

STATEMENT

By Prof. Tanya Ivanova Deneva, MD, PhD
Member of the Scientific Jury appointed by Order No. R-2505/21.04.2026 of the Rector
of the Medical University of Plovdiv

On a competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor**
in the scientific specialty **Clinical Laboratory**
at the Department of Clinical Laboratory,
Faculty of Medicine, Medical University of Plovdiv,
for teaching in Bulgarian and English, one part-time position (4 hours), announced in
State Gazette No. 13 of 03.02.2026.

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE AND THE SUBMITTED MATERIALS

The competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty Clinical Laboratory at the Department of Clinical Laboratory, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University of Plovdiv, was announced in State Gazette No. 13 of 03.02.2026.

Two candidates were admitted participating in the competition:

Chief Assistant Dr. Snezhana Stoyanova Stoencheva, MD, PhD
Chief Assistant Dr. Delyana Miteva Davcheva, MD, PhD

The documents and materials submitted for the competition have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, its Implementing Regulations, and the Regulations for Academic Development at the Medical University of Plovdiv. They provide sufficient information for an objective assessment of the candidates' scientific, teaching, and professional achievements.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE CANDIDATES' CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Chief Assistant Snezhana Stoyanova Stoencheva, MD, PhD is a specialist in Clinical Laboratory Medicine with consistent professional and academic development in the field of laboratory medicine. She completed her secondary education in 1999 at the Plovdiv Language High School with a specialization in English language studies. In 2006, she graduated in Medicine from the Medical University of Plovdiv with excellent results both in her state examinations and overall academic performance. Between 2009 and 2013, she specialized in Clinical Laboratory Medicine and obtained her specialty qualification in 2014.

Her professional career began in 2007 as a physician at Astralab Medical Diagnostic Laboratory, Gorna Oryahovitsa. Since 2012, she has been working at the Central Clinical Laboratory of St. George University Hospital, Plovdiv, where she has successively held the positions of physician and specialist in Clinical Laboratory Medicine.

Dr. Stoencheva's academic development has been closely associated with the Department of Clinical Laboratory at the Medical University of Plovdiv. In 2015, following a competitive selection procedure, she was appointed Assistant Professor at the Department. In 2023, she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation entitled "Clinical and Laboratory Assessment of Coagulation and Fibrinolysis in Patients with Malignant Diseases". Since 2024, she has held the academic position of Chief Assistant Professor.

Dr. Stoencheva continuously maintains and expands her professional qualifications through participation in international educational webinars in the field of clinical laboratory diagnostics, specialized courses related to statistical analysis of scientific data, electronic and distance learning, development of online educational courses, and the use of educational platforms.

She is a member of the Executive Board of the Bulgarian Society of Clinical Laboratory, the Bulgarian Medical Association, and the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

Chief Assistant Delyana Miteva Davcheva, MD, PhD, completed her secondary education at the Plovdiv Language High School with a specialization in German language studies. In 2003, she graduated in Medicine from the Medical University of Plovdiv. Between 2006 and 2011, she specialized in Clinical Laboratory Medicine and subsequently obtained a Master's degree in Public Health and Health Management.

Her professional career began in 2007, and she has since worked as a physician specialist in the Clinical Laboratory Department of St. George University Hospital, Plovdiv. Between 2013 and 2014, she also worked at the Clinical Laboratory of the Specialized Hospital for Active Treatment of Pulmonary Diseases "St. St. Cosmas and Damian", Plovdiv.

Her academic career has been associated with the Department of Clinical Laboratory at the Medical University of Plovdiv. In 2010, she was appointed Assistant Professor. In 2022, she defended her doctoral dissertation entitled "ICP-MS Multi-Element Analysis – Applicability in Clinical Laboratory Practice", and since 2023 she has held the academic position of Chief Assistant Professor.

During the period 2015–2016, Dr. Davcheva served as Head of the Research Laboratory "Elemental Analysis" at the Technological Center for Emergency Medicine in Plovdiv. Subsequently, the laboratory became part of the Research Institute of the Medical University of Plovdiv. At present, Dr. Davcheva is a member of the research team within the research area Environment and Health.

