



RECENSION

Вх. № РД-20-1163/04.08.2025

by Prof. DSc. Nikolay Hristov Sterev, UNWE – Sofia, Scientific specialty: 05.02.18
Economics and Management; 3.8. Organization and Management of Production

regarding the application for the academic position of “PROFESSOR”

at the University of Economics – Varna in the field of higher education 3. “Social Sciences, Economic and Legal Sciences”, in professional field 3.8. “Economics”, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Business Planning and Corporate Culture)”

I serve as a member of the academic jury in accordance with Rector’s Order No. RD-06-89/28.05.2025 of the University of Economics – Varna. This review has been prepared in line with Decision No. 1 of the Academic Jury dated 24.06.2025.

The sole applicant in the competition for the academic position of “professor,” announced in State Gazette, issue 32/15.04.2025, is Associate Professor Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov from the University of Economics – Varna, Department of Industrial Business and Logistics. According to the submitted documentation, the candidate:

- **Meets and exceeds the minimum national requirements** for the position of “professor” in the respective higher education field, as per Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Development of Academic Staff Act (DASA):
 - Group A: 50 pts., minimum required – 50 pts.
 - Group B: 100 pts., minimum required – 100 pts.
 - Group C: 325 pts., minimum required – 200 pts.
 - Group D: 235 pts., minimum required – 100 pts.
 - Group E: 285 pts., minimum required – 100 pts.
 - **Total: 895 pts. (minimum required: 550 pts.)**
- **Exceeds the additional quantitative criteria** set by the University of Economics – Varna (Art. 2b, para. 5 of DASA):
 - Scientific reports: 105.0 pts., minimum – 60 pts.
 - Scientific articles and studies: 132.5 pts., minimum – 115 pts.
 - Publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science: 37.5 pts., minimum – 30 pts.
 - Citations in Scopus and Web of Science: 60.0 pts., minimum – 15 pts.
 - Supervised PhD graduates: 80.0 pts., minimum – 40 pts.
 - Research projects: 180.0 pts., minimum – 15 pts.
 - **Total: 595.0 pts. (minimum required: 275 pts.)**

1. Candidate Profile

The sole applicant for the position of PROFESSOR at the University of Economics – Varna holds a Bachelor’s degree in Economics (1997) and a Master’s degree in Economics (1998), both from the same university. He was awarded a PhD in 2003 in the scientific specialty 05.02.18 “Economics and Management of Industry” by the Higher Attestation Commission



(ИАС) with diploma No. 28786/08.01.2004 for a dissertation on: *Problems of Corporate Culture in the Bulgarian Industry*.

He began his academic career in 2004 as Chief Assistant Professor and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2010 in the scientific specialty 05.02.18 "Economics and Management (Planning and Analysis of the Industrial Enterprise)" with diploma No. 26560/23.08.2010.

His teaching portfolio includes: Enterprise Business Planning, Corporate Culture, Enterprise Economic Analysis, Competitiveness and Growth Management, Corporate Culture and Consulting Ethics, and Planning and Analysis of the Enterprise.

His academic output includes 60 publications: 5 monographs, 6 studies, 21 scientific articles, 22 conference reports, and 6 textbooks or teaching aids. He has supervised four PhD students, two of whom have successfully defended their dissertations.

In conclusion, the candidate's academic and professional qualifications fully comply with the requirements for the position of PROFESSOR as outlined in Article 118, para. 2, items 1 and 2 of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

2. Overview of Scholarly Works

The candidate for the academic position of PROFESSOR: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, participated in the competition with 33 publications, including 1 monograph for the competition, 1 monograph for the doctoral degree and 1 collective monograph, 4 studies, 2 collective textbooks, 11 articles and 13 scientific reports. Some of the publications are in English. Of the publications submitted for the competition: 5 are indexed in Scopus; 1 is indexed in Web of Science; 10 are referenced in SEEOL, 2 are referenced in ERIH+ and 3 are referenced in EBSCO. The share of indexed publications is 18%, and of referenced publications – 30%. The distribution between independent and co-authored is as follows:

№	Publications	Sole author		authorship		Total		Indexed in Scopus and Web of Science	Referred at CEEOL, ERIH+, EBSCOhost
		N	p	N	p	N	p		
1.	Monographs	2	357	1	6	3	363	-	-
2.	Studia	-	-	4	75	4	75	3	2
3.	Articles	7	106	4	35	11	141	3	5
4.	Papers	8	76	5	33	13	109		3
5.	Учебници и учебни помагала	-	-	2	64	2	64		
Total:		17	539	16	213	33	752	6	10

All submitted works were published after the candidate's appointment as Associate Professor and do **not overlap** with those used for previous academic promotions.

The thematic focus of the candidate's research is within the field of **business planning and corporate culture**, fully aligned with the scientific specialty and scope of the announced



competition. The publications explore relevant issues related to the nature, structure, development, and effectiveness of corporate culture in business organizations, with particular emphasis on its publicly disclosed (internet-published) aspects and their connection to strategic positioning, stakeholder communication, and performance outcomes.

2.1. Evaluation of the monograph in the competition for "PROFESSOR"

The only candidate in the competition: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, participated in the competition with a monograph on the topic: The published on the Internet corporate culture of business organizations in Bulgaria, published by the publishing house Nauka i konimostika, Varna, in 2025 with ISBN 978-954-21-1190-0.

The monograph has two reviewers - habilitated persons. The total volume of the reviewed monograph is 164 printed pages, 10.25 printing presses and fully meets the requirements for a monographic work. More specifically, the monographic study defends the thesis that a higher level of publication of the official corporate culture in the Internet environment contributes to better awareness of partners and stakeholders about the strategic priorities of companies, which in turn favors the realization of positive organizational results - sales and profit.

Notably, the monograph submitted for the competition is a comprehensive and methodologically grounded study addressing the strategic role of online-published corporate culture in informing stakeholders and enhancing organizational results. The empirical research spans four sectors of the Bulgarian economy – beer production, courier services, construction, and meat processing. The study evaluates the level of development of publicly disclosed corporate culture, its core characteristics, and the relationship between cultural transparency and company profitability. A comparative sectoral analysis is performed, identifying critical deficiencies and proposing measures for improvement.

The monographic study covers Bulgarian enterprises from four sectors of the real economy - beer production, courier services, construction and meat processing. The study assessed the level of development of the published corporate culture, identified its main content characteristics and analyzed the relationship between the degree of its disclosure and the economic results of the companies. Based on the data obtained, a comparative analysis was carried out between the individual sectors, key problems in building such a culture were formulated and opportunities for its improvement were proposed. The results of the empirical study indicate that the published corporate culture of business organizations in Bulgaria on the Internet is poorly developed, and in a significant number of cases it is completely absent. This prevents companies from using its potential for market differentiation and building a sustainable organizational image.

