

STATEMENT

From Prof. Dr. Radko Asenov Radev, UNWE-Sofia, Professional Field 3.8. "Economics",
Scientific Specialty: Economics and Management (Strategic Business Management)"

For occupying the academic position of 'PROFESSOR' at the University of Economics - Varna 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 Firm
Culture)".

Based on Order No. RD-06-89/28.05.2025 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna
and Decision No. 1 of the Scientific Jury from 24.06.2025, I participate as a member of the jury
for the announced competition.

1. Information about the Competition

- The competition is announced for occupying 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 Firm
Culture)".
- The procedure is open for the needs of the Department of "Industrial Business and
Logistics" at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Economics - Varna.

- The competition is announced in the State Gazette, issue 32 of 15.04.2025.

2. Fulfillment of the Minimum Requirements

2.1. National Requirements

The candidate for the academic position of "Professor" exceeds the minimum national
requirements, regulated in Art. 26, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic
Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic
and Legal Sciences", professional field 3.8. "Economics".

Indicator	Points	Achieved	Minimum Requirements	Difference
Group A		50.0	50	0.0
Group B		100.0	100	0.0
Group C		325.0	200	+125.0
Group D		235.0	100	+135.0
Group E		285.0	100	+185.0
TOTAL (national)		895.0	550	+345.0

2.2. Additional Institutional Requirements (UE - Varna)

The candidate fully fulfills and significantly exceeds the additional quantitative requirements of the University of Economics - Varna, established according to Art. 26, para. 5 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Indicator	Achieved Points	Minimum Requirements	Difference
Scientific Reports	105.0	60	+45.0
Scientific Articles and Studies	132.5	115	+17.5
Publications in Scopus and WoS	37.5	30	+7.5
Citations in Scopus and WoS	60.0	15	+45.0
Graduated PhD Students	80.0	40	+40.0
Research Projects	180.0	15	+165.0
TOTAL (additional)	595.0	275	+320.0

The candidate for the academic position of "Professor" fully fulfills and significantly exceeds both the minimum national requirements, regulated in Art. 26, para. 2 and 3 of LDASRB, as well as the additional institutional requirements of the University of Economics - Varna, according to Art. 26, para. 5 of the same law.

According to the indicators from the national framework (groups A-E), the candidate has achieved a total of 895 points with a minimum requirement of 550 points, exceeding the requirements in three of the five groups with a significant reserve (for example: +185 points in group E).

Regarding the internal university requirements, the candidate reports 595 points with a required minimum of 275 points, with the most significant excess in the indicators for participation in research projects (+165 points) and citations in international databases (+45 points).

These data unambiguously confirm that the candidate significantly exceeds the established quantitative and qualitative standards for occupying the academic position of "Professor" in the relevant professional field.

3. Data on the Candidate (Personal Characteristics)

The candidate in the competition, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, holds an educational and scientific degree "Doctor", awarded in 2003 in the scientific specialty 05.02.18 Economics and Management of Industry, based on a dissertation dedicated to the problems of corporate culture in Bulgarian industry.

The professional biography of the candidate includes over 20 years of teaching and research activity at the University of Economics - Varna. His academic career began in 2004 as a chief assistant, and in 2010 he acquired the scientific title "Associate Professor" in the same scientific specialty.

He teaches courses in disciplines such as: Business Planning of the Enterprise, Corporate Culture, Economic Analysis of the Enterprise, Management of Competitiveness and Growth,

Corporate Culture, Planning and Analysis of the Enterprise, Consulting Ethics and Corporate Culture.

The scientific interests of Assoc. Prof. Minkov are focused on the field of corporate culture, business planning, strategic management, and organizational development.

He is the supervisor of 4 doctoral students, 2 of whom have already successfully defended their dissertations. Actively participates in and manages research projects - a total of 6, of which he is the leader in 5.

The professional achievements also include participation in organizational and scientific committees of numerous conferences, as well as active expert and consultant activities in the framework of cooperation with leading national companies.

4. Description of Scientific Works

The candidate has presented 33 scientific works, including 1 monograph for the competition, 1 monograph for ONS "Doctor", 1 collective monograph, 4 studies, 11 articles and 13 reports. Part of the publications are indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, and others are referenced in CEEOL, ERIH+ and EBSCO. The indexed publications account for 18%, and those referenced - 30%. 16 of the publications are co-authored, and 17 are developed independently.

The scientific developments are structurally and thematically well organized and cover three main areas:

1. *Corporate culture and organizational behavior;*
2. *Strategic management and business planning;*
3. *Development of industrial enterprises.*

The monograph presented for the competition fully meets the criteria for independent scientific research. It is structured logically, contains clearly formulated conclusions, applies an author's methodology, and is distinguished by high scientific and applied quality.

The scientific production of the candidate meets the requirements of Art. 118, para. 2, items 3-6 in connection with Art. 129 of the Rules for Academic Staff of the University of Economics - Varna in terms of volume, citability, indexability, participation in projects and supervision of doctoral students.

From a linguistic and stylistic point of view, the works are written in an academically sound style, with correct terminology and without significant omissions.

No cases of duplicate texts with different titles or translations have been identified that would require alignment of publications.

5. Identification of Contributions to the Candidate's Research Work

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

5.1. Theoretical and Theoretical-Methodological Contributions:

- The concept of "publicized corporate culture" as an integral part of the official culture of organizations has been developed, with clearly distinguished elements and internal structure.
- An author's methodology for quantitative and qualitative assessment of the publicized corporate culture is proposed, including an integrated coefficient of disclosure at the firm, sector and national economy level.
- The relationship between the disclosure of culture and organizational profitability is proven through empirical research in four economic sectors.

5.2. Scientific and Applied Contributions:

- Sectoral differences and similarities in the publicized corporate culture are identified, which serve as a basis for benchmarking and strategic positioning.
- Universal practical recommendations for improving the cultural visibility of companies in the online environment are formulated.

- Measures for using corporate culture as an instrument for strategic management and employee engagement are proposed.

5.3. Practical Contribution:

- The results of the research have direct applicability 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, strategic management, and business planning, offering innovative solutions with high applicability in the modern business environment.

The candidate has presented a total of 33 citations of his scientific works, distributed as follows: 2 citations in international databases Scopus and Web of Science (30 points); 11 citations in monographs and collective volumes (110 points); 19 citations in non-referenced journals (95 points).

Taking into account the number and nature of the cited works, it can be concluded that the candidate is gradually building a sustainable academic influence, and the presented citability meets the requirements and contributes to the consolidation of his scientific achievements.

6. Participation in Scientific Projects and Scientific Forums

The candidate demonstrates active research activity, having participated in a total of six research projects, five of which as a leader. The thematic focus of the projects is fully consistent with the field of the competition, covering issues related to corporate culture, business planning, organizational development and competitiveness management. Part of the results of these projects are objectified in scientific publications, presented in the competitive procedure.

The candidate has made a significant contribution to the scientific and organizational activities, including: 5 participations in organizational committees of international scientific conferences, of which 2 as chairman; 5 participations in scientific committees of forums with academic significance; 3 delivered plenary reports at international scientific conferences.

In addition, the candidate is engaged in expert-consulting activities and has participated in the composition of expert teams of three leading national companies, where he applies results from his research for organizational diagnostics and strategic management.

These activities testify to a high degree of recognition in the scientific and professional community, as well as the ability of the candidate to integrate scientific work with practical experience and socially significant processes.

7. Teaching Work

The candidate has approximately 25 years of teaching experience at the University of Economics - Varna, consistently leading lectures, exercises and seminars in bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs. The disciplines he leads are in the field of the specialty announced in the competition.

The candidate has developed a total of 37 curricula for OCS "Bachelor", OCS "Master" and ONS "Doctor", which demonstrates in-depth methodological training and sustainable engagement in the learning process.

