

To

The Chairman of the Scientific Jury, determined
by Order No. R -1251/13.03.2025 15A
V. Aprilov Blvd., 4002 Plovdiv

To your Protocol No. 1/March 18, 2025

I present herewith:

Review of the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Pathoanatomy and Cytopathology", announced for the needs of MU-Plovdiv, Department of "General and Clinical Pathology"

in the State Gazette, issue 110./31.12.2024

Reviewer: Professor Dr. Petar Ivanov Genev, MD, Scientific specialty "Pathoanatomy and Cytopathology" Institution Medical University - Varna
Address and contacts: Postal address: 9000 Varna, 93 "Slivnitsa" Blvd., floor 7, ap. 40 Email address: ghenev@gmail.com Phone numbers: 0885163760

REVIEW

on the Competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Pathoanatomy and Cytopathology", announced for the needs of the Department of "General and Clinical Pathology", Medical University of Plovdiv,

with candidate: Dr. Maria Stoyanova Koleva

I. Analysis of the candidate's career profile.

Dr. Maria Koleva was born on 30.05.1985 in the city of Burgas. She graduated from the English Language School "Geo Milev" in Burgas (2003). In 2009, she studied at the Medical University of Plovdiv, majoring in "Medicine" and obtained a diploma with registration number 13199/30.10.2009). Then she started working as an Assistant Professor at the Department of General and

Clinical Pathology at MU-Plovdiv and a resident physician at the Department of Clinical Pathology at "St. George", Plovdiv. She obtained the specialty "Pathology and Cytopathology" in May 2017. She successfully defended her PhD Thesis on the topic "Eosinophilic metaplasia in the prostate epithelium: general characteristics, morphology, morphogenesis" on December 18, 2020. The following year, she was appointed as a chief administrative assistant in the Department. In Burgas - University "Professor Dr. Asen Zlatarov" in 2021 she acquired the academic position of "Associate Professor" and a Certificate of Professional Qualification in Health Management. Since 2022 she has also held the position of Head of the Department of Clinical Pathology at University Hospital "St. George", Plovdiv.

Over the years, Dr. Koleva has made efforts to follow the latest developments in the specialty and regularly participates in various events to maintain her qualifications - postgraduate training and pedagogical courses, diagnostic seminars for mastering methodologies and algorithms, for which she has presented certificates. She is a member of the Bulgarian and European Pathology Societies.

Medical University of Plovdiv and St. George University Hospital certify that Dr. Koleva has approximately 15 years of work experience in the specialty, respectively in the Department and the Department of Clinical Pathology.

II. General description of the materials submitted for the competition.

For this competition, the candidate submits for review a total of 20 publications in scientific journals, distributed as follows:

- abstract of a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "doctor": "Eosinophilic metaplasia in the prostate epithelium: general characteristics, morphology, morphogenesis", successfully defended on 18.12.2020 - (Group of indicators A 1)
- habilitation work - a collective monograph: "Current pathomorphology of bladder diseases", ISBN:978-619-189-144-3, printed in 2020, containing a total of 338 pages, of which 101 are personal work of Dr. Koleva, according to the

Distribution Protocol for full participation in the collective work, signed by the three authors (Group of indicators B 3)

- 14 publications in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in Scopus and Web of Science (Indicator Group D 7)
- four publications in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes (Indicator Group D 8)

III. Evaluation of the candidate's scientific works for overall academic development.

General characteristics of scientific production and publication activity;

Dr. Koleva has diverse scientific interests, primarily in the field of pathology of the excretory system. The majority of publications are in this area: the dissertation is dedicated to the pathology of the prostate gland; the monograph is on diseases of the urinary bladder.

Dr. Koleva has submitted for review 14 articles published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information, and another four articles in non-refereed journals. Thematically, these articles present individual elements of the doctoral thesis - epithelial metaplasia in transurethral resections of the prostate gland, PD-L1 expression in lymphoepithelial lesions and granulomatous prostatitis. The rest are descriptions of biopsy and autopsy cases from the pathologist's practice.

Two articles from the List of publications in non-referred scientific journals are also case reports. The morphological description of such cases enriches the scientific literature with more information about rare diseases and facilitates their diagnosis.

The total score of this scientific production is 221.60 with a minimum of 200 required. This certifies that the minimum requirements of Group of Indicators D have been met.

Scientific activity – dissemination and application of the candidate's scientific and practical achievements among the scientific community;

It is noteworthy that the candidate's scientific activity has increased over the years - from 2-3 publications on average per year, in 2023 it reaches 6. The areas of interest and the authority of the journals in which she publishes her

results are also progressively increasing. Some of the investigations are in collaboration with various clinicians, and are based on her description and morphological assessment of biopsy materials. It is obvious that Dr. Koleva makes great efforts to follow the latest developments in the specialty and regularly participates in various events to maintain her qualifications and improve her skills. She is a member of scientific organizations and attends national and international scientific forums - forms for disseminating knowledge, direct exchange of experience and creating useful contacts.