The monograph submitted for review is structured in six consecutive chapters, organized in accordance with the logic of the presentation.

The first chapter presents the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study, examining corporate culture as an essential factor for increasing competitiveness in the modern business environment. In this context, the concept of "published culture" is defined as part of the official culture of the organization, outlining its main characteristics and internal structure.



Its main elements are derived, their hierarchy is justified and their content features are examined. The last two paragraphs present the methodology of the study and the statistical tools used to analyze the relationship between the level of disclosure and the profitability of companies.

The second, third, fourth and fifth chapters are structured identically and contain an empirical analysis of the development of the published corporate culture in the four relevant economic sectors. At the beginning of each chapter, the context of the sector is presented through an analysis of its characteristics, current state and trends. The analysis of corporate culture is focused on four main areas:

- Calculating the relative share of companies that disclose each of the elements of the published culture;
- Determining the shares of companies according to the number of disclosed elements;
- Calculating the disclosure coefficient;
- Analyzing the content characteristics of the individual elements.

Each chapter ends with an examination of the correlation between the degree of disclosure and the profitability of revenues in the respective sector.

The sixth chapter contains a summary of the main conclusions of the study, including a comparative analysis between sectors. Significant similarities and differences in the published culture are indicated in relation to:

- The significance of individual cultural elements;
- The number of elements included in the cultural portfolio;
- The emphases and priorities in the content of the published messages.

Based on the identified deficiencies, practical recommendations and measures for improving and developing the published company culture have been formulated. These proposals are universal in nature and can be implemented by a wide range of business organizations.

2.2. Evaluation of scientific publications under the "PROFESSOR" competition

Under the competition, the only candidate: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov has submitted 30 scientific publications for review, including 1 monograph for the doctoral degree and 1 collective monograph, 4 studies, 11 articles and 13 scientific reports.

The remaining publications serve to deepen and broaden various thematic aspects of this central research topic – including definitions, structural elements, content specifics, measurement approaches, and sectoral nuances of corporate culture in the digital space. The use of statistical tools and empirical verification lends credibility and practical relevance to the candidate's work.

The main directions in the publications are:



- **Development of industrial enterprises**
 - A number of factors and circumstances are outlined, hindering industrial enterprises in their efforts to improve market positions and increase competitiveness. The conclusion summarizes the main conclusions of the research, and some questions are raised, which are the subject of future research on the topic (D7.1).
 - The opportunities that the Operational Program "Human Resources Development" 2014-2020 provides to Bulgarian enterprises for ensuring good and safe working conditions are analyzed and the actual absorption of funds under the "Good and Safe Working Conditions" procedure by the beneficiary enterprises in Varna District is assessed (G4.8)
 - The growth potential of industrial companies is diagnosed, and the key factors for their long-term sustainable development are defined, and on this basis, measures are proposed to ensure a favorable environment for the development of existing and the creation of new real production in Bulgaria (G4.1)
 - The main advantages that the application of competitive intelligence in industrial enterprises would lead to are deduced. The analysis is focused on the positive impact on the competitiveness of companies, regardless of the economic sector in which they operate (G4.5)
- **Company culture**
 - the essence and features of company culture are theoretically examined and its status and development in the Bulgarian industry are analyzed. Opportunities for its improvement and adaptation to modern dynamic market conditions have been revealed. Primary (main) and secondary (additional) elements that build the structure of the published corporate culture of companies have been identified (G2.1; G3.2; G4.1; G4.14; G4.15; G4.16; G4.17; G4.18; G4.23; G5.1; G6.1)
 - the role of the mission, vision and values in building the published corporate culture of insurance companies in Bulgaria on the Internet has been revealed, outlining the specifics of their formulation and application. (G4.22, G5.2)
 - the relationship between the degree of development of the published corporate culture and the level of corporate profitability, as a key financial and economic indicator, has been established. The results show that, depending on the nature of the disclosed elements, the published corporate culture has between a weak and significant impact on the profitability of sales revenues of the studied companies (D3.1; D4.19).
 - the key problems facing the project management team leader in building team culture are examined, on the basis of which specific measures can be taken to improve it and increase the cohesion of team members (D4.6).
 - the possibilities are outlined to stimulate the pursuit of self-realization of employees in order to achieve the strategic goals of business organizations through corporate culture management. Existing theoretical statements in the areas of strategic management, corporate culture and human resources are integrated and summarized. The positive and negative aspects of the attitude of employees towards the employer and its culture are outlined (D4.3; D4.9, D4.11, D4.19; D4.20)
- **Strategic management and HR management**



- The features of the strategic management of companies are examined when placed in the framework of adverse impacts of the external environment, limiting the scope of possible actions regarding business processes on the example of the COVID pandemic (D4.10).
- The nature of the measures and actions related to personnel management, taken by Bulgarian business organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic, measures for managing the human factor (D4.12) are established.

The analysis of the obtained scientific and scientific-applied results in the works submitted for review shows that the candidate's publications are in accordance with the requirements under Art. 118, para. 2, items 3-6 in connection with Art. 129 of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna. Moreover, in the report on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements, the publications in SEEOL, ERIH+ and EBSCOhost are referenced, which leads to an increase in the number of points for each of them - in a total amount of 145.0 points. Separately, 1 chapter of a collective monograph, studies (referenced in SCOPUS) and a scientific paper (referenced in SEEOL) are submitted for review, which adds another 50.0 points. Thus, the total value of indicators from group D becomes 510.0 points.

3. Scientific and Applied Contributions

The candidate's body of work submitted for the competition contains both theoretical and applied contributions that advance knowledge in the field of corporate culture and business planning. These contributions can be grouped into the following main areas:

3.1. Contributions of a theoretical and theoretical-methodological nature:

1. Conceptualization and Definition of Internet-Published Corporate Culture

- A key contribution lies in the clarification of the nature and scope of the publicly disclosed (internet-published) corporate culture as an integral part of a company's official culture. The author defines its place within the overall organizational system and highlights its importance as a communicative and strategic management tool.

2. Identification and Structuring of Cultural Elements

- A structural model of internet-published corporate culture is proposed, identifying its constituent elements and substantiating their hierarchical arrangement. This model allows for a more systematic analysis and evaluation of corporate culture across organizations and sectors.