In parallel with her academic activities, Dr. Davcheva has continuously upgraded her professional qualifications through participation in specialized courses and training programs in Clinical Laboratory Medicine, statistical analysis of scientific data, quality management systems, and internal auditing in accordance with ISO 15189 standards.

Dr. Davcheva is a member of the Bulgarian Medical Association, the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, and the Bulgarian Society of Clinical Laboratory.

III. EVALUATION OF SCIENTIFIC OUTPUT AND CITATIONS IN THE ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANDIDATES

The overall characteristics of her scientific output and publication activity present Chief Assistant Dr. Snezhana Stoencheva as an ambitious and promising researcher.

Dr. Stoencheva has authored 22 scientific publications, 13 of which are indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, with a cumulative Impact Factor of 23.212. In 15 of these publications she is either the first or leading author. She has participated in 30 scientific forums and has delivered five plenary lectures, including two at international and three at national scientific conferences. Her h-index is 4.

For participation in the competition, Dr. Stoencheva has submitted:

- One doctoral dissertation (**Group A – 50 points**);
- One habilitation monograph entitled “Laboratory Markers of Hypercoagulability in Transfusion-Dependent Beta-Thalassemia” (2025) (**Group B – 100 points**);
- Ten articles indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, six of which have an Impact Factor (**Group G – 156.6 points**);
- Six publications in peer-reviewed non-indexed journals (**Group G – 117.5 points**);
- Citation record comprising 84 citations in Scopus and Web of Science, 5 citations in monographs and edited volumes, and 12 citations in peer-reviewed non-indexed journals (**Group D – 1,260 points**);
- Participation in 10 university-funded research projects (**150 points**).

Dr. Stoencheva’s scientific production demonstrates a clearly identifiable personal contribution and leading authorship in a substantial proportion of her publications. The indexed articles have been published in journals ranked within the Q1 and Q2 quartiles of Scopus and Web of Science, with a cumulative Impact Factor of 14.8. She is the first or leading author in approximately 60% of these publications.

The thematic focus of her publications and research projects is coherent and consistently developed within the fields of Clinical Laboratory Medicine, Hemostaseology, Laboratory Diagnostics, and the application of contemporary laboratory biomarkers in socially significant diseases.

A major focus of her scientific work is the investigation of coagulation and fibrinolytic disorders, assessment of thrombotic risk, laboratory monitoring, and the prognostic value of biomarkers in oncological, hematological, endocrine, infectious, and other clinical conditions.

Significant contributions have been made through studies investigating markers of coagulation and fibrinolytic activation, including TAT complexes, prothrombin fragment F1+2, D-dimer, and tissue plasminogen activator (t-PA). Several of these investigations were conducted for the first time in Bulgaria among patients with malignant diseases.

The monograph “Laboratory Markers of Hypercoagulability in Transfusion-Dependent Beta-Thalassemia” provides a comprehensive and systematic analysis of hemostatic abnormalities in β -thalassemia. The work has a pronounced scientific and practical orientation and enriches current knowledge regarding the pathogenesis of hypercoagulability, the role of specific laboratory biomarkers, and the possibilities for laboratory assessment of thrombotic risk in these patients.

Dr. Stoencheva’s publication activity demonstrates remarkable citation impact and substantial scientific recognition. A total of 101 citations in various scientific sources have

been documented, reflecting the relevance, visibility, and scientific significance of her research contributions.

Most of the citations indexed in Scopus and Web of Science are associated with publications in the fields of hemostaseology, oncohematology, coagulation disorders in oncological diseases, laboratory assessment of prothrombotic conditions, and the application of contemporary hemostatic biomarkers. Significant scientific impact has also been achieved by publications addressing vitamin D and autoimmune thyroid diseases, which have been cited in review articles, meta-analyses, and clinical studies in the fields of endocrinology, autoimmunity, and nutrition science.

Furthermore, the citation record encompasses interdisciplinary areas such as cardio-oncology, COVID-19-related complications, stress biomarkers, and micronutrient status in chronic diseases, demonstrating the broad applicability, scientific relevance, and strong international visibility of the candidate's research output.