Participation in the implementation and management of projects;

Medical University of Plovdiv has issued Dr. Koleva certificates for participation in the research teams of a total of five projects; two intra-university and three - with external funding. Thematically, three of the projects are related to the candidate's research profile - urogenital pathology; the rest are aimed at establishing the biological effect of medicinal plants.

Scientific and creative achievements (scientific authority);

The majority of Dr. Koleva's scientific publications are collective works. In addition to her ability to work in a team, this means that Dr. Koleva is a sought-after collaborator. Some of her publications, as well as citations, are in prestigious medical journals with a high Impact Factor. She has received an award for high publication activity.

Overall, Dr. Koleva's scientific output is distinguished by its contemporary thematic focus, methodological competence and clinical applicability, from which her authority also stems in scientific circles.

Supervision of doctoral students.

The documentation provided lacks information on supervision of doctoral students by Dr. Koleva.

IV. Evaluation of the monographic work submitted by the candidate for participation in the competition for "Associate Professor".

The monograph presented as a habilitation work is an in-depth literature review and analysis of diseases of the urinary bladder - general characteristics and diagnostic problems.

Dr. Koleva is the sole author of the sections on normal anatomy, histology, and embryology of the urinary bladder. The section on normal anatomy also discusses in detail the blood supply, lymphatic drainage, and innervation of the urinary bladder. In parallel with the normal histology, the histochemical and immunohistochemical characteristics of the individual cell populations in the urothelium are described. The demonstration and analysis of the most commonly used immunohistochemical markers are particularly useful for the daily practice of the pathologist.

The sections on benign tumors and non-tumor lesions in the urinary bladder are also the personal work of Dr. Koleva. The etiology, molecular pathology, known and potential biomarkers, histological classification, and problems in the differential diagnosis of these processes are described in detail.

Overall, the monograph is based on the authors' extensive practical experience and large number of original publications, illustrated with high-quality microphotographs from their own observations, obtained with modern biopsy research methods, and is a useful tool not only in the practice of the pathologist, but also for related specialists and medical students.

The monograph is evaluated at 100 points, which meets the requirements of Indicator B 3.

V. Reflection (citation) of the candidate's publications in the national and foreign literature (publication image).

Dr. Koleva's publications cover a wide spectrum of diagnostic pathology and deservedly are echoed in the periodical literature.

According to a search of world-renowned scientific information databases (Web Of Science and Scopus), Dr. Koleva's publications have 10 citations, which correspond to 150 points. In addition, Dr. Koleva indicates one citation in the List of citations in non-referred journals with scientific review and still another one in the List of citations in monographs and volumes with scientific review

With a total of 165 points in the Reference for the cited requirements under Group of indicators E are covered.

VI. Comprehensive, qualitative assessment of educational, methodological and teaching activities, including scientific supervision of students, doctoral students, and postgraduates.

Medical University of Plovdiv issues a Report on the teaching workload of units with diagnostic activities for the last three years, which shows that Dr. Koleva has conducted between 390 and 470 hours of practical classes, including English-language training, with an annual norm of 250 teaching hours. The Report clearly shows that Dr. Koleva has taught all disciplines to students of medicine, dentistry and pharmacy, including in the English-language training program. She has also been assigned some lectures from the main lecture course. The Report also lists hours for extracurricular employment - consultations and scientific guidance of students, preparation of teaching materials and others. In addition, she serves as a Chief Administrative Assistant. Dr. Koleva is a co-author in the publication of textbooks and manuals on pathology. Two of the articles in the List of Publications in Non-Referred Journals with Scientific Review are also on problems of teaching pathology.

VII. Critical Notes and Recommendations.

I have no serious critical comments regarding the design of the documentation submitted for review. I accept the data in the Self-Assessment and the contributions mentioned without objection.

VIII. Overall assessment of the candidate's compliance with the minimum national requirements

The following Table shows the comparison between the National Minimum Scientometric Indicators for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" and the quantitative parameters (number of points) for which the candidate has presented evidence, according to the approved methodology.

Group of indicators	Content	Assoc Prof (points)	Dr. Koleva (points)
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 3 or 4	100	100
Г	Sum of indicators 5÷9	200	221,6
Д	Sum of indicators 10÷12	50	165
Е	Sum of indicators 13÷21	60	137,16
Ж	Teaching activity		740,3

Obviously, Dr. Koleva fully meets the requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" according to the regulatory documents - the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Promotion of Higher

IX. Conclusion

The candidate possesses the necessary theoretical knowledge, professional skills and conceptual vision to generate a scientific idea, to find the right way to implement it, and also to draw conclusions useful for diagnostic practice, i.e. all the necessary qualities to conduct an independent scientific study. She has sufficient training and personal experience to maintain a high level of teaching in pathology.

The documentation submitted for the Competition is complete and meets the procedural requirements in the regulatory documents. The candidate's scientific output meets the required criteria. I am impressed by the candidate's professional qualities and I believe that he fully meets the requirements and challenges of the position.

Based on the presented scientific works, their significance, and the scientific contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to propose that Dr. Maria Koleva take the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 7.1. Medicine, area 7. Health and Sports, and I vote positively for this with full conviction.

28.04.2025

Varna

Signature:

Prof. Dr. Peter Ghenev, MD)