3. Development of Methodological Tools for Empirical Research

- The author develops a specialized methodology for analyzing the internet-published corporate culture of business organizations, including tools for measuring the level of disclosure and content richness of its elements. Additionally, appropriate statistical instruments are proposed for exploring the relationship between cultural transparency and company profitability.

4. Empirical Verification Across Four Economic Sectors

- The findings of the empirical study offer valuable sector-specific insights into the state, strengths, and weaknesses of corporate culture disclosure practices in



the beer production, courier services, construction, and meat processing industries. These findings contribute to the understanding of how sectoral characteristics influence the formation and communication of corporate values and identity.

3.2. Contributions of a scientific-applied and applied nature:

5. Identification of Sectoral Patterns and Benchmarking

- The comparative analysis between sectors leads to the identification of both commonalities and divergences in cultural practices, allowing for benchmarking and best practice transfer among businesses operating in different environments.

6. Proposal of Measures for Improvement

- Based on the diagnosed deficiencies, the candidate formulates generalizable recommendations for enhancing the internet-published corporate culture of business organizations. These include practical strategies for improving content quality, increasing transparency, and aligning corporate communication with strategic goals.

In summary, the contributions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov demonstrate a **high level of scholarly rigor, originality, and applicability**. The research outcomes have both theoretical significance and practical utility for scholars, managers, consultants, and policymakers concerned with organizational development and communication in a digital context.

3.3. Evaluation of the candidate's citations.

The candidate in the competition: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, has submitted a report on the presence of 33 citations of his scientific works, which are distributed as follows:

- Citations in Scopus and Web of Sciences: 2 pcs. /30 pts./
- Citations in monographs and collective volumes: 11 pcs. /110 pts./
- Citations in non-refereed journals: 19 pcs. /95 pts./

The citations show that the candidate has contributed moments of a theoretical, methodological and applied nature, which have been identified by other authors and have found a place in the literature cited by them.

4. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums.

- The candidate reports participation in 6 scientific research projects. In 5 of them he is the leader, as these projects are related to the scientific research results reported in the competition.
- The candidate has been a member of the Organizing Committee of an international scientific conference 5 times, and in 2 of the conferences he is the Chairman of the Organizing Committee. He also reports participation in the Scientific Committees of 5 scientific forums.
- The candidate reports 3 times delivering a plenary report at international conferences.



- The candidate also reports expert and consulting activities, and through his applied contributions he is included in expert teams of 3 large national companies.

5. Evaluation of Teaching and Educational Activities

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has over **20 years of experience** in higher education as a full-time academic at the University of Economics – Varna. His teaching portfolio includes both undergraduate and graduate-level courses, among which the most prominent are:

- **Enterprise Business Planning**
- **Corporate Culture**
- **Enterprise Economic Analysis**
- **Competitiveness and Growth Management**
- **Corporate Culture and Consulting Ethics**
- **Planning and Analysis of the Enterprise**

He has developed **teaching materials**, including **textbooks**, **lecture notes**, and **practical guides**, which are actively used in the university's educational process. The high evaluation of his teaching work is evidenced by **positive student feedback** and the **long-standing inclusion** of his courses in various academic programs.

In addition to his teaching responsibilities, the candidate has been actively involved in:

- **Supervising diploma theses** and **mentoring graduate students**;
- **Supervising doctoral students** – to date, four PhD students have been assigned to him, two of whom have successfully defended their dissertations;
- **Participating in curriculum development** and academic program improvement;
- **Conducting trainings** and participating in university initiatives for professional development of teaching staff.

The candidate has participated in 1 collective textbook: "Management of Competitiveness and Growth", and 1 collective teaching aid: "Management of Pricing".

A high assessment deserves the fact that he reports 2 successfully defended doctoral students, as well as supervision of 4 doctoral students. At the same time, the candidate reports participation in 10 Scientific Juries for holding an academic position, incl. 1 review. The candidate has also participated in 19 scientific juries for acquiring the ONS Doctor.

Overall, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov demonstrates a high level of commitment and professionalism in his academic and teaching activities. His pedagogical approach successfully combines theoretical foundations with applied business perspectives, thereby contributing to the practical training of students and the academic prestige of the University of Economics – Varna.



6. Evaluation of Project, Expert, and Research-Organizational Activities

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has actively participated in a number of **research and applied projects**, contributing significantly to their successful implementation. According to the submitted documentation, he has been involved in:

- **6 research and applied research projects**, with a total credit of **180 points** (per the internal evaluation system of UE–Varna), exceeding the institutional requirements for the academic position of Professor;
- Projects funded through **national programs, university funds, and external partnerships** with business and institutional stakeholders;
- Roles as **team leader, researcher, and methodological consultant**, depending on the project scope and objectives.

His project work has focused on areas closely aligned with his research interests: corporate culture, business planning, competitiveness, and organizational performance. The practical orientation of these projects underlines his capacity to apply academic knowledge to real-world business problems.

In addition to research projects, the candidate has contributed to:

- **Expert activities** related to business diagnostics, organizational culture assessments, and strategic consulting for companies and public organizations;
- **Scientific-organizational efforts**, including participation in program and organizing committees of academic conferences, review of scientific papers, and membership in academic and professional bodies.

Through these activities, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has established himself as a **respected expert** in his field, with notable influence in both academic and professional circles. His ability to integrate research, teaching, and consulting ensures a balanced and impactful academic profile.

7. Plagiarism

When reviewing the publications accepted for scientific review within the framework of this competition, no evidence was found and/or no signals of infringement of copyright of other researchers were identified at the time of preparing the review.

8. Critical remarks to the candidate.

In essence, the scientific and creative results of the candidate for the academic position of PROFESSOR correspond to the direction of the competition. Despite the fact that partial criticisms and remarks can be made to individual elements of the candidate's scientific production submitted for review, I believe that in general no significant such criticisms can be made to him.



Nevertheless, I pose the following question:

- How does the penetration of Artificial Intelligence tools affect /will affect/ the published corporate culture of business organizations?

Conclusion

In summary, the documents and materials submitted by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov meet all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADSRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ADSRB and the relevant Regulations of the University of Economics - Varna.

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the ONS 'doctor' and holding the title of AD 'associate professor'. His scholarly contributions are **original, theoretically grounded, and practically applicable**, offering valuable insights into the structure, function, and communicative role of corporate culture in modern business organizations, particularly in its internet-published form.

In view of the above, I express my **positive evaluation** and firmly recommend that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov be awarded the academic position of **PROFESSOR** in the field of higher education 3. "Social Sciences, Economic and Law Sciences," professional field 3.8. "Economics," scientific specialty "*Economics and Management (Business Planning and Corporate Culture)*" for the needs of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics at the University of Economics - Varna.