The research activity of **Chief Assistant Dr. Delyana Davcheva, MD, PhD**, has been consistently developed in the fields of Clinical Laboratory Medicine, multi-element analysis, and the application of modern analytical technologies in laboratory medicine. Her publications, monographic work, and research projects are focused on the implementation of highly sensitive analytical technologies in clinical practice and on elucidating the role of micronutrient status in various pathological conditions.

For participation in the competition, Dr. Davcheva has submitted:

- One doctoral dissertation (**Group A – 50 points**);
- One habilitation monograph entitled “The Human Ionome – Clinical and Laboratory Aspects” (2026) (**Group B – 100 points**);
- One book based on her doctoral dissertation entitled “Ionomic Profile in Autoimmune Thyroid Disease” (**Group G – 40 points**);
- Ten publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, seven of which have an Impact Factor (**Group G – 105.3 points**);
- Twenty-three publications in peer-reviewed non-indexed journals (**Group G – 158.4 points**);
- Citation record comprising 44 citations in Scopus and Web of Science and 10 citations in peer-reviewed non-indexed journals (**Group D – 710 points**);
- Participation in two national scientific or educational projects (**30 points**);
- Participation in four international scientific or educational projects (**80 points**).

Dr. Davcheva has served as first or leading author primarily in publications appearing in peer-reviewed non-indexed journals and edited scientific volumes. Of the 23 submitted publications, she is the first or leading author in nine (39%). A substantial proportion of her publications are directly related to international, national, and university-funded research projects in which she has participated as a member of the research team.

Particularly noteworthy are her studies devoted to trace element analysis and the application of advanced analytical methodologies in laboratory diagnostics, which clearly demonstrate a focused scientific interest and the establishment of an independent research

direction in the field of elemental analysis. Several of these studies have been published in international journals with Impact Factor, ranked within the Q1 and Q2 quartiles and indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, with a cumulative Impact Factor of 12.086, contributing to the strong visibility of the candidate's scientific work.

I consider Dr. Davcheva's scientific contributions to be original, scientifically grounded, scientifically applicable, and of practical significance. They are the result of sustained research activity and may be summarized within the following major thematic areas: development, validation, and application of ICP-MS methodologies for multi-element analysis in biological and non-biological matrices; investigation of micronutrient status, ionic profiles, and the role of essential and toxic trace elements in endocrine, metabolic, and chronic diseases; application of advanced analytical technologies in laboratory medicine and translational biomedical research.

Special recognition should be given to the monograph "The Human Ionome – Clinical and Laboratory Aspects" and the book "Ionic Profile in Autoimmune Thyroid Disease." These works present contemporary concepts in ionomics, multi-element analysis, and the application of ICP-MS technologies in clinical laboratory practice, with particular emphasis on the role of essential and toxic trace elements in various pathological conditions.

The majority of citations indexed in Scopus and Web of Science are related to publications in the fields of ICP-MS multi-element analysis, micronutrient status, and the role of essential trace elements in endocrine, metabolic, and chronic diseases. Particularly notable is the scientific interest in studies concerning serum selenium concentrations in autoimmune thyroid diseases, the role of rubidium and trace element imbalance in chronic kidney disease and hemodialysis, as well as publications investigating incretin hormones GLP-1 and GIP in type 1 diabetes mellitus.

Significant scientific impact has also been achieved through publications concerning urinary mercury determination and multi-element analysis of human serum, which have been cited in review articles and methodological publications within analytical chemistry and laboratory medicine.

Part of the citation record is associated with interdisciplinary research in dental medicine, biocompatibility of metal alloys, toxicology, and public health, demonstrating the broad applicability and international visibility of the candidate's scientific contributions.

IV. COMPREHENSIVE QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING, EDUCATIONAL, AND MENTORING ACTIVITIES

Dr. Stoencheva's teaching activity includes lectures and practical training sessions in Clinical Laboratory Medicine, Clinical Chemistry, and Computer Technologies in Diagnostic Laboratory Medicine for students from various academic programs in both Bulgarian and English, including international students participating in the Erasmus programme.