In the scientific and educational aspect, the candidate is the author and co-author of 2 collective textbooks and a teaching aid, which are actively used in training. The works are of high methodological value and present a comprehensive approach to the taught material, characterized by clarity, structure and practical orientation.

As a lecturer and supervisor of exercises, the candidate applies modern teaching methods, combining theoretical training with case studies, simulations and practical tasks. Feedback from students confirms his engagement, accessibility and professionalism in teaching activities.

With regard to the preparation of young staff, the candidate has been the scientific supervisor of four doctoral students, two of whom have successfully defended dissertations. In

In addition, the candidate actively supervises graduates and supports the professional development of young assistants.

His participation in scientific juries is significant - a total of 10 juries for academic positions (incl. 1 review) and 19 juries for the acquisition of ONS "Doctor", which is evidence of recognized scientific authority and contribution to the development of the academic environment.

8. Other

The candidate has considerable administrative experience, having consistently held key managerial and academic positions in the structure of the University of Economics - Varna, among which: Head of the Department "Academic Activity and Students"; Head of the Department "Industrial Business and Logistics"; Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Economics; Member of the Academic Council of the University of Economics - Varna; member of Faculty Councils of two faculties "Economics" and "Informatics"; Member of the Scientific Council of the Research Institute at the University of Economics - Varna; Chairman of the Central Competition Commission and of the Attestation Commission at the Faculty of Economics; member of permanent commissions for scientific activity, accreditation and quality.

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

His participation in public and professional organizations is complemented by consulting and expert activities with proven impact. The candidate has been an expert in the teams of three leading national companies, as the results of his scientific and applied work are 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 link between theory and practice, which enriches both scientific and teaching activities of the candidate.

9. Plagiarism

After examining the scientific works presented by the candidate, no cases of plagiarism, incorrect citation, data manipulation or unfamiliarity with sources are found. All analyzed publications are accompanied by the necessary scientific apparatus, with correctly indicated authors, used sources and methodology.

10. Questions, Critical Notes to the Candidate

The scientific and teaching activity of the candidate, as well as his overall academic and administrative development, fully meet the requirements for occupying the academic position of "Professor". The presented works are distinguished by high quality and practical applicability, and scientific production is systematic and thematically consistent.

Regardless, I would like to pose the following three questions for future research consideration:

- Is there a difference observed between the nominal and the actual published corporate culture?
- What will be the effects of implementing ESG standards on the published corporate culture and on the strategic communication of business organizations?
- What is the state of the published organizational culture of universities in Bulgaria?

These questions reflect the need for further development of the candidate's research in the context of increasing ESG standards and can serve as a basis for subsequent scientific inquiries.

11. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the presented documents and scientific works, I believe that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov fully meets the legal, institutional and scientific requirements

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

The scientific, teaching and administrative activities of the candidate are distinguished by consistency, high quality and contributory character, both in theoretical and applied terms. The presented production is diverse in form and content, indexed in international databases and thematically related to the profile of the competition.

In this regard, I give a positive assessment and propose that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov be elected to the academic position of "Professor".

I would recommend that the candidate, in their future scientific work, expand their research on the interaction between corporate culture and the increasing ESG standards, as well as with the digital transformation, in particular – the role of artificial intelligence and automation in building cultural identity and strategic communication in organizations.

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

11.06. 2025

Member of the Scientific Jury:

(Prof. Dr. ~~качко~~ ~~качев~~)





OPINION FOR THE ACADEMIC POSITION OF "PROFESSOR" ACCORDING TO A COMPETITION ANNOUNCED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - VARNA IN THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD 3.8 ECONOMICS AND SCIENTIFIC SPECIALTY "ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT (BUSINESS PLANNING AND CORPORATE CULTURE)"

1. General information

Prepared the opinion: Prof. Teodorina Zhelyazkova Turlakova, PhD, University of Economics - Varna, professional field 3.8 "Economics" and scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Agricultural Entrepreneurship and Regional Entrepreneurial Activity)".

Reason for giving an opinion on the competition: The scientific jury for the competition for JSC "Professor" was appointed by order No. RD-06-89/28.05.2025. of the Rector of the University of Varna. This statement on the competition for the academic position of "Professor" is also prepared on the basis of the decisions of the first meeting of the scientific jury, held on 24.06.2025, in person and through the use of technical means.

2. Contest details

Field of higher education : 3.8. Economy

Scientific specialty: "Economics and Management (Business Planning and Company Culture)"

Faculty and department where the competition is announced: Faculty of Economics at the University of Economics - Varna, Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics".

In the competition for professor, announced in *the State Gazette, issue no. 32/15.04.2025 and on* the website of the University of Economics - Varna, as the only candidate participated Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD. The set of materials submitted by the candidate on paper/electronic media is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna.

3. General presentation of the candidate

Associate Professor Ilian Minkov completed his higher education (Bachelor's and Master's degrees) at the University of Economics - Varna. In the period 2000-2003 he studied as a doctoral student in the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics at the University of Economics - Varna and obtained the Doctor of Economic Sciences (Diploma 28786/08.01.2004), scientific specialty "Economics and Management of Industry".

In the period 2004-2010 he was a chief assistant, and in 2010 he acquired the academic position of "associate professor". Currently, associate professor Ilian Minkov has over 20 years of teaching and academic experience, of which 15 years as an associate professor in scientific specialty (code): 05.02.18 - Economics and



Management (Planning and Analysis of the Industrial Enterprise), thereby exceeding many times the requirements of Art. 118, para. 2, items 1 and 2 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Varna (PRAS).

The professional development of Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD is accompanied by administrative activity as Head of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics in the period 2011-2019, Head of the Department of Academic Activities and Students (2011-2013) and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Economics since 2019, a position he still holds to this day. Simultaneously with his teaching activities, he participates in a number of working groups, is a member of the Academic Council, of the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Economics, Chairman of the Specialized Committee on Academic Activities at the Faculty of Economics, etc. Assoc. Prof. Minkov participates in the editorial boards on publishing proceedings of conferences of the department and other organized events at the university. He is a member of the editorial board of the prestigious magazine "Izvestiya", of the scientific council of the Scientific Research Institute at the University of Varna, etc.

Associate Professor Ilian Minkov actively participates in the development of educational documentation for the department. 5 educational and scientific projects have been successfully completed, including projects for the development of parts of doctoral dissertations. Every year he works with graduates of the Master's and Bachelor's degree programs, he is the scientific supervisor of four doctoral students, with whom he also implements research projects.

The scientific interests of Associate Professor Ilian Minkov are in the field of strategic management, corporate and organizational culture, business planning and the competitiveness of the enterprise. He is the author of a number of scientific publications: including 11 monographs and studies, 21 articles and 22 reports, 6 textbooks and teaching aids. He systematically upgrades his qualifications and trainings - in the field of working with software, statistical processing of scientific research and communication in foreign languages. As a scientist with accumulated experience, he participates in scientific juries under the Law on the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria, in organizing committees of national conferences, promotes his scientific and research results through interviews in Radio-Varna and other media. Member of the Union of Scientists - Varna branch and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Association of Teachers of Economics and Management in Industry.

The candidate has significant teaching, research and practical experience in the field of this competition. The results of the overall educational, project, mentoring and scientific activities of Associate Professor Minkov are an indication of purposefulness, professionalism and responsibility.

4. Quantitative and substantive characteristics of the submitted scientific papers and fulfillment of the requirements for holding the academic position

Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov participated in the competition for "Professor" with a total of 32 publications in specialized scientific journals and one study in the process of publication, all of which do not repeat the works for acquiring the ONS "doctor" and



for occupying the academic position "associate professor".