29 July 2025

Reviewer:

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

/prof. DSc. Nikolay Starev/



REVIEW

Вх. № ДД-20-1297/19.08.2025

1. General Information

Review drawn up by: Prof. Dr Evgeni Petrov Stanimirov; Area of Higher Education: 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; Professional Field: 3.8. Economics; Scientific Specialty: "Marketing"; University of Economics - Varna.

Basis for drawing up the review: Decision of the Scientific Examining Jury appointed by order No РД-06-89/28.05.2025 and Decision of the first sitting of the Scientific Examining Jury, held on 24.06.2025 in hybrid form (pursuant to Art. 4, Para. 8 of the LDASRB and Art. 124, Para. 2 of the *Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at UE-Varna*).

2. Information about the Competition

The competition is promulgated in SG, iss. 32/15.04.2025 for occupying the academic position of "Professor" in Professional Field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Planning and Company Culture)".

3. Candidate in the Competition

Within the advertised deadline, documents for participation in the competition are submitted by one applicant: Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Ivanov Minkov, who is found eligible to take part in the competition by a Committee, under Art. 122 of the *Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at UE - Varna*.

The candidate in the competition meets the Minimum National Requirements for occupying the academic position of "Professor" in Professional Field 3.8 "Economics" (under Art. 2b, Para. 2 and 3 of the LDASRB), as well as the additional quantitative requirements of UE-Varna (under Art. 2b, Para. 5 of the LDASRB).

4. Information about the Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Ivanov Minkov is the only candidate in the competition. Ilian Minkov acquires the EQD of "Master" at the University of Economics - Varna in 1998. In 2003 he is awarded the ESD of "Doctor" with a defended dissertation on the following theme: *Issues of Company Culture in Bulgarian Industry* (decision of the Higher Attestation Committee – HAC – Record No 14/28.10.2023). In 2010 the HAC confers on him the academic rank of "Associate Professor" in scientific specialty 05.02.18 "Economics and Management (Planning and Analysis of the Industrial Enterprise)" – Record No 12/22.06.2010. The candidate satisfies the requirements of Art. 118, Para. 2, Item 1 and Item 2 of the *Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna*.

During the period 2011-2013 Assoc. Prof. Minkov is Head of the *Unit of Academic Affairs and Students*. From 2011 to 2019 he is Head of the *Department of Industrial Business and Logistics*, and since 2019 he is Vice Dean of the *Faculty of Economics*.

The areas of academic interest of the candidate in the competition are as follows:



strategic management, company and organizational culture, business planning, competitiveness of the enterprise. For the period 2019-2023 he is a member of the Editorial Board of *Izvestiya na IU* (Proceedings of UEV) - a journal of the University of Economics - Varna. What can be observed is the aspiration of my colleague to develop his level of competence through attending courses for improving his communication skills in foreign languages, as well as courses in working with statistical software.

The foregoing is positive proof of the purposeful work of Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Minkov in order to constantly upgrade his qualification and is an indication of his professionalism and the single-mindedness of his work.

5. Description of Research Works

The presented statement on fulfilling the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, Para. 2 and 3 of the LDASRB for occupying the academic position of "Professor" in PF 3.8 "Economics" shows an excess over the cumulative quantitative requirements, formed from the components in *Section I. National Minimum Requirements* pursuant to the LDASRB (Art. 2b) and the *Regulation on its Application* (Art. 1a, Para. 1). The required number of points for meeting the national minimum requirements are accumulated as follows:

- Group A: Defended dissertation for awarding the ESD of "Doctor" - *Issues of Company Culture in Bulgarian Industry* (50 pts);

- Group C: Habilitation work on the following theme: *The Company Culture of Business Organizations in Bulgaria Published on the Internet* (100 pts);

- Group D (required 200 pts, the candidate collects 325 pts): published book based on defended dissertation (75 pts); articles and papers published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous data[bases] of scientific information (45 pts), articles and studies, published in unreferenced magazines with academic reviewing or published in edited compilation volumes (175 pts); studies published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information (22.5 pts); studies published in unreferenced magazines with academic reviewing or published in edited compilation volumes (7.5 pts).

- Group E (required 100 pts, the candidate collects 235 pts): citations in scientific journals, monographs, compilation volumes referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information (30 pts); citations in monographs and compilation volumes with academic reviewing (110 pts), citations in unreferenced magazines with academic reviewing (95 pts).

- Group F (required 100 pts, the candidate collects 285 pts): supervision of doctoral students who have successfully defended their dissertations (80 pts); management of national research or educational projects (180 pts); published University manual (20 pts); published University training aid (5 pts).

The needed statements evidencing the points for fulfilling the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, Para. 2 and 3 of the LDASRB for occupying the academic position of "Professor", declared above, are attached to the documents for the competition:

The works presented for reviewing are 33 in total, of which: 3 monographs (one of which is a habilitation work); 4 studies; 24 articles and papers; 2 manuals and teaching



aids. 17 of the presented publications are written independently and 16 as a co-author. 8 of the publications are in English. The volume of the academic production (taking into account the 64 pages in manuals and training aids) is 752 standard pages. 3 of the presented publications (1 article and 2 papers) are not on the theme of the competition. They are associated with the professors at the University, as well as the Department, which Assoc. Prof. Minkov used to be the Head of. All the remaining 30 publications are subject to reviewing and are on the theme of the promulgated competition. The examination of the presented works shows a very high rate of concentration and specialization of Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Minkov in the area of company and corporate culture.

The monograph *The Company Culture of Business Organizations in Bulgaria Published on The Internet* is presented as a habilitation work in the present competition. It is devoted to company culture as a factor for the development of new competitive advantages. The publication of company culture has its role in communicating the strategic goals and intentions of companies and thus it is expected to have an immediate effect on their market positioning.

The monograph contains a study of companies connected with the following: beer production, courier services, construction and meat processing. An assessment of the degree of development of the company culture published by them, based on its principal features, is made. The author examines the relation between the level of disclosure of the culture and the economic performance of companies. On that basis, he conducts a comparative analysis between the sectors under study. The analysis is a basis for the subsequent definition of issues of the development of company culture and for defining suggestions for its improvement. The results of the study show that there are found deficiencies in the publication of business organizations' company culture. What is more, in some entities it is virtually missing. This is a drawback, insofar as that particular communication tool for better positioning cannot be utilized.