She is actively involved in the education of residents and doctoral students, as well as in postgraduate training programs for physicians from different medical specialties. She has contributed to the development of textbooks and educational materials. The submitted records for the last two academic years demonstrate a substantial teaching workload exceeding both the requirements for non-habilitated academic staff and the minimum

requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor (684 teaching hours; 346.5 points).

Dr. Stoencheva participates in examination boards for semester examinations, colloquia for medical residents, and specialty training competitions. She also performs administrative duties related to educational activities, electronic resources, and maintenance of the Department's website.

Dr. Davcheva's teaching activity includes lectures and practical courses in Clinical Laboratory Medicine and Clinical Chemistry for students from various academic programs in both Bulgarian and English.

She actively participates in the training of residents and doctoral students, as well as in semester examinations, colloquia for medical residents, and academic staff selection procedures. She has also contributed substantially to the preparation of textbooks and educational materials for students in various specialties.

The submitted documentation demonstrates that her teaching workload exceeds both the institutional norm and the minimum requirements for appointment as Associate Professor, amounting to 675 teaching hours and 337.5 points.

In 2022, Dr. Davcheva received the award "*Best Practical Training Lecturer*" from third-year medical students enrolled in the Bulgarian-language program, reflecting the high evaluation of her teaching performance and commitment to the educational process.

In parallel with her teaching and research activities, Dr. Davcheva performs numerous administrative and organizational duties, serving as Chief Administrative Assistant, departmental property officer, Quality Manager, and certified internal auditor within the quality management system of the Medical University of Plovdiv.

IV. CRITICAL REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I have no critical remarks or recommendations regarding the submitted materials or either of the candidates.

I am personally and professionally acquainted with both Chief Assistant Dr. Snezhana Stoencheva, MD, PhD, and Chief Assistant Dr. Delyana Davcheva, MD, PhD, and have direct impressions of their teaching, research, and professional activities.

During the review of the submitted documentation, I identified several minor inconsistencies in individual indicators and reported scores, which have been corrected and reflected in the comparative evaluation table.

Chief Assistant Dr. Delyana Davcheva, MD, PhD, provided documentary evidence of participation in eleven university-funded research projects that were not included in her self-assessment report. In accordance with Group E, Indicator 16, "Participation in a National Scientific or Educational Project," I have acknowledged these projects and awarded the corresponding number of points (165 points).

Dr. Davcheva also submitted evidence of co-authorship in an additional university textbook with a separate ISBN number that had not been included in her self-assessment. Consequently, I have awarded an additional 5.7 points under Indicator E-20, in accordance with the applicable regulations for the evaluation of textbooks and teaching materials.

Regarding Indicator E-22, "Training of Interns, Residents, and Doctoral Students (Seminars and Practical Training Sessions)," Dr. Davcheva assessed her activity as 2×30 points (60 points in total). According to the applicable provisions of the Academic Staff Development Act, its Implementing Regulations, and the Regulations of the Medical

University of Plovdiv, a maximum of 30 points may be awarded under this indicator regardless of the number of trainees. Therefore, I have reduced the score under this indicator by 30 points, resulting in a final score of 30 points.

V. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Based on the submitted documentation, scientific achievements, citation impact, project participation, teaching activities, and administrative engagement, I conclude that both candidates fully satisfy the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, its Implementing Regulations, and the Regulations for Academic Development of the Medical University of Plovdiv for appointment to the academic position of **Associate Professor** in the scientific specialty **Clinical Laboratory**.

Both candidates demonstrate substantial scientific productivity, strong publication activity, participation in research projects, significant teaching engagement, and active involvement in the educational process and the development of the Department of Clinical Laboratory.

The submitted scientific works address relevant and contemporary topics, possess clear scientific and practical significance, and demonstrate good international visibility. The overall academic profiles of both candidates reflect consistent professional development and well-established academic competence.