The scientific output proposed for review includes:

- 3 monographs - 2 solo and 1 co-authored, reviewed by habilitated persons with recognized competence in the scientific field, with a total volume of 363 standard pages;
- 3 studies (one of which in Scopus) and one accepted for publication, all co-authored with a contribution of 59 pages (we exclude 16 pages from the study accepted for publication);
- 11 scientific articles (two of which in Scopus and Web of Science) - 7 independent and 4 co-authored, with the participation of the candidate in a volume of 141 standard pages;
- 13 scientific reports - 8 independent and 5 co-authored;
- 2 textbooks and teaching aids;

The total volume of scientific production amounts to over 736 standard pages.

All publications submitted have the appropriate ISBN/ISSN and meet the requirements for scientific publications. Monographs with more than one author have sections listed in the preface.

According to the report on the fulfillment of minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", according to Art. 2b, paragraph 2 and 3 of the Law on Higher Education and Research B, the accumulated points by sections are as follows: the main monograph on the competition, reviewed by the editorial board of the monographic library "Tsani Kalyandzhiev " and published by the publishing house "Science and Economics" of the University of Varna forms 100 points. Points were generated in the following areas (section D): published book based on a defended dissertation, with a proper ISBN and two reviewers - 75 points; publications on the Web of Science and Scopus – from 2 articles and and 1 study, which in total form 67.5 points, as well as 1 collective study, 21 articles and reports. The candidate in the competition exceeds the required number of points from the citations of his scientific publications, as the accumulated points are 325, with a minimum of 100 points. High citation is a certificate of the value of the candidate's scientific research work. From the citations in world-famous databases (2 citations, which carry 30 points), citations in collective volumes with scientific review and in non-refereed publications (30 in total) a total of 235 points have been formed with a required minimum of 100 points. The citations are in the "scientific" category, not "educational literature". Under section "E" the accumulated 285 points are from: the scientific supervision of successfully defended doctoral students (80 points); from participation and supervision of national scientific and educational projects and from published textbooks and teaching aids.

In summary, in all sections of the Report on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements, the candidate Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD repeatedly exceeds the required minimum for holding the academic position of "Professor".

Apart from exceeding the total mandatory amount of points required to participate in a competition for the academic position of "professor", the report shows that the



specific requirements in all sections are met.

In the reference for occupying the academic position "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", according to Art. 118, para. 2, item 6 of the PRAS at the University of Varna, the declared part of the general list of publications, citations, number of defended doctoral students and participation in projects also shows a serious excess of the minimum additional requirements under the point system (see Table 1 with declared and minimum required points of the candidate).

Table 1

Compliance with quantitative requirements at the University of Varna

No.	Indicators	Points for " professor "	Declared points from the candidate
1.	Scientific reports	60	1 05
2.	Scientific articles and studies	115	1 32.5
3.	Publications in Scopus and/ or Web of Science	30	37.5
4.	Citations in Scopus and/ or Web of Science	15	60
5.	Protected doctoral students	40	8 0
6.	Research projects	15	180

In summary, the candidate in the competition for "Professor" - Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD complies with the mandatory conditions of Art. 2b, paragraph 2 and 3 of the Law on Academic Positions and the requirements of the Rules for the conditions and procedure for holding academic positions at the University of Varna under Art. 118(2), item 6 in connection with Art. 2b, paragraph 5 118(2), item 6 in connection with Art. 2b, paragraph 5 of the Law on Academic Positions and the requirements of the Rules for the conditions and procedure for holding academic positions at the University of Varna under Art. 118(2), item 6 in connection with Art. 118(2), item 6 in connection with Art. 118(2), item 6.

5. Description of scientific works and identification of contributions

The author's scientific works have been published in renowned scientific publications - Publishing Houses "Science and Economics" of the University of Varna, " Economic Research " (III-BAS), Publishing Complex of the University of National and World Economy, magazine "Izvestiya" of the University of Varna, Yearbook of the Economic Research Institute of Varna, University, Academic Publishing House " D.Tsenov " Svishtov, magazine "Sustainable Development" of LTU-Sofia, "Proceedings of the Union of Scientists-Varna" and collections of reports from participation in national and international forums. A large part of the candidate's scientific works - articles and reports are in scientific publications, refereed and indexed in world-famous databases (Scopus, CEOOL, Repec , Econ papers, etc.) of high



scientific value, and others are in the COBISS national library database and in the National Reference List of NACID.

In terms of content, the works submitted for review mainly concern the field of corporate culture and its publication, as well as the problems of business planning and competitiveness. The publications are distinguished by precision and use of representative literary sources. The main monographic work on the topic "The Published Corporate Culture of Business Organizations in Bulgaria on the Internet" was published in a specialized scientific publishing house, was discussed in the primary unit and was reviewed by two habilitated persons. It offers an in-depth study and assessment of the degree of development of the published corporate culture and the relationship between the level of disclosure and the economic results of companies. The author's main thesis is that "the higher degree of publication of the official corporate culture on the Internet contributes to appropriate informing of partners and stakeholders about the strategic priorities of companies and thus favors the achievement of positive organizational results."

The first part examines the role and place of corporate culture, defines its essence and deduces the elements of the published culture. It is considered by the author as a major factor in increasing the competitiveness of companies. The author's research methodology and justification of the toolkit for studying the relationship "Level of disclosure - profitability of companies" deserve special attention and high praise. The next few chapters (second, third, fourth and fifth) are aimed at analyzing and assessing the degree of development of the published culture in several sectors of the economy (beer, courier services, construction and meat processing) by emphasizing the specificity, status and development trends of each sector. The study in these chapters is aimed at assessing the relative share of companies with a published corporate culture, the number of disclosed elements, the disclosure coefficient and identifying the content characteristics. The strength and direction of the relationship "disclosure - profitability of revenues" is determined. The last part of the monographic study summarizes the main results of the empirical study, identifies the main problems of the published corporate culture, and formulates recommendations, approaches, and measures for its improvement.

The monograph makes a useful theoretical and practical contribution to the issues of corporate culture, its role and importance in terms of the economic performance of companies and its strategic development in order to increase the competitiveness of business organizations. The monograph is a valuable scientific resource for future academic research and practical application by companies, offering clear guidelines for the development of corporate culture and its adaptation to the modern conditions of digitalization and a highly competitive and uncertain market environment.

The monographs and studies provide a thorough and well-founded analysis of the development of the industrial sector in Bulgaria and the adaptation of corporate culture in the modern dynamic environment. Some of the studies are dedicated to studying the characteristics of the organizational culture of higher education institutions in Bulgaria published in the online space, as well as the inclusion of the published corporate culture



in the communication policy of insurance companies, revealing the specifics, direction and priority elements used. The studies combine theoretical statements and empirical data, and the proposals for creating a complete portfolio of key elements that would complement the disclosed organizational mission and history of the institutions are particularly valuable.

The scientific articles examine the current challenges and opportunities for managing the relationship "Strategic Management-Company Culture- Employee Self-Realization". Some of the studies focus on the role of vision, mission and corporate values for the competitiveness of companies from different sectors of the Bulgarian economy. Others are dedicated to assessing the project activities of enterprises under the European Structural and Investment Funds, analyzing the degree of absorption of funds, own financial contribution, implementation of indicators, etc. and proposing strategic and operational solutions regarding good and safe working conditions.

The reports successfully address the key challenges facing industrial companies in the Northeastern Planning Region, diagnosing the growth potential and identifying key factors for sustainable development, including strategic actions and measures regarding the personnel of business organizations in the context of COVID-19. A series of reports examine employees' attitudes towards company culture, team culture issues and values in project management in business organizations. The reports discuss the state of online disclosed company culture and its specific manifestations. The growing importance of published company culture for leading companies in each of the surveyed sectors of the economy is emphasized.

Among the candidate's publications are articles and reports dedicated to the development of the specialty "Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship", the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics", and the creative path of its prominent scientists.