The monographic work is structured in six chapters. Chapter One is devoted to the theoretical and methodological aspects of the published company culture. The author discusses the role and place of company culture in the strategic management of business organizations. He presents the nature and the elements of company culture published on the Internet. In this Chapter are presented the methodological tools for studying the published company culture of business organizations, but also for studying the relation between the level of disclosure of the elements of company culture and the profitability of company revenue. This part of the monograph presents the theoretical and methodological premises of the study, which serve as the groundwork for further research.

The structure of the following four chapters (Two through Five) is identical. In those an analysis of the degree of development of the published company culture in the four sectors of the Bulgarian economy, which were mentioned previously, is made. The analysis of the culture is conducted in several aspects: share of companies from the sector, in which each element of the published culture is present; share of the companies, disclosing a specified number of elements of their culture; coefficient of disclosure of the elements of company culture; identification of the main features of the individual elements. In the specified four chapters the strength and the direction of the connection between the level



of disclosure of the elements of culture and the profitability of company revenues by sector, is studied.

In the last chapter of the habilitation work, an assessment is made and are discussed opportunities for increasing the level of the published company culture of business organizations in Bulgaria. The main results of the study are summed up, a comparative analysis between the observed sectors is conducted, issues of the company culture of Bulgarian business organizations and its publication are drawn and are suggested opportunities for its improvement.

In the monographic work, as well as in the other publications of the author, one is impressed by the clear logic of exposition of the issues under consideration. The style of the publications presented for reviewing is scholarly, but at the same time readable. This renders the published studies of the author accessible for use on the part of the business.

Lastly, it can be concluded that the statements on fulfilling the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, Para. 2 and 3 of the LDASRB for occupying the academic position of "Professor" in PF 3.8 "Economics", as well as on the additional indicators under Art. 57a, Para. 2 of the RALDASRB convincingly demonstrate that the candidate in the competition has his own profile and substantial authority in his area of expertise. The candidate in the competition meets the requirements under Art. 118, Para. 2 Item 3-6, in conjunction with Art. 129 of the *Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna*.

6. Contributions in the Research Work of the Candidate

The subject-matter of the scientific works shows clear and profound orientation of the author towards issues connected with company culture, its publication and the relation of the latter to the financial performance of companies. The presented publications have not only scientific value, but also practical orientation with a clearly expressed author's standpoint. Among the more substantial scientific, methodological as well as practical and applied contributions of Assoc. Prof. Minkov, the following can be pointed out:

Scientific contributions:

1. Developed further are theoretical formulations in the area of company culture as a management tool for organizational change. Defined and justified (in terms of content, features and structure) is the concept of "published culture".

2. The theoretical concepts of competitiveness and growth of companies are enhanced in the light of human resources, competitive intelligence and project activities for the development of steady competitive advantages.

Methodological contributions:

1. Justified is a methodological framework for assessing the level of the published company culture through the formation of an integrated coefficient of disclosure of the elements of culture at the micro- and meso-level.

2. Proposed is a methodology for determining the generalized level of the published company culture, which allows for conducting cross-sectoral comparisons.

Applied contributions:

1. The nature and the degree of development of the published on the Internet company culture of businesses from various sectors of the economy are studied. Identified are



similarities and differences between those in respect of the culture's quantitative and qualitative parameters, which affect its communication potential.

2. Recommendations for raising the level of the published online company culture, with the purpose of improving its communication capabilities, are suggested.

3. Strategic actions and measures of reactive nature, undertaken by the Bulgarian business organizations under conditions of economic crisis, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, are identified.

7. Participation in Scientific Projects and Scientific Forums

The candidate in the competition has 6 participations in projects. One of them can be eliminated, since it is not connected with the theme of the competition (Student Placements - Phase 2). The rest of the projects are on issues of industrial business: outsourcing, management of customer equity, prospects and opportunities in front of the industrial enterprise, corporate security, corporate image. Over the years Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov has participated as Head and member of 10 organizational and scientific committees. He is a member of the *Union of Scientists in Bulgaria* and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the *Association of the Lecturers in Economics and Management in Industry*. Assoc. Prof. Minkov has presented 3 plenary papers at scientific forums, which is certified with an enclosed statement.

8. Teaching Activities

Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Minkov is a well-established lecturer in the area of company culture, business planning, economic analysis, management of competitiveness and growth. During the period 2015-2025 the candidate in the competition has developed the following syllabuses and lecture courses: Company/Corporate Culture; Business Planning of the Enterprise; Business Diagnostics; Business Analyses; Human Resources Management; Economics of the Enterprise; Company Restructuring; Innovation Management; Management of Competitiveness and Growth; Consulting Ethics and Company Culture; Management of Corporate Intellectual Property, etc. Educational materials in 11 subjects for students in the EQD of "Bachelor" and the EQD of "Master" in the full-time and the distance learning form of study have been developed.

For participation in the competition Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov presents 1 manual (*Management of Competitiveness and Growth* - in co-authorship) and 1 University handbook (*Management of Pricing* - in co-authorship).

In the last two academic years, in the EQD of "Bachelor" the candidate has taught 220 class hours in lectures (without being reduced to seminars/tutorials) and 180 class hours in seminars/tutorials, and in the EQD of "Master": 58 class hours in lectures (without being reduced to seminars/tutorials) and 44 class hours in seminars/tutorials. Statements attesting to the classes taught are presented.

During the last 5 years the candidate in the competition has carried out 26 scientific supervisions and has drawn up 5 reviews in the EQD of "Bachelor" and the EQD of "Master".

No data has been submitted about conducted teaching staff mobility, or specializations in Universities abroad.



9. Other Activities

During the period 2011-2013 Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov is Head of the *Unit of Academic Affairs and Students*. From 2011 to 2019 he is Head of the *Department of Industrial Business and Logistics*, and since 2019 he is Vice Dean of the *Faculty of Economics*. The candidate in the competition is a member of the following councils and committees/commissions at UE-Varna: the *Academic Council*; the *Faculty Councils* of the *Faculty of Economics* and of the *Faculty of Informatics*; the *Scientific Council of the Research Institute*; the *Standing Committee on Accreditation*; the *Commission on Quality Assurance and Assessment*; the *Committee on Research*. He is also Chairperson of the following committees at the University: the *Central Selection Committee*; the *Specialised Committee on Academic Affairs* with the *Faculty of Economics*; the *Attestation Committee of the Faculty of Economics*.

The candidate in the competition has presented a statement for 5 participations in the media with expert analyses, with which he contributes to a better positioning of the University in the public domain. A statement for performed consultancy work in three business organizations (training of management teams; development of strategic documents) is also included in the documents on the competition. Assoc. Prof. Minkov has drawn up 9 reviews and opinions on competitions for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor", 19 reviews and opinions for the acquisition of the ESD of "Doctor" and 1 participation in a competition for the academic position of "Chief Assistant Professor".