Comparative Table of the Mandatory Minimum Scientometric Indicators for Candidates in the Competition for the Academic Position of Associate Professor in Field 7.1. Medicine (Medical-Clinical Sciences), Medical University of Plovdiv

Groupe	Indicators	Value	Assoc.Prof	Points Davcheva, MD, PhD	Points Stoencheva, MD, PhD
A	1. Dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor (PhD)	50	50	50	50
B	2. Dissertation for the award of the scientific degree Doctor of Sciences	100			
B	3. Habilitation thesis – Monograph	100	100	100	100
	4. Habilitation thesis – Scientific publications (not fewer than 10) published in journals indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases	60/n for each publication			
Г	5. Published monograph not submitted as the principal habilitation work	100	200 точки 15 publications, including 10 publications indexed in Scopus and/or Web of Science, of which 3 publications with IF		
	6. Published book based on a defended doctoral dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree Doctor (PhD) or the scientific degree Doctor of Sciences	40		40	
	7. Publications and conference papers published in scientific journals indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases	60/n or distributed according to an authorship contribution protocol		105.3	156.6
	8. Publications and conference papers published in peer-reviewed journals or edited collective volumes	30/n or distributed according to an authorship contribution protocol		158.4	117.5
	9. Published chapter in an edited monograph	20/n			
Д	10. Citations or reviews in scientific publications indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases or in monographs and edited volumes	15	7 citations in journals indexed in Scopus and/or Web of Science	660	1260

Groupe	Indicators	Value	Assoc.Prof	Points Davcheva, MD, PhD	Points Stoencheva, MD, PhD
	11. Citations in peer-reviewed monographs and edited volumes	10			50
	12. Citations or reviews in peer-reviewed non-indexed journals	5		50	60
E	13. Awarded scientific degree Doctor of Sciences	40	60 точки x Participation in at least one research project (including university-funded projects) x Acquired medical specialty (for Field 7.1 Medicine)		
	14. Supervision of a successfully defended doctoral student (n = number of supervisors)	40/n			
	15. Acquired medical specialty	40		40	40
	16. Participation in a national scientific or educational project	15		2x15 =30 11x15 =165	10x15 =150
	17. Participation in an international scientific or educational project	20		4x20 = 80	
	18. Principal investigator of a national scientific or educational project	30			
	19. Principal investigator of an international scientific or educational project	40			
	20. Published university textbook or textbook used in the school education system	40/n		11.4+5,7= 17.1	17.1
	21. Published university teaching manual or teaching aid used in the school education system	20/n		3.3	
	22. Training of interns, residents, and doctoral students (seminars and practical classes)	30		30	30
Ж	Teaching activity:				
	Teaching workload (lectures and practical classes)		100 points (for the last 2 years × 0.5 points/hour)	337.5	346.5

Groupe	Indicators	Value	Assoc.Prof	Points Davcheva, MD, PhD	Points Stoencheva, MD, PhD
	Academic position held		200 points (Chief Assistant Professor – 100 points per year)	291.7	216.66
	Total		810	2158.3	2594.36

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR RANKING/APPOINTMENT

Both candidates are established specialists with proven professional, teaching, and research achievements developed consistently throughout their careers. The submitted materials and their overall academic activity demonstrate a high level of professional competence, active scientific productivity, and a sustained contribution to the advancement of Clinical Laboratory Medicine. Each candidate possesses the qualifications, experience, and academic background required for appointment to the academic position of Associate Professor.

In formulating my final assessment, I have considered not only the quantitative scientometric indicators but also the qualitative characteristics of the scientific output, which I regard as leading criteria in the evaluation of academic achievements. These include publication activity in refereed and indexed journals, international visibility and citation impact, as well as the degree of personal and leading authorship contribution to the submitted scientific works.

Based on the above considerations, I rank the candidates as follows:

1. Chief Assistant Snezhana Stoyanova Stoencheva, MD, PhD

2. Chief Assistant Delyana Miteva Davcheva, MD, PhD

Considering the higher publication activity in journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, the stronger citation impact, the more pronounced leading authorship contribution, and the substantially higher overall score achieved across the evaluated indicators, I confidently recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury elect **Chief Assistant Snezhana Stoyanova Stoencheva, MD, PhD** to the academic position of **Associate Professor in Clinical Laboratory**.

11.06.2026 r.

Prof. Tanya Deneva, MD, PhD

Заличено на основание
Чл.5 §1, 6. "В" Регламент (ЕС)2016/679