The in-depth review of the publications submitted by Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov in the competition for the academic position of "professor" gives me reason to accept and convincingly confirm the correct and expedient formulation by the candidate of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of a theoretical and practical-applied nature.

More significant contributions in highlighted areas are as follows:

- *Theoretical contributions* - the theory of corporate culture is further developed and enriched as a management tool for implementing organizational change and a key factor for increasing the competitiveness of business organizations; the concept of "published culture" is defined and justified, its content and key characteristics are determined; the constituent elements (main and secondary) that build the structure of published culture are identified; a systematization of the theoretical concepts for the competitiveness and growth of companies in the modern conditions of a dynamic and digital business environment is made; the possibilities of corporate culture as a tool for managing the relationship between strategic management and the realization of employees in companies are explored.

- *Contributions of a scientific and methodological nature* – a universal methodology



has been developed and tested for assessing the level of the published corporate culture of business organizations, integrating quantitative and qualitative assessments of its elements; An integrated coefficient of disclosure of cultural elements has been developed at two levels - enterprise and economic sector; a methodology has been systematized for determining the summary level of the published corporate culture, which allows for comparative analysis between individual sectors; a statistical toolkit has been adapted to study the strength of the relationship between the level of disclosure of the elements of the published corporate culture and the performance of companies; operationalizing variables have been formulated to study the relationship: "integrated coefficient of disclosure of cultural elements" and "profitability of company revenues".

-Practical and applied contributions - Researching the level of corporate culture in various sectors and activities, including business and non-profit organizations; identifying opportunities for increasing the level of culture and adapting it to the requirements of the company strategy in a specific business activity; researching and deriving similarities and differences in the corporate culture of organizations from different sectors; revealing the main weaknesses that hinder the realization of the communication potential; proposing measures and recommendations for increasing the level of the published online corporate culture, revealing the significance and role of the mission, vision and values, as key strategic documents, in organizations with different sector affiliations in the Bulgarian economy. Identification of strategic actions and measures of a reactive nature undertaken by Bulgarian business organizations in the context of economic crisis, including the Covid-19 pandemic; contributions related to the development of the department and the specialty.

The scientific and applied contributions of a theoretical, methodological and practical nature thus derived allow the conclusion that through his scientific publications Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov develops and enriches the scientific research direction for corporate culture, its publication, as well as the set of processes in the field of business planning. The presented publications are characterized by problem orientation and purposefulness of the research carried out by the candidate.

Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD has fulfilled the main and additional indicators for the academic position "Professor" at the University of Varna provided for in Art. 129, paragraph 2 and 5, item 2, related to scientific research activity. The candidate is an established researcher and author with accumulated experience. The presented works are of a high scientific level and ensure the dissemination of the results of the conducted research among the academic community.

6. Quantitative and qualitative assessment of teaching and learning activities

The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov covers a wide range of disciplines. The report on the total classroom workload (hours) for the last two academic years (2022/23 and 2023/24) shows that the academic workload of the candidate in the bachelor's degree at the University of Varna is 2 00 hours on average per year, and his workload exceeds the norms set by the university.



In the employment of the candidate for the Bachelor's Degree, lecture courses predominate. He is the holder of lecture courses in the Bachelor's Degree in fundamental disciplines from the curriculum of specialties in distance and full-time education, namely: "Business Planning of the Enterprise", "Economic Analysis of the Enterprise", "Corporate Culture", etc.

In the Master's Degree Program, Assoc. Prof. Minkov is the titular instructor of the following disciplines: "Management of Competitiveness and Growth"; "Planning and Analysis of the Enterprise"; "Consulting Ethics and Corporate Culture", "Corporate Culture in the Logistics Business", "Master's Seminar", etc. The classes are conducted for students from distance and part-time study, and for the last two years the report shows an average annual workload of 50 hours, with priority given to lecture classes.

As a result of the documents submitted by the candidate related to the educational activity, it can be stated that:

-The candidate has made a significant contribution to the development of the specialty, full-time classroom and extracurricular employment in the Bachelor's degree program, as well as a significant number of disciplines in the Master's degree program. He/She leads the development and updating of 5 curricula for the Bachelor's degree program, 7 for the Master's degree program and the curriculum for the lecture course "Business Strategies, Planning and Diagnostics of the Industrial Enterprise" under the doctoral program "Industrial Business".

- A textbook and a guide have been published for some of the lecture courses, as well as materials published on the distance learning platform. The textbook on "Managing Competitiveness and Growth" and the textbook on "Pricing Management" deserve serious attention, in which the application of statistical and mathematical methods is found.

- He works actively with students, within the framework of classroom and extracurricular employment, including in relation to their scientific and research activities. He has carried out scientific supervision of 4 doctoral students, two of whom have successfully defended their dissertations, and the rest have been discharged with the right to defend. In addition to the lecture course conducted in the doctoral program "Industrial Business", Assoc. Prof. Minkov also participates in the team of the discipline "Economics of the Enterprise", which is part of the fundamental preparation of doctoral students from all doctoral programs.

Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov is a dedicated and responsible lecturer who, with his accumulated experience and teaching work, enjoys well-deserved respect among students, doctoral students, the academic community at the university and related departments from other universities.

All of the above gives reason to summarize that the candidate complies with the mandatory conditions of the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the requirements under Art. 129, paragraph 5, item 1 of The Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna, related to academic activities.



7. Critical notes, questions and recommendations

The candidate's teaching and research competence do not give grounds for critical remarks. Given the time perspectives for teaching and scientific activity before Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, I would recommend to continue working to deepen its cooperation and publication activities with researchers from other universities in the country and abroad, as well as to continue to support and guide the activities of young researchers in the department and the university.

8. Conclusion

The documents and materials presented by Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD 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 Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna.

The candidate in the competition is presented scientific papers published after the first habilitation, the number of which many times exceeds the required minimum. The candidate's publications contain original scientific and applied scientific contributions that have received international recognition. The theoretical developments have practical applicability, and some of them are directly oriented towards academic work. Associate Professor Ilian Minkov has undoubted scientific and teaching qualifications/Др.

After reviewing the materials and scientific papers submitted for the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific and applied scientific contributions contained therein, I find it completely justified to give my **positive** assessment and to recommend to the esteemed scientific jury to vote and propose to the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Economics to elect Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD to the academic position of "Professor" at the University of Economics - Varna in the professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Planning and Corporate Culture)".

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

04.08. 2025

Varna

Prepared the opinion :

/prof. Teodorina Turlakova, PhD/



OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Plamen Pavlov, habilitated in professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Innovation Management".

1. The opinion is prepared regarding a competition for the academic position of **professor**, in accordance with Order № ПД-06-89/28.05.2025 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna and the decision of the scientific jury, held on 24.06.2025.

2. Information on the competition

The competition for a professor is 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 University of Economics - Varna, Faculty of Economics, Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics" and was announced in the State Gazette No. 32/15.04.2025.

3. Candidates for the competition

Only one candidate participated in the competition for the academic position of "professor" - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, a full-time lecturer in the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics" at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Varna. From the documents provided by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov, it can be stated that he **fulfills** both the requirements specified in Art. 26, para. 2 and 3 of the "Law on the Development of Academic Staff in Bulgaria (ZRASRB)" for holding the academic position of "professor", as well as the quantitative requirements of the University of Varna (based on Art. 26, para. 5 of the ZRASRB).

4. Candidate details

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1997 with a major in "Economics and Industrial Management" and a master's degree in 1998 at the University of Economics - Varna, with a major in "Economics of Industry". From 2000 to 2003 he was a doctoral student at the University of Economics - Varna. In October 2003, he defended his dissertation and received the Educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the scientific specialty 05.02.18. "Economics and Management of the Industry". Since 2004 he has been a senior assistant in the Department of "Economics and Management of the Industry" (today called "Industrial Business and Logistics"). In 2010, Ilian Minkov acquired the title of associate professor in Economics and Management, scientific specialty 05.02.18. "Economics and Management (Planning and Analysis of the Industrial Enterprise)".

