fields of psychodiagnostics and crisis intervention applied within an operational environment—experience that is highly relevant to the academic and practical professional path she has chosen. Given the high assessment of Dr. Bozhanova's scientific and teaching activities, I have every reason to firmly recommend and support her appointment to the academic rank of "Associate Professor" (Docent) in Professional Field 3.2: Psychology, within the Department of Psychology and Police Management at the Faculty of Police, Academy of the Ministry of Interior.

Sofia, October 21, 2026

SIGNATURE:

/Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsvetelina Ivanova/