Based on the presented information it can be concluded that Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov possesses administrative experience as well as consultancy practice and activities with his own contribution to the development and affirmation of the values of University of Economics – Varna.

10. Plagiarism

In the presented works, I have found no evidence of plagiarism, incorrect data and/or incorrect reference to research works by other authors.

11. Questions, Critical Remarks and Recommendations to the Candidate

I am familiar in detail with the professional development of the candidate in the competition. I would, as a colleague, recommend to Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Minkov the following:

1. His substantial research experience is a reason for him to get involved as a member of a greater number of national and international editorial boards.
2. The expertise of the candidate in the competition allows for more active work in order to solve specific issues in business, as well as work with more doctoral students.
3. The subjects under study, related to company culture, values and guiding principles, are particularly relevant and significant for every business. My recommendation is that emphasis is placed on publications that will ensure even greater visibility of the research (publication in scientific journals in Scopus/WoS, as well as priority publication in English).



4. The experience gained and the amassed empirical data entail active involvement in educational exchange programmes and visits to foreign Universities.

5. In his habilitation work the candidate in the competition upholds the proposition that "the higher degree of publication of the official company culture on the Internet contributes to the proper awareness of partners and stakeholders". This raises the question Which is given priority: the adequate publication in accordance with the priorities and strategic objectives of the business or the quantification of the level of publication?

12. Conclusion

The findings connected with the research, publication and teaching activities of Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Ivanov Minkov and the performance of his administrative duties at the University of Economics - Varna, pointed out in this review, unequivocally show conformity with the requirements of the LDASRB and the *Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff at UE-Varna* for occupying the academic position of "Professor". This gives me reason to express my definitely positive attitude on the presented competition and to move that the esteemed members of the Scientific Examining Jury vote in favour of the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr Ilian Ivanov Minkov for occupying the academic position of "Professor" in the scientific field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Planning and Company Culture)".

13.08.2025
Varna

Signature:

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

(Проф. Д-р Ел. Станковић)

**REVIEW**

On the competition for the academic position of "professor" at the University of Economics - Varna, field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", in the professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and management (Business planning and corporate culture)"

1. General information.

- Prepared by the review - Prof. Dr. Ivan Petrov Paligorov, University of Forestry, Sofia, scientific specialty: Economics and management; professional field 3.7. Administration and management;

- Grounds for preparing the review - decision of the meeting of 24.06.2025 of the scientific jury, appointed by order of the rector of the University of Economics - Varna No. RD 06-89/28.05.2025

2. Information about the competition.

The competition for the academic position of "professor" at the University of Economics - Varna is announced under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on Academic Staff Development of the Republic of Bulgaria (LASDRB), in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", in the professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Planning and Corporate Culture)", for the needs of the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics" of the Faculty of Economics, the University of Economics – Varna, announced in the State Gazette, issue 32/15.04.2025.

3. Candidate for the competition.

1 candidate participates in the announced competition for the academic position of "professor" - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov from the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics", of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Economics - Varna.

The attached references show that the candidate for the competition: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov meets the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "professor" in the field of higher education, in which the competition was announced, namely with a required minimum of 550 points in total, 895 points were recorded, including group A: out of the required min. 50 points, - 50 points were recorded, group B: out of min. 100 points, 100 points were recorded, group D: with min. 200 points, 325 points were recorded, group E: with min. 100 points, 235 points were recorded and group E: with min. 100 points, 285 points were recorded. It is clear from the data that the candidate also meets and exceeds the additional quantitative requirements of the University of Economics Varna under Art. 2b, para. 5 of the LASDRB, namely, with a required minimum of 275 points in total, 595 points were reported.

	Minimum points	Declared points	Difference
Scientific reports:	60	105.0	+45.0
Scientific articles and studies:	115	132.5	+17.5
Publications in Scopus and Web of Science: 30		37.5	+7.5
Citations in Scopus and Web of Science: 15		60	+45.0



Defended doctoral students:	40	80	+40.0
Scientific research projects:	15	180	+165.0
Total (additional to IU Varna)	275	595	+320.0

It can be summarized that the candidate for the competition: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov meets the minimum national requirements and the additional quantitative requirements of University of Economics - Varna for occupying the academic position of "professor" in the field of higher education in which the competition is announced,

4. Data for candidate (personal characteristics).

The candidate for the competition for the academic position of "professor", announced by the University of Economics - Varna, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov holds the PhD ("doctor") in the scientific specialty 05.02.18 Economics and Management of Industry since 2003 with diploma No. 28786/ 08.01.2004 issued by the Higher Attestation Commission on the topic: Problems of corporate culture in the Bulgarian industry.

The candidate for the competition graduated from higher education in Economics, Bachelor degree in 1997 and Master degree in 1998 at the University of Economics - Varna.

His professional career as a lecturer started in 2004 as a chief assistant at the University of Economics - Varna. Since 2010, he has been an "associate professor" in the scientific specialty 05.02.18 Economics and Management (Planning and Analysis of the Industrial Enterprise) with diploma No. 26560/23.08.2010, issued by the Higher Attestation Commission. He teaches the following subjects: Business Planning of the Enterprise, Corporate Culture, Economic Analysis of the Enterprise, Competitiveness and Growth Management, Corporate Culture, Consulting Ethics and Corporate Culture, Planning and Analysis of the Enterprise.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov is the author or co-author of 60 publications, including: 5 monographs; 6 studies; 21 scientific articles; 22 scientific reports and 6 textbooks and teaching aids. He is the supervisor of 4 doctoral students, 2 of whom successfully defended their dissertations.

In summary, the candidate in the competition possesses professional and scientific qualifications, acquired scientific and academic experience and fully complies with the requirements in Art. 118, para. 2, items 1 and 2 of the Rules for the Academic Staff Development at the University of Varna for holding the academic position of "professor".

5. Description of scientific works.

The candidate for the competition for the academic position of "professor": Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, participated with 33 publications, including 3 monographs: incl. 1 monograph for the competition, 1 monograph for the defended dissertation for the PhD (doctor degree) and 1 collective monograph, 4 studies, 2 collective textbooks, 11 articles and 13 scientific reports. Part of the publications are in English.

Of the publications submitted for the competition: 5 are indexed in Scopus; 1 is indexed in Web of Science; 10 are referenced in SEEOL, 2 are referenced in ERIH+ and 3 are referenced in EBSCO. The share of indexed publications is 18%, and of referenced publications – 30%.

