

## OPINION

By Prof. Svetlozara Lyubomirova Petkova,  
Institute of Experimental Morphology, Pathology and Anthropology with Museum  
/IEMPAM/ - BAS,  
member of the Scientific Jury, appointed by order No. NO-05-05-12/21.10.2025 of  
the Director of IEMPAM-BAS

**Regarding:** competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the professional field 6.4. Veterinary Medicine, scientific specialty "Parasitology and Invasive Diseases of Animals and Humans" for the needs of the Experimental Parasitology section announced in the State Gazette, issue no. 81/03.10.2025

The only candidate in the announced competition for "Professor" is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariana Stancheva Panayotova-Pencheva, from the Experimental Parasitology section at IEMPAM-BAS.

The candidate has submitted a complete set of required documents for the competition in a systematic and correct manner. They are in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act and the Academic Staff Development Regulations at IEMPAM-BAS.

Brief biographical data about the candidate:

Assoc. Prof. Mariana Stancheva Panayotova-Pencheva graduated with honors from Thracian University - Stara Zagora, as a Master of Veterinary Medicine in 1995. She joined the system of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in the same year. In 2009, she defended her PhD in the scientific specialty "Parasitology and Invasive Diseases of Animals and Humans" on the topic: "Etiological, epizootological and pathomorphological studies on protostrongylidoses in domestic and wild ruminants in Bulgaria". Her work experience is more than 30 years, as she went through her scientific development from a specialist, through the ranks of a research associate until 2014, when she became an associate professor in the Experimental Parasitology section of IEMPAM.

In this competition, Dr. Mariana Panayotova-Pencheva participated with 54 scientific papers, of which 32 were IF or SJR. Her total impact factor is 22.328, the individual 9.729, and h-index 8. The distribution of publications by quartiles is Q1- 6, Q2 - 10, Q3 - 8 and Q4 - 8. She also presents 65 participations in authoritative national and international forums such as congresses, conferences and others. Assoc. Prof. Panayotova-Pencheva's citations are over 300.

Assoc. Prof. Panayotova - Pencheva has participated in 17 projects, of which 12 are included in the competition for professor (8 national and 4 international). She has led 2 national and 3 international projects, and her role and competence as a leading scientist and organizer of various activities is evident. She has participated in international scientific colleges and councils - Russian Journal of Parasitology, Journal of Zoological and Botanical Gardens, in scientific forums and program committees in our country and abroad. From the presented materials, active expert activity is also observed - 48 reviews of scientific articles and projects and participation in 12 scientific juries. She has reviewed 48 scientific articles for international and Bulgarian scientific journals.

Assoc. Prof. Panayotova - Pencheva was the supervisor of a full-time doctoral student Vasilena Dakova, who successfully defended her dissertation in 2020 on the topic: "Studies of parasitosis in wild animals in Bulgaria". The scientific supervision of a defended doctoral student is a mandatory condition according to the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at IEMPAM-BAS for habilitation as a professor, and she fulfills it.

The analysis of the correspondence between the minimum required points by group of indicators and those presented by Assoc. Prof. Panayotova - Pencheva is presented in a table:

Group of indicators	Required points	Actual points
Group A	50	50
Group B	100	208
Group G	200	264.5
Group D	100	2520
Group E	100	155
<b>Total</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>3197.5</b>

The points of scientometric indicators exceed many times the minimum required by law. Increased results in publication activity and citation are highlighted, which is an indicator of relevance and systematic work on scientific issues by the candidate.

The presented scientific publications are grouped into five main areas:

1. Etiology and spread of parasitosis
2. Epidemiology of parasitosis
3. Immunity, pathogenesis and pathomorphology of parasitosis
4. Control of parasitosis
5. Bee pathology and bee products

Contributions arising from the obtained scientific results in the relevant areas, which are of a scientific and applied nature in the field of veterinary parasitology, are presented.

Assoc. Prof. Panayotova - Pencheva is a member of the Scientific Council of IEMPAM-BAS from 2015 to the present. She has actively participated in scientific forums as a member of organizational and program committees. She is a member of the editorial boards and councils of 2 scientific publications. She is a member of the Management Board of the Bulgarian Parasitological Society.

Conclusion:

The documents submitted for the competition fully meet the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations on the Terms and Procedure for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at IEMPAM - BAS. Based on the above, I confidently give my positive assessment for awarding the academic position of "Professor" to Associate Professor Dr. Mariana Panayotova-Pencheva and I confidently recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury and the Scientific Council of IEMPAM to support her choice with a positive vote.

12.02.2026

Prof. Svetlozara Petkova

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Svetlozara Petkova', is written over a red rectangular box. The signature is cursive and extends below the box.