EVALUATION OPINION

From: Assoc. Prof. Valeri Denev Todorov,
PhD, Institute for Population and Human Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,
Department of Psychology, Professional Field 3.2. Psychology

Regarding: Competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Higher Education Area 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", Professional Field 3.2. "Psychology", in the academic subjects "Psychology of Terrorism and Negotiation", "Business Negotiation", "Psychology of Management", "Psychology", and "Psychological Interview, Interrogation, Confession", announced in the State Gazette, issue 73 of August 14, 2026, for the needs of the Department of Psychology and Police Management at the Faculty of Police of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior, with sole candidate Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova.

I. Assessment of Compliance with Minimum National Requirements

The competition was announced in accordance with the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ADASRB, and the specific requirements of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior. The sole candidate in the procedure is Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychology and Police Management at the Faculty of Police of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior.

From the presented detailed statement of compliance with the minimum national requirements (MNR) under Art. 26, para. 2 and para. 3 of ADASRB in Area 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", Professional Field 3.2. "Psychology", it is evident that Dr. Diana Bozhanova meets and exceeds the quantitative criteria in all groups of indicators for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor":

Group of Indicators	Minimum Requirements	Candidate's Points	Compliance
Indicator A (Dissertation for Educational and Scientific Degree 'Doctor' / PhD)	50 pts.	50 pts.	Meets
Indicator B (Habilitation Work – Monograph)	100 pts.	100 pts.	Meets
Indicator G (Publications and other	200 pts.	212.5 pts.	Exceeds

scientific works)			
Indicator D (Citations in scientific publications)	50 pts.	70 pts.	Exceeds

The total number of points formed by the research and publication activities of Dr. Bozhanova convincingly exceeds the statutory requirements, providing full justification for her admission to the final evaluation in the procedure.

II. Research Activity and Scientific-Applied Results

1. Assessment of the Main Habilitation Work

The main habilitation work presented by Dr. Diana Bozhanova is the monograph "Verbal Indicators of Lying" (Sofia, "Avangard Prima" Publishing, 2026, 163 pp., ISBN 978-619-279-257-2, with scientific reviewers Assoc. Prof. Tsvetelina Ivanova, PhD and Assoc. Prof. Zahari Goranov, PhD). The work represents an in-depth and original monographic study focused on non-instrumental methods of lie detection and the development of specific human skills for recognizing deceptive behavior in police practice.

In the monograph, the author successfully combines classical theories of increased cognitive load during lying (A. Vrij, P. Ekman, M. Enikeev) with her long-standing practical and teaching experience at the Academy of the Ministry of Interior. Of exceptional interest are the summarized data from the field experiment conducted by the author with cadets (covering 257 narrated stories), analyzing characteristic manifestations of language errors, evasive answers, delayed responses, references to moral authority, information gaps, "embedded lies", and verb tense inconsistencies.

2. Assessment of Other Scientific Works and Publications

Beyond the main habilitation work, the candidate presents a rich and thematically profiled body of scientific work, including:

The monograph "Hostage Crisis Negotiations" (AMVR, 2026, 163 pp., ISBN 978-954-348-257-3) – a systematic analysis of hostage crisis management, the psychological state of hostage-takers and hostages, manifestations of "Stockholm Syndrome", and tactics for negotiation team operations.

The book based on a defended doctoral dissertation "Negotiations in Demonstrative Suicide Attempts" (AMVR, 2025, 213 pp., ISBN 978-954-348-249-8) – a fundamental study of auto-aggressive acts and specific methodologies for police response and negotiation impact in suicidal crises.

Scientific articles in peer-reviewed specialized journals, addressing key applied topics: Burnout syndrome and professional exhaustion among Fire Safety and Civil Protection personnel; the psychological profile and personality of the terrorist; the psychological foundations of "hate speech"; as well as the specifics of police work with elderly victims and witnesses of crime.

3. Assessment of Scientific and Scientific-Applied Contributions

The main scientific and scientific-applied contributions of Dr. Diana Bozhanova have a pronounced practical orientation for police bodies and summarize the following key highlights:

- Scientific-theoretical systematization of verbal lie indicators and derivation of an original model for non-instrumental detection of deceptive behavior during interrogations and operational interviews.
- Development and testing of a new questionnaire for establishing the chronological age of illegal immigrants based on cognitive load and reverse chronological order of interrogation.
- Formulation of fundamental principles and algorithms for applying negotiation techniques in hostage crises and demonstrative suicide attempts.
- Empirical research of significant applied value regarding Burnout syndrome among Fire Safety and Civil Protection employees, personality traits of terrorists, and psychological aspects of hate speech.

4. Reflection in Scientific Literature (Citations)

The candidate's works have received a strong response within the scientific community and among practitioners. A total of 11 citations are presented (generating 70 points against a required minimum of 50), published in international journals (International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management, UK), monographs (Georgi Georgiev), and specialized scientific publications.

III. Teaching and Pedagogical Activity

Dr. Diana Bozhanova possesses extensive and proven experience as a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychology and Police Management at the Faculty of Police of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior. Her teaching workload covers key disciplines in Bachelor's and Master's programs directly matching the profile of the announced competition:

- "Psychology of Terrorism and Negotiation"
- "Business Negotiation"

- "Psychology of Management"
- "Psychology"
- "Psychological Interview, Interrogation, Confession"

Evaluations of her teaching activities are consistently high, and her developed instructional materials and role-playing exercises are successfully utilized by cadets, trainees, and operational staff across Ministry of Interior structures.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendation for Selection

The materials, scientific publications, and scientific-applied contributions submitted for participation in the competition by Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova fully comply with all requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ADASRB, and the specific criteria for academic positions at the Academy of the Ministry of Interior.

The candidate demonstrates a high level of theoretical training, significant scientific-applied achievements, and an established reputation as a respected lecturer and researcher in security and police psychology.

Based on the above, I give a POSITIVE evaluation and propose to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury and the Academic Council of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior to elect Dr. Diana Ancheva Bozhanova to the academic position of "Associate Professor" in Higher Education Area 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", Professional Field 3.2. "Psychology".

Date: 01.11.2026 Member of the Scientific Jury:
Sofia /assoc. prof. Valery Todorov, PhD/