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov has held a number of administrative and management positions at the University of Varna from 2011 to the present. He has also participated in numerous editorial boards, scientific organizations, university committees, and others.

The areas of scientific interest of Assoc. Prof. Minkov are in the field of the announced competition, namely: strategic management; corporate and organizational culture; business planning; competitiveness of the enterprise.

The candidate for the announced competition for the academic position of "professor" **meets** the requirements of 118, para. 2, items 1 and 2 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Varna (PRAS).

5. Description of scientific works

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov participates in the competition for the academic position of "professor" in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business Planning and Corporate Culture)" with 31 scientific publications and participation in 2 textbooks. The candidate fulfills the requirements under Art. 118, para. 2 items 3-6 as well as Art. 129 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna.

The required number of points to fulfill the minimum national requirements from the Appendix to Art. 1a, para. 1 of the Regulations for the implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in Bulgaria (PPZRASRB) is 550 points, and the actual fulfillment by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov is 995 points, complying with the requirements of the PRAS and the corresponding quantitative requirements for occupying the academic position of "professor" at the University of Economics – Varna.

To participate in the competition, the candidate has submitted:

- A defended dissertation for the acquisition of the Educational and scientific degree "Doctor" on the topic "Problems of corporate culture in the Bulgarian industry" (50 points according to the Minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "professor").
- An independent monograph (main habilitation work) "The published on the Internet corporate culture of business organizations in Bulgaria", published in 2025 by the publishing house "Science and Economics", University of Varna. The submitted work is 164 pages long. The study conducted a study of companies from four sectors of the Bulgarian economy – beer production, courier services, construction and meat processing, assessing the degree of development of their published official culture, identifying its main content characteristics and examining the relationship between the level of disclosure of culture and the economic results of the companies. Based on this, a comparative analysis between the individual sectors has been made, the main problems in its construction in companies have been identified and opportunities for its improvement have been proposed. The thesis is defended that the higher degree of publication of the official company culture on the Internet contributes to appropriate information of partners and stakeholders about the strategic priorities of companies and thus favors the achievement of positive organizational results. (100 points);
- A published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of an educational and scientific "doctor" (75 points), part of a monograph in co-authorship (not presented as the main habilitation thesis), 2 studies in co-authorship (another 2 studies are not described in the reference for the minimum national requirements, but appear in the quantitative requirements of the University of Varna), 11 articles (including 4 in co-authorship) and 13 reports (including 5 in co-authorship). In the reference for the minimum national requirements, 2 of all publications are reported as published in Scopus or Web of Science (45 points), a total of 21 reports, articles and studies are indicated as such in non-refereed journals (175 points). 1 study published in Scopus or Web of Science (22.5 points), 1 study published in non-refereed journals with scientific review and published chapters (7.5 points). In total, in the sections reporting publications in the reference for minimum national requirements, the candidate has scored (325 points).

In terms of content, the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov predominate, which are mainly focused on the field of corporate culture and the impact of its publication on the results of

the activities of organizations, industrial growth and competitiveness, as well as strategic management in enterprises.

The candidate's scientific output is characterized by depth, competence, purposefulness and style. It is noteworthy that over 40% of the publications (in number) are co-authored, which gives reason, on the one hand, to take into account the individual contribution to the scientific achievements of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov, and on the other hand, his ability for team scientific work.

6. Identification of contributions

The significant volume of scientific research by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov in the field of corporate culture, competitiveness and strategic management has contributed to the identification of a number of significant contributions to theory and practice, namely:

Scientific and theoretical contributions of the participant in the competition:

- The theoretical statements in the field of corporate culture have been further developed, as a management tool for implementing organizational change and a key factor for increasing the competitiveness of business organizations. (In publications with numbers 1.1., 3.2., 4.3., 5.4., 7.6., 15.8., 21.3., 23.5. from the list of scientific publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov)
- The concept of “published culture” has been introduced and substantiated, an integral part of the official corporate culture of companies, and its content and key characteristics have been defined. The constituent elements of the published culture, building its internal structure, are identified, which are distinguished into primary and secondary according to their degree of importance for disclosing the strategic priorities of organizations. (In publications: 1.1., 4.3., 5.4., 6.5., 7.6., 12.5., 13.6., 15.8.)
- The possibilities of corporate culture as a tool for managing the relationship between strategic management and the self-realization of employees in companies are outlined in order to achieve goals and reach the desired organizational situation. (In publications: 10.3., 11.4.)
- The theoretical concepts of the competitiveness and growth of companies in the modern conditions of a dynamic and digital business environment are enriched. The emphasis is on the role of human resources, competitive intelligence and project activity in the creation and development of sustainable competitive advantages. (In publications: 2.1., 9.2., 19.1., 21.3., 22.4., 23.5., 32.1.)

Scientific and methodological contributions of the participant in the competition:

- A universal methodological statement has been developed for assessing the level of the published corporate culture of business organizations, integrating quantitative and qualitative assessments of its elements. The methodology allows for determining an integrated coefficient of disclosure of the elements of culture at the enterprise level and at the economic sector level, an indicator of the degree of its development. (In publications: 1.1., 7.6., 15.8.)
- A methodology has been systematized for determining the general level of the published corporate culture and its elements at the national economy level. The methodology allows for comparison between individual economic sectors and highlighting the common features and differences between them. (In publications: 1.1., 16.9., 17.10., 18.11.)
- A statistical toolkit has been adapted to examine the strength of the relationship between the level of disclosure of the elements of the published corporate culture and the performance of companies.

The operationalization of this relationship has been carried out through the indicators “integrated coefficient of disclosure of the elements of culture” and “profitability of company revenues”. (In publications: 1.1., 14.7., 31.13.)

Scientific and applied contributions of the participant in the competition:

- Research on the level of corporate culture in different by the nature of their activity business and non-profit organizations with a focus on the informal side of culture and the set of its components. Revealing opportunities for increasing the level of culture and adapting it to the requirements of the company strategy. (In publications: 3.2., 21.3., 23.5.)
- Study of the nature, features and degree of development of the published on the Internet official corporate culture of business organizations from different sectors of the Bulgarian economy. Identification of the similarities and differences between them in terms of its quantitative and qualitative parameters, as well as revealing the main weaknesses that hinder the realization of its communication potential. (In publications: 1.1., 7.6., 15.8., 27.9., 28.10., 29.11., 30.12.)
- Research and assessment of the strength and direction of the relationship between the level of the published online corporate culture and the economic results of companies from different sectors of the Bulgarian economy. (In publications: 1.1., 14.7., 31.13.)
- Proposing measures and recommendations for increasing the level of the published online corporate culture, adapted according to the revealed weaknesses in the individual economic sectors, with a view to improving its communication capabilities. (In publications: 1.1., 7.6., 15.8., 27.9., 28.10.)
- Study of the significance and role of the mission, vision and values, as key strategic documents, in organizations with different sector affiliations of the Bulgarian economy. Assessment of their contribution as basic elements in building the portfolio of the published online corporate culture. (In publications: 6.5., 16.9., 17.10., 18.11.)
- Researching the degree of development of the published online organizational culture of higher education institutions in Bulgaria and outlining the priorities and specifics of its formation. (In publications: 4.3., 5.4.)
- Identification of strategic actions and measures of a reactive nature taken by Bulgarian business organizations in the conditions of the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. (In publications: 25.7., 26.8.)