I accept all publications submitted for the competition for review and evaluation.



The candidate for the competition, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, participated with a monograph on the topic: "The Corporate Culture of Business Organizations in Bulgaria Published on the Internet", published by the Science and Economics Publishing House, Varna, in 2025 with ISBN 978-954-21-1190-0. The monograph was reviewed by two reviewers - habilitated persons. It was printed in a volume of 164 printed pages, 10.25 printing presses and fully meets the requirements for a monographic work.

The achieved goal of the monographic study is, on the basis of a comprehensive theoretical review, to develop an author's methodology through which to analyze and assess the level of the company culture published on the Internet in selected sectors of the Bulgarian economy, to highlight the common features and differences in the elements of this culture between the individual sectors, to identify the main problems, as a result of which to propose guidelines for its improvement, as well as its ability to contribute to a greater extent to the market success and financial results of companies.

I would like to note the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study presented in the first chapter, the defined working concepts, including the concept of "published culture" as part of the official culture of the organization, by outlining its main characteristics and internal structure. Its main elements are derived, their hierarchy is justified and their content features are examined. At the end of this theoretical and methodological chapter, the research methodology and the statistical tools used to analyze the relationship between the level of disclosure and the profitability of companies are presented.

In the following chapters from the second to the fifth, structured identically, an empirical analysis of the development of the published corporate culture is presented, presenting corporate culture as an essential factor for increasing competitiveness in the modern business environment. At the beginning of each chapter, the context of the sector is presented through an analysis of its characteristics, current state and trends. The emphasis in the analysis of corporate culture is in four directions:

- Determining the relative share of companies that disclose each of the elements of the published culture;
- Calculating the shares of companies according to the number of disclosed elements;
- Calculating the disclosure ratio;
- Analysis of the content characteristics of the individual elements.

Each chapter ends with a study of the relationship between the degree of disclosure and the profitability of revenues in the respective sector.

The last chapter contains a summary of the main conclusions of the study, including a comparative analysis between sectors. Significant similarities and differences in the published culture are indicated in relation to:

- The significance of individual cultural elements;
- The number of elements included in the cultural portfolio;
- The accents and priorities in the content of the published messages.

It can be summarized that the monographic work presented in the competition fully meets the criteria for independent scientific research. It is dedicated to a real business problem, an author's methodology for its study has been developed, results have been obtained, on the basis of which conclusions, recommendations and measures for improving and developing corporate culture through its public disclosure in the modern information environment have



been formulated. These proposals are universal in nature and can be applied by a wide range of business organizations.

Another 30 scientific publications were submitted for review under the competition, including 1 monograph for the doctoral degree and 1 collective monograph, 4 studies, 11 articles and 13 scientific reports.

I would like to single out the main areas of the publications as follows:

• **Corporate culture**

- ✓ From a theoretical point of view, the essence and features of corporate culture are presented and its status and development in the Bulgarian industry are analyzed. Opportunities for its improvement and adaptation to modern dynamic market conditions are revealed. Primary (main) and secondary (additional) elements that build the structure of the published corporate culture of companies are identified. [G2.1; G3.2; G.4.1; G4.14; G4.15; G4.16; G4.17; G4.18; G4.23; G5.1; D6.1]
- ✓ The role of the mission, vision and values in building the published on the Internet corporate culture of insurance companies in Bulgaria is outlined, and the specifics of their formulation and application are presented. (D4.22, D5.2)
- ✓ The relationship between the degree of development of the published corporate culture and the level of corporate profitability, as a key financial and economic indicator, is proven. The results show that depending on the nature of the disclosed elements, the published corporate culture has between a weak and significant impact on the profitability of sales revenues of the studied companies (D3.1; D4.19).
- ✓ Through corporate culture management, the opportunities to stimulate the pursuit of successful work performance of employees are outlined, with a view to achieving the strategic goals of business organizations. The positive and negative aspects of the attitude of employees towards the employer and its culture are outlined. Existing theoretical statements in the areas of strategic management, corporate culture and human resources are summarized. (D4.3; D4.9, D4.11, D4.19; D4.20)
- ✓ The key issues facing the project management team leader in building team culture are presented, on the basis of which specific measures can be taken to improve it and increase the cohesion of team members (D4.6).

• **Development of industrial enterprises**

- ✓ The key factors for long-term sustainable development of industrial companies are defined, and their growth potential is diagnosed. Measures are proposed to ensure a favorable environment for the development of existing and the creation of new real production in Bulgaria (D4.1)
- ✓ Based on an analysis focused on the positive impact on the competitiveness of companies, regardless of the economic sector in which they operate, the main advantages that the application of competitive intelligence in industrial enterprises would lead to are identified. (D4.5)
- ✓ The factors and circumstances that hinder the improvement of market positions and the increase in the competitiveness of industrial enterprises are outlined. Conclusions are summarized and some questions for future research on the topic are raised (D7.1).
- ✓ The opportunities that the Operational Program "Human Resources Development" 2014-2020 provides to Bulgarian enterprises for ensuring good and safe working conditions are analyzed and the actual absorption of funds under the "Good and Safe



Working Conditions" procedure by the beneficiary enterprises in Varna Region is assessed. (D4.8)

• **Strategic management and human resources management**

- ✓ The specifics of the strategic management of companies placed in an external environment of adverse impacts limiting the scope of possible actions with respect to business processes, on the example of the COVID-19 pandemic, are outlined (D4.10).
- ✓ The nature of the measures and actions taken by Bulgarian business organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic, related to personnel management, is established (D4.12).

The analysis of the obtained scientific and applied scientific results in the works submitted for review shows that the candidate's publications are in full compliance with the requirements of Art. 118, para. 2 items 3-6 in connection with Art. 129 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna.

6. Identification of Contributions

Based on the analysis of the submitted scientific works, the following main contributions of the candidate can be identified:

6.1. Contributions of a theoretical and theoretical-methodological nature:

- The elements and internal structure of the "published corporate culture" as a component of the official culture of organizations are clearly distinguished, which can be accepted as a modern development of the concept of corporate culture.
- An integrated coefficient of disclosure of corporate culture at the level of a company, sector and the national economy is proposed, obtained using the author's own methodology for quantitative and qualitative assessment of the disclosed corporate culture.
- Based on the results of an empirical study in enterprises from four economic sectors, a relationship between the disclosure of corporate culture and financial indicators has been proven.