The candidate reports a significant number of citations of works in scientific publications, namely: 4 citations in scientific publications referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information (Scopus or Web of Science, according to a reference for quantitative requirements of the University of Varna, and in the reference for the minimum national requirements under the Regulations for the implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in Bulgaria, only 2 of the four are reported); 11 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review; 19 citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review. They bring the candidate a total of 235 points, which significantly exceed the minimum requirements of 100 points. This is an indicator of the recognition of the specialist Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov, not only among Bulgarian, but also among foreign scientists.

7. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has participated in 6 national projects, and he was the leader of all six. He has repeatedly been a member of the scientific or organizational committee of a number of scientific forums (a total of 10 times). He is a member of the Union of Scientists – Varna, section “Economic Sciences”. He is a member and chairman of the control board of the Association of Teachers of Economics and Management in Industry. The candidate in the competition was a member of the editorial board of the journal “Izvestiya” of the University of Economics-Varna.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has carried out expert and consulting activities in three Bulgarian enterprises from the real sector, as part of his activity is directly related to the application of personal skills and knowledge in the field of corporate culture, competitiveness and strategic management in specific companies.

8. Teaching work

The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov covers courses in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs in full-time and distance learning. The provided references for the candidate's academic workload in the last 2 academic years – 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 indicate that he mainly teaches disciplines in the field of this competition, namely: “Business Planning of the Enterprise”, “Corporate Culture”, “Economic Analysis of the Enterprise”, “Management of Competitiveness and Growth” and others.

Over the years, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has developed 19 curricula in the Bachelor's degree programs for the specialties of IBP, Logistics, Business and Management and 1 fundamental for the Bachelor's degree programs, 17 in the Master's degree programs for the specialties of KBM, OBD, LM and BC and 1 doctoral program for “Industrial Business”.

For the competition, the candidate submits 1 co-authored textbook and 1 teaching aid also co-authored.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov was the scientific supervisor of 4 doctoral students, two of whom have successfully defended their doctoral degrees. The candidate's active work with doctoral students and students is evidenced by some publications co-authored with doctoral students, as well as the successfully supervised 26 graduates in master's and bachelor's degrees for the period 2021-2025. A great recognition of the teaching and personal qualities of Assoc. Prof. Minkov is his choice by the students for “Teacher of the 2024/25 academic year” in the annual competition organized by the Department of “IBL”.

A serious certificate and recognition by the college for the qualities of the candidate as a scientist is his participation in 29 scientific juries for acquiring the educational and scientific degree of doctor and for occupying academic positions of chief assistant and associate professor.

9. Others

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has a very serious administrative experience, with which he has contributed over the years to the development of the University of Varna, the Faculty of Economics and the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics. From 2011 to 2019 he was the head of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics, and from 2011 to 2013 he was also the head of the Department of Academic Activities and Students. From 2019 until now he has been the deputy dean of the Faculty of Economics.

From 2011 to the present Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has been a member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics, and since 2019 he has been a member of the Academic Council of the University of Varna, of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Informatics, of the Scientific Council of the Research Institute at the University of Varna, as well as the chairman and member of several other committees at the university and faculty level.

10. Plagiarism

In the works of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov *has no proven* plagiarism in accordance with the statutory procedure. The candidate has provided a declaration of originality.

11. Questions, critical remarks to the candidate

I recommend the candidate:

- To continue to build on the development of his research activities in areas such as strategic management, competitiveness and corporate culture.
- To continue to work with young people, motivating them to achieve success both in the field of industrial business and strategic management of companies, and in the scientific field.

12. Conclusion

The analysis of the scientific, teaching and administrative activities, based on the documents submitted by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, as well as his professional experience and personal qualities, give reason to believe that all the requirements of the ZRASRB and PPZRASRB for holding the academic position of “professor” have been met. Evaluating the quantity, type, content and quality of the publications, it can be confidently stated that the candidate fulfills the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Varna (in their part for occupying the academic position of “professor”).

All this gives reason to recommend to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to support the proposal that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ilian Ivanov Minkov be approved for occupying the academic position of “professor” in the professional field 3.8 “Economics”, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Business Planning and Corporate Culture)” at the University of Varna.

Date: 07.07.2025 г.

Varna

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

/Assoc. Dr. Plamen Pavlov/



OPINION

Bz. No.

PD 20-1301/19.08.2025

- From:** Prof. **Valentina Lyubenova Nikolova-Alexieva, PhD**
University of Food Technology - Plovdiv,
Professional field 3.8. Economics, Scientific specialty
"Economics and Management" (Business economics,
Corporate governance)
- Subject:** competition for **Professor** in a district on higher Education 3. Social,
economic and legal sciences, professionally direction 3.8. Economics,
scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business planning and
Corporate culture)", announced from University of Economics – Varna.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate.

The competition for borrowing on academic position "**Professor**" by area on higher education 3. " Social, economic and legal sciences ", professional direction 3.8 „ Economics (Business planning and company culture)" has been announced for needs at the department "Industrial Business and Logistics" of University of Economics (UE) - Varna in the State Gazette, issue 32/15.04.2025. I participate in the scientific jury of the competition, in accordance with Order No. RD-06-89/28.05.2025 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna.

In the competition participates only one candidate – Associate professor Ilian Ivanov Minkov, PhD from the University of Economics -Varna. In 1997, the candidate obtained the Bachelor's degree in Economics and Industrial Management at the University of Economics - Varna. At the same university, in 1998, he completed a Master's degree in Economics of Industry. In October 2003, he successfully defended his dissertation and received the Educational and Scientific Degree (EDS) "Doctor" in the scientific specialty 05.02.18. "Economics and Industrial Management". Since 2004, he has been appointed as a Chief Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics and Industrial Management. With *diploma No. 26560/23.08.2010, issued by the Higher Attestation Commission (HAC)*, in 2010 Ilian Minkov was appointed as an Associate professor in the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics, with the scientific specialty 05.02.18. "Economics and Management (Planning and Analysis of the Industrial Enterprise)".

Over the years, Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD combines his academic growth with active administrative activity. In the period 2011-2013, he was elected Head of the Department of "Academic Activities and Students", and in the period 2011-2019, he was Head of the Department of "Industrial Business and Logistics". In 2019, he was elected Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Economics and in 2023, he was re-elected to this position for a second term. He is a member of the editorial board of the prestigious journal "Izvestiya", of the scientific council of the Scientific Research Institute at the University of Economics -Varna, etc. He is a member of the Union of Scientists - Varna branch and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Association of Teachers of Economics and Management in Industry.

Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD has carried out expert and consulting activities in three Bulgarian enterprises from the real sector, with part of his activity being directly related to the



application of personal skills and knowledge in the field of corporate culture, competitiveness and strategic management in the specific companies.

All this complements the already wide range of knowledge, skills and competencies, skillfully combined with solid practical and administrative experience.

He is fluent in English and uses Russian at a good level, which allows him to monitor foreign scientific achievements and good management practices and adapt them to a university environment.

Must say here that I know Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD and have observed his personal, intellectual, and in particular, scientific and teaching evolution. I can confirm with complete conviction that he is *a creative, disciplined, thorough, scholar and colleague, an extremely correct, competent specialist, who is distinguished by intellectual curiosity, professionalism and scientific dignity.*

2. Fulfillment of the requirements for holding the academic position.

The candidate meets all mandatory conditions under Art. 24 of the ZRASRB and the additional requirements of the University of Varna, pursuant to Art. 15, para. 1 of the ZRASRB and Art. 60 of the PPZRASRB.

Regarding the requirement for an acquired ESD "Doctor" (Art. 60, para. 1, item 1 of the PPZRASRB) - in 2003, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Minkov defended a dissertation before the SNS of the HAC, on the topic: "Problems of corporate culture in the Bulgarian industry". He acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (by industries)" (diploma No. 28786 / 08.01.2004, approved by Protocol No /date:14-16 / 28.10.2003.).

Regarding the requirement for minimum academic experience (Art. 60, para. 1, item 2 of the PPZRASRB) - the total work experience of Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov as a lecturer at the University of Economics - Varna is over 21 years. Obviously, the candidate fully meets the legal requirement for a minimum academic experience of two years.

Regarding the requirement for a published monographic work (Art. 60, para. 1, item 3 of the PPZRASRB) – Assoc. prof. Minkov has presented a habilitation thesis on the topic "The corporate culture of business organizations in Bulgaria published on the Internet". The thesis was reviewed by two respected reviewers in scientific circles, was published in 2025 by the "Science and Economics" publishing house, University of Varna and has a volume of 164 pages. The topic of the monographic work, the object, subject and time period to which it refers, do not imply overlap with the dissertation work and the monograph for the candidate's academic position of "associate professor", which meets the legal requirement of Art. 24, para. 1, item 3 of the ZRAS of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Regarding the requirement to submit other original scientific research works (Art. 60, para. 1, item 4 of the PPZRASRB) - the candidate has submitted a published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of an educational and scientific degree of "doctor", part of a co-authored monograph, 2 co-authored studies, 11 articles and 13 reports. Of all publications, 2 are reported as published in Scopus or Web of Science (45 pts.), a total of 21 reports, articles and studies are listed as such in non-refereed journals. 1 study published in SCOPUS or Web of Science, 1 studies published in non-refereed journals with scientific review and published chapters. All of them refer to the period 2013 - 2025, which does not imply overlap with publications from previous competitions for holding academic positions and doctoral degrees.



*Regarding the requirement to meet the relevant minimum national criteria and the requirements under Art. 1a, para. 2; (Art. 60, para. 1, item 5 of the PPZRASRB) – according to the submitted Certificate, the candidate has achieved a total of **995 points** (from indicators: A- 50 points; B-100 points; D-325 points; E-235 points; E-285 points), which significantly exceeds the required threshold of 550 points. It is noteworthy that activity was recorded on each of the indicators, and on some of them, performance was recorded that significantly exceeded the minimum threshold - such as G (publications), D (citations) and E (projects, textbooks, etc.). This undoubtedly proves the candidate's potential for holding the academic position and the enormous work that he has put in.*

Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD also meets the additional requirements for the University of Varna according to the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 2b, para. 5) and Art. 118, para. 2, item 6 of the Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities at the University of Varna – with a minimum number 275 points, the candidate collects **595 points**.

The total number of points that the candidate collects is 1,590, which significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements and the additional requirements for the University of Varna for the position of "professor", which are 825 points.

Regarding the requirement that there be no plagiarism proven in accordance with the statutory procedure in scientific works (Article 60, paragraph 1, point 6 of the PPZRASRB) - at the moment, none has been established.

Ilian Minkov is also a recognizable researcher with contributions in the field of business planning and corporate culture. The overall pedagogical training and activity of Assoc. prof. Minkov shows that he is an established and respected lecturer in the academic community. His repeated participation in national and international forums is proof of his potential to develop and his desire to work to raise the image of the University of Economics -Varna.

Based on all of the above, regarding the diverse and in-depth teaching and research work of Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD, I believe that he fully meets the quantitative and qualitative requirements for holding the academic position of "Professor" at the University of Economics - Varna.

3. Evaluation of teaching and research activities

Assoc. prof. Dr. Ilian Minkov has a guaranteed teaching load in the disciplines: "Business Planning of the Enterprise", "Corporate Culture", "Economic Analysis of the Enterprise", "Management of Competitiveness and Growth", "Corporate Culture", "Consulting Ethics and Corporate Culture", "Planning and Analysis of the Enterprise". His reported classroom occupancy for the period 2011-2025 exceeds the mandatory minimum.

His scientific and teaching activities are complemented by the supervision of 26 graduate students and 4 doctoral students. To date, two of the doctoral students have successfully defended their dissertations, and the rest have been dismissed with the right to defend. In addition to the lecture course conducted in the doctoral program "Industrial Business", Assoc. prof. Minkov also participates in the team of the discipline "Economics of the Enterprise", which is part of the fundamental preparation of doctoral students from all doctoral programs.

Over the years, Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD has developed 19 curricula in the Bachelor's degree program for the specialties of IBP, Logistics, Business and Management and



1 fundamental one for the Bachelor's degree program, 17 in the Master's degree program for the specialties of KBU, ABR, LM and BC and 1 doctoral program for "Industrial Business".

The rich practical and administrative experience that Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov possesses in the context of business planning and corporate culture and the continuous monitoring of innovations in the field, contribute to his lectures being delivered at a very high professional level, practically oriented, up-to-date, challenging, intriguing, and thought-provoking for young people.

A serious certificate and recognition from the academic community for the qualities of the candidate as a scientist is his participation in **29 scientific juries** for acquiring the ESD "doctor" and for occupying academic positions "chief assistant" and "associate professor". He has published a textbook and a guide for some of the lecture courses, as well as materials published on the distance learning platform. The textbook "Managing Competitiveness and Growth" and the teaching aid "Managing Pricing", which include the application of statistical and mathematical methods, deserve serious attention.

There is a significant contribution to strengthening the good name of the University of Varna, developing good management practices, academic traditions and spirit at the university. The candidate was Head of the Department of Academic Activities and Students, Head of the Department of Industrial Business and Logistics, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Member of the Academic Council of the University of Economics - Varna, Member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Economics - Varna, Member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Informatics of the University of Economics - Varna, Member of the Scientific Council of the Research Institute at the University of Economics - Varna, Chairman of the Central Competition Committee of the University of Economics - Varna, Chairman of the Specialized Commission on Academic Activities at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Economics - Varna, Member of the Permanent Commission on Accreditation at the University of Economics - Varna, Member of the Commission on Quality Assurance and Assessment at the University of Economics - Varna, Member of the Permanent Commission on Scientific Research at the University of Economics - Varna, Chairman of the Attestation Commission of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Economics - Varna.

His active participation in the project activity makes an excellent impression. Assoc. prof. Minkov has taken part in **6 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 was the Chairman of the Organizing Committee. He also reports participation in the Scientific Committees of 5 scientific forums. Assoc. prof. Minkov 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**. *The topics and activities of the projects in which he participates are directly related to his teaching and research work.* The high project activity gives reason to conclude that Dr. Minkov has acquired sufficient experience and routine and evidences of undisputed professionalism in his teaching work.

The teaching and learning and scientific activity on Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD as lecturer, author of numerous scientific publications, leader and participant in international and national projects and scientific leader of doctoral students, completely corresponds on requirements for borrowing on academic position " Professor " at the University of Economics - Varna.



4. Brief description of the submitted scientific publications

The careful introduction to science production gives me reason for the following conclusions and summaries :

First, Assoc. prof. Minkov participates in the current competition with sufficient scientific output, the volume of which amounts to 752 *standard pages*. The relative share of *independent publications is 52%*, and *co-authored publications - 48%*, which indicates that the candidate for professor has a pronounced ability to balance between *in-depth individual work and teamwork*.

NO.	Type of publications	Standalone		Co-authored		Total
		Bulgarian language	English language	Bulgarian language	English language	
1	Monographs	1	-	-	-	1
2.	Section of a collective monograph	-	-	1	-	1
3.	Book based on a dissertation	1	-	-	-	1
4.	Studios	-	-	1	3	4
5.	Articles	7	-	1	3	11
6.	Scientific reports	8	-	2	3	13
7.	Textbooks and aids	-	-	2	-	2
	Total:	17	-	7	9	33

Secondly, the publications of Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov reveal his ambition to research current, complex and significant problems for modern science and business practice. His interests are mainly in the field of strategic management, corporate culture and human resources management. In the competition, Assoc. prof. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, PhD participated with 33 *scientific publications, including 1 monograph, 1 collective monograph, 1 book on doctoral dissertation, 4 studies, 11 articles and 13 scientific reports*. All of them are directly related to the disciplines of the competition.