6.2. Contributions of a scientific-applied and applied nature:

- Measures have been proposed for managing corporate culture and its use as a tool in strategic management and stimulating better professional performance of personnel.
- Practical recommendations for improving the presentation of corporate culture of companies in the Internet environment have been formulated and applicable, regardless of the economic sector.
- The identified sectoral differences and similarities in the published corporate culture can serve as a basis for strategic positioning.
- The results of the research are directly applicable in organizational practice, including in areas such as: strategic positioning, communication with stakeholders, building a sustainable image.



The candidate's contributions are of significant importance for the development of theory and practice in the field of corporate culture, business planning and strategic management, by offering innovative solutions with high applicability in the modern business environment.

The submitted reference for a total of 33 citations of the candidate's scientific works shows that they are distributed as follows: 2 citations in international databases Scopus and Web of Science (30 items); 11 citations in monographs and collective volumes (110 items); 19 citations in non-refereed journals (95 items). This clearly shows that the candidate in the competition has indisputable contributions of a theoretical, methodological and applied nature, which have been identified by other authors and cited by them in the literature used.

7. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Minkov reports participation in 6 scientific research projects, of which he was the leader of 5 of these projects. The projects are thematically focused in the field of the competition, and the publications of the project results are presented in the competition.

The candidate in the competition has been a member of the Organizing Committee of an international scientific conference 5 times, and in 2 of the conferences he is the Chairman of the Organizing Committee. He also reports participation in the Scientific Committees of 5 scientific forums.

He has presented plenary reports to participants in 3 international conferences. He also reports expert and consulting activities in expert teams of 3 large national companies based on his applied contributions.

8. Teaching work.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov is an established lecturer by career - he has over 25 years of teaching experience at the University of Economics - Varna. He has consistently led exercises, lectures and seminars in bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs. The disciplines he has led include: Corporate Culture, Business Planning of the Enterprise, Economic Analysis of the Enterprise, Competitiveness and Growth Management, Corporate Culture in the Logistics Sector, Planning and Analysis of the Enterprise, Consulting Ethics and Corporate Culture.

He has participated in the preparation of educational documentation - he has developed a total of 37 curricula for the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programs, which demonstrates in-depth methodological preparation and sustainable engagement in the educational process.

A significant contribution of a scientific, methodological and educational nature is the participation of the candidate as the author and co-author of 2 collective textbooks and a teaching aid, which are actively used in education. The textbooks are of high methodological value and present a comprehensive approach to the taught subject, distinguished by clarity, structure and practical focus.

The lecturer and the instructor of the exercises, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Minkov, applies modern teaching methods, combining theoretical training with case studies, simulations and practical tasks. The feedback from the students confirms his commitment, accessibility and professionalism in his teaching activities.



The candidate in the competition is an active participant in the preparation of doctoral students and young scientists, and in addition to being the scientific supervisor of four doctoral students, two of whom have successfully defended their dissertations, he is the head of 5 research teams on projects in the subject of the competition. In addition, the candidate actively supervises graduate students and supports the professional development of young assistants.

Proof of recognized scientific authority and contribution to the development of the academic environment is the participation of Assoc. Prof. Minkov in 10 scientific juries in competitions for holding an academic position (incl. 1 review) and 19 juries for acquiring the ONS "doctor".

9. Other

The candidate in the competition has gained significant administrative experience. He has successively held key management positions in the structure of the University of Economics - Varna, including: Head of the Department "Academic Activities and Students"; Head of the Department "Industrial Business and Logistics"; Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Economics; elected as a member of the Academic Council of the University of Economics - Varna; as a member of the Faculty Councils of two faculties - "Economics" and "Informatics"; is a member of the Scientific Council of the Research Institute at the University of Economics - Varna; Chairman of the Central Competition Commission and the Attestation Commission at the Faculty of Economics; Member of standing committees on scientific activity, accreditation and quality.

By fulfilling these functions, the candidate has made a tangible contribution to the development of academic policy, the modernization of the educational process and the strengthening of the institutional values of the University of Economics - Varna.

The candidate has been an expert in the teams of three leading national companies, and the results of his scientific and applied work have been integrated into their management practices.

This practical experience outside the academic environment – including work with private business structures, public institutions and national organizations – contributes to ensuring a real connection between theory and practice, which enriches both the candidate's scientific and teaching activities.

His participation in public and professional organizations should also be added: Association of Teachers of Economics and Management in Industry (APIUI) – as Chairman of the Supervisory Board and Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Varna branch.

10. Plagiarism

A thorough familiarization with the publications submitted for scientific review under the competition for the academic position of "Professor" gives reason to claim that at the time of preparing this review, there was no evidence of plagiarism, no signals of infringement of copyrights of other researchers or incorrect citation of other scientific works.



11. Questions, critical remarks and recommendations to the candidate.

No significant gaps, contradictions or errors were found in the scientific production presented in the competition. The presented works are distinguished by the necessary quality and a high degree of practical applicability. The subject matter of the scientific production is subject to systematicity and consistency in scientific research. The candidate's overall scientific and teaching activities reflect the process of his academic growth and development and fully meet the requirements for holding the academic position of "professor".

I would like to pose two questions for future research:

1. Does the future development of corporate culture, through the elements of the published corporate culture, directly affect the results of companies or is it rather an element of information ensuring their stable and sustainable development?

2. Could increasing the level of disclosure of corporate culture and undertaking a set of measures for this have negative effects, in the presence of digital technologies and artificial intelligence?

These questions are intended to stimulate further development of the candidate's research in the context of new digital realities and may serve as a basis for further scientific research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the presented scientific production and the required documents and references submitted by the candidate in the competition for the academic position of "professor" Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov fully meet the requirements of the Act on the Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria (ASDRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ASDRB, as well as the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University of Economics - Varna.

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient volume and original content of scientific production, which does not repeat the one presented when receiving the PhD degree and in the competition for the academic position of "associate professor". The candidate's works contain indisputable original scientific and applied scientific contributions, which have received recognition among the scientific and practical community, as evident from the citations presented. A representative part of the production has been published in journals and scientific collections published by international academic publishing houses, which is also an international recognition of his scientific achievements. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, and the prepared educational documentation, as well as the published textbooks, are directly oriented towards academic work.

Taking into account the above, I categorically give a POSITIVE ASSESSMENT to the candidate in the competition for the academic position of "professor" at the University of Economics - Varna and recommend to the members of the scientific jury to support the proposal of our esteemed Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics to elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov in the competition for the academic position of "professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional field 3.8. "Economics", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Planning and



Corporate Culture)" for the needs of the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics" at the University of Economics - Varna.

August 11, 2025

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