On the *company culture* is dedicated his independent monograph "*The corporate culture of business organizations in Bulgaria published on the Internet*", in which Assoc. prof. Minkov exceptionally has collected and processed in good faith huge quantity of information. Main accent is puts on the contribution of publishing it on the official company culture on the internet the environment , for the better one awareness on partners and stakeholders countries regarding strategic priorities on the companies, which from his/her own country , favors the realization on positive organizational results – sales and profit. The monographic study covers Bulgarian enterprises from four economic sectors — beer production, courier services, construction and meat processing. The study assesses the level of development of the published corporate culture, identifies its main content characteristics and analyzes the relationship between the degree of its disclosure and the economic performance 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 from the empirical study indicate that published on the Internet company culture on business organizations in Bulgaria is weak developed, and in a significant number cases completely is absent . This hinders the companies yes use its potential for market differentiation and construction on sustainable organizational image. The monograph *deserves*



high assessment as from theoretical, as well as from practical point of view point. It concerns topics and issues relating to is directly to the topic on announced competition.

The analysis of the publications submitted in this procedure shows that they are distinguished by both relevance and originality, as well as a clear methodological framework and professional interpretation of the empirical results. They do not repeat publications related to previous competitions. Taken together, these scientific works reveal a deep scientific interest of Assoc. prof. Ilian Mnnkov, PhD in the thematic area of the competition: business planning and corporate culture.

Third, the other publications presented in the competition, besides monographs and textbooks, are **28 in number**. Of these, **6** are published in the global databases SCOPUS and WoS and **10** are referenced in international databases with scientific information such as CEEOL, ERIH+, EBSCOhost. I positively assess the aspiration of Assoc. Prof. Ilian Minkov to publish his works in international publications, as well as in national publications, in English (about 30% of his publications are in English). *This significantly increases the potential of his work to become recognizable in international scientific circles.*

Fourth, the active publication activity of Assoc. prof. Minkov is combined with a high citation rate of his scientific publications. The total number of **citations is 33**, of which **2 issues are in the global SCOPUS database and WoS, 11 issues** - in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and **19 issues of citations are** in non-refereed publications. This information clearly proves that the candidate's research achievements have *found recognition and public prominence among the scientific community.*

The represented publications attest Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD as serious, conscientious, thorough and perspective scientific worker.

5. Evaluation of scientific and applied scientific contributions

The publications contain a number of *scientific, scientific-applied and applied* contributions of varying degrees of significance to economic science:

➤ **Scientific contributions** include:

- Economic theory is enriched with a systematization of concepts for the competitiveness and growth of companies in the modern conditions of a dynamic and digital business environment. The emphasis is on the role of human resources, competitive intelligence and project activity in the creation and development of sustainable competitive advantages. (*Publications: 2.1., 9.2., 19.1., 21.3., 22.4., 23.5., 32.1.*)
- published culture", a component of the official corporate culture of companies, is introduced and justified, and its content and key characteristics are defined. The constituent elements of the published culture, building its internal structure, are identified, which are distinguished into primary and secondary according to their degree of importance for disclosing the strategic priorities of organizations. (*Publications: 1.1., 4.3., 5.4., 6.5., 7.6., 12.5., 13.6., 15.8.*)
- Theoretical statements in the field of corporate culture have been further developed as a management tool for implementing organizational change and a key factor for increasing the competitiveness of business organizations. (*Publications with numbers 1.1., 3.2., 4.3., 5.4., 7.6., 15.8., 21.3., 23.5*)



- The possibilities of corporate culture as a tool for managing the relationship between strategic management and the self-realization of employees in companies with a view to achieving goals and reaching the desired organizational situation have been identified. (*Publications: 10.3., 11.4.*)

➤ **Scientific and applied contributions** include :

- A universal methodological framework has been developed to assess the level of disclosed corporate culture in business organizations, integrating quantitative and qualitative assessments of its elements. The methodology allows for the determination of an integrated coefficient of disclosure of cultural elements at the enterprise level and at the economic sector level, an indicator of the degree of its development. (*Publications: 1.1., 7.6., 15.8.*)
- A methodology has been systematized for determining the general level of the published corporate culture and its elements at the level of the national economy. The methodology allows for a comparison between individual economic sectors and highlighting the common features and differences between them. (*Publications: 1.1., 16.9., 17.10., 18.11.*)
- A statistical toolkit has been adapted to examine the strength of the relationship between the level of disclosure of the elements of the published corporate culture and the performance of the companies. The operationalization of this relationship has been carried out through the indicators "integrated coefficient of disclosure of the elements of culture" and "profitability of the companies' revenues". (*Publications: 1.1., 14.7., 31.13.*)

➤ **Applied contributions** include :

- Research and assessment of the strength and direction of the relationship between the level of corporate culture published on the Internet and the economic results of companies from different sectors of the Bulgarian economy. (*Publications: 1.1., 14.7., 31.13.*)
- Research on the level of corporate culture in different types of business and non-profit organizations with a focus on the informal side of culture and the totality of its components. Revealing opportunities for increasing the level of culture and adapting it to the requirements of the company's strategy. (*Publications: 3.2., 21.3., 23.5.*)
- Proposing measures and recommendations to increase the level of the published online corporate culture, adapted according to the weaknesses revealed in the individual economic sectors, with a view to improving its communication capabilities. (*Publications: 1.1., 7.6., 15.8., 27.9., 28.10.*)
- Study of the significance and role of the mission, vision and values, as key strategic documents, in organizations with different sector affiliations of the Bulgarian economy. Assessment of their contribution as basic elements in building the portfolio of the published online company culture. (*Publications: 6.5., 16.9., 17.10., 18.11.*)
- Study of the nature, features and degree of development of the official corporate culture published on the Internet of business organizations from different sectors of the Bulgarian economy. Identification of the similarities and differences between them in terms of its quantitative and qualitative parameters, as well as revealing the main



weaknesses that hinder the realization of its communication potential. (*Publications: 1.1., 7.6., 15.8., 27.9., 28.10., 29.11., 30.12.*)

- Identification of strategic actions and measures of a reactive nature undertaken by Bulgarian business organizations in the context of the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. (*Publications: 25.7., 26.8.*)
- Researching the degree of development of the organizational culture of higher education institutions in Bulgaria published on the Internet and outlining the priorities and specifics of its formation. (*Publications: 4.3., 5.4.*)

6. Critical notes and recommendations

I have no significant critical remarks, but at the same time I would like to make the following recommendations for the candidate's future work:

- I recommend that the candidate, given the broad portfolio of knowledge and skills in the field of business planning and company culture, create Master Classes for training.
- Given the extremely relevant specialty of his habilitation, I recommend that the candidate continue to supervise doctoral students, with the aim of building a scientific school in this field, which is in line with the mission and one of the main tasks of every professor.

7. Conclusion

The candidate for the academic position "professor" meets the scientometric requirements introduced by the Act on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Additional Requirements of the University of Economics - Varna. **Assoc. prof. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, PhD** has a solid scientific output, which contains scientific and applied scientific contributions in the field of business planning and corporate culture. Assoc. prof. Ilian Minkov, PhD is also a recognized lecturer in the academic community in consulting ethics and corporate culture, in business planning and economic analysis.

With full conviction, I give my POSITIVE assessment and recommend to the other esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to vote FOR AWARDING the academic position of "Professor" to Assoc. prof. Ilian Ivanov Minkov, PhD in the professional field 3.8. Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Business planning and Corporate culture)".

08.08.2025
Plovdiv

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