

## OPINION

From

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Head of Food and Nutrition Department  
National Center for Public Health and Analysis

**Subject:** competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 7. "Health and Sports", professional field 7.1 "Medicine" in the scientific specialty "Hygiene" for the needs of the Department of Microbiological Factors, Directorate "Analytical and Laboratory Activities"

By order № RD-109-163 / 15.04.2021 of the Director of NCPHA and protocol № 7 / 06.04.2021 of the Scientific Board of NCPHA for announcing a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 7. "Healthcare and sport ", professional field 7.1 "Medicine" in the scientific specialty "Hygiene" for the needs of the department "Microbiological factors ", directorate "Analytical and laboratory activities ", I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for conducting the competition.

The competition was published in SG, issue 14/19.02.2021. and at <http://ncpha.government.bg> on 19.02.2021.

The only one candidate in the competition is Assistant Professor Vessela Ivanova Georgieva, MD

### **1. Brief biographical data and career development of the candidate.**

Mrs. Vessela Ivanova Georgieva has a Master's degree in Biology, she graduated from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", Faculty of Biology in 1991. Her narrow specialization is in the field of hydrobiology and water protection, she has defended a thesis on the topic: coastal Black Sea waters ".

Since 2014, Ms. Vessela Ivanova Georgieva has been a PhD in "HYGIENE" after a theses defense "Biological contaminants in the hygienic assessment of bottled water."

From 1992 to 1998, Ms. Georgieva worked as a biologist at the National Center for Public Health and Analysis (NCPHA). From 1998 to 2010 she was a research associate, and from 2010 to 2013 she is Assistant Professor in NCPHA, Directorate "Analytical and laboratory activities" department "Microbiological factors". Since 2014 - to the present (2021) Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva, PhD is Head of the Department of Microbiological Factors at the same directorate.

Her research interests are related to the problems of microbiological analysis of samples from: tap water, boreholes, surface water bodies, water supply settlements, bottled water, swimming pools; cosmetic products; sludge; biowaste; soil improvers; air in working premises; performing hydrobiological analyzes of samples from: surface water bodies, water supply settlements; reservoirs used for recreation and fishing, bottled water, soft drinks. The whole practical and research experience of Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva is in the field of sanitary microbiology and is involved in the protection of public health.

Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva, PhD has extensive practical experience in the field of sanitary microbiology, knows the regulations governing the indicators and standards for testing samples of different nature.

- **General description of the presented materials and fulfillment of the scientometric criteria.**

Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva, PhD has submitted 37 scientific publications for participation in the competition, of which: 4 are cited in the PhD thesis and 33 are outside the topic of thesis. In 17 of the presented publications Vessela Georgieva is the first author, of which 8 are independent authors. 3 publications in foreign journals with impact factor are presented, the total Impact Factor of the publications is 3,014. Of the presented publications, 12 are published in publications that are refereed and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information (Scopus and Web of science), and 18 are published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or in edited collective volumes. The publications of Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva have been cited in 14 foreign scientific journals.

14 participations with reports or posters of Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva in national scientific conferences and congresses was presented.

Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva has participated in 4 national and 3 international projects, as well as in 2 national programs and 1 program of Sofia Municipality.

The publications submitted by the candidate for participation in the competition, in number and categories, fully comply with and exceed the Minimum National Requirements for the Scientific Activity of Candidates for Academic Position "Associate Professor" and the recommended quantitative scientometric criteria for holding "Associate Professor", defined in Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions in the NCPHA.

## **2. Qualitative evaluation of research and contributions.**

The main scientific contributions of the activity of Assistant Professor Vessela Georgieva are systematized in 6 thematic scientific areas:

*Microbiological examination of surface water bodies, water supply settlements, tap water, boreholes, bottled waters* - as a result of chemical, microbiological and hydrobiological analyzes, a hygienic assessment of water supply dams was performed - Iskar Dam, Dyakovo Dam, Dyakovo Dam. "Asenovets" dam "Bebresh"; Hygienic assessments have also been made on two of the largest rivers in Bulgaria - the Iskar River and the Danube River, in order to improve their ecological status and prevent their burden of anthropogenic pollution. A large-scale study of Bulgarian bottled water was started in 2000, more than 3,000 water samples were tested - from the deposits themselves, as well as bottled. The results and the assessments made are important for the protection of public health and for the establishment of monitoring in the production of bottled water;

*Microbiological examination of cosmetic products* - microbiological analyzes of various cosmetic products have been performed - creams, shampoos, toothpastes, mascaras, incl. and current natural products. The results are part of the hygienic evaluation of the products and are related to the safety of their use;

*Microbiological examination of WWTP sediments; biowaste; soil improvers* - the performed microbiological analyzes of sludge, biowaste, children's sandstones and sand from regulated beaches on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast are an element of their hygienic assessment. The conclusions made are of great importance and scientific contribution, as for the first time they provide similar data for Bulgaria.

*Hydrobiological study of surface water bodies, water supply settlements and reservoirs used for recreation and fishing* - hydrobiological analyzes of dams used for water supply of settlements - Iskar Dam, Dupnitsa Dam, Bebresh Dam, Bebresh Dam, . "Cold", dams for recreation and fishing - Bistritsa Dam, Pchelina Dam and others. The obtained results allow for an objective assessment of the condition of the reservoirs and their ecological status. An assessment of the ecological condition of the Iskar River was made by surveying the water benthic communities.

*Hydrobiological testing of bottled water and soft drinks* - the microbiological and hydrobiological analyzes of bottled water and soft drinks are of help to the food industry and are important for public health.

Emphasized scientific and applied contribution is the fact that the hydrobiological analyzes performed over the years in samples from drinking dams, recreational bodies of water, bottled water and soft drinks, provided data that are unparalleled in the system of the Ministry of Health.

The publication of basic hydrobiological approaches applied in the study of surface water bodies can also be noted as a theoretical contribution.

*Other interesting contributions* - Contributions of scientific and applied nature are the developed microbiological method for analysis of antibiotics in the air at work and study for the presence of microorganisms of the genus Legionella in water samples from refrigeration plants in various industries.

Ms. Georgieva participates in the preparation of ISO standards, assigned by TC 15 to BDS.

The overall activity of Assistant professor Vessela Ivanova Georgieva, MD from performing hydrobiological analyzes in samples of dam and bottled water and in soft drinks enriches the national database of the Ministry of Health and allows for in-depth hygienic assessment of sites important for the health of the population.

### **3. Learning and teaching activity**

Since 2014 Assistant professor Vessela Ivanova Georgieva, PhD participates annually in training courses for continuing specialization of medical and non-medical specialists, designed for specialists from RHI and water companies, as well as from other private laboratories on important topics related to microbiological testing and interpretation of results in water, cosmetics, swimming pools; changes in the regulatory framework and methods; validation / verification of the microbiological methods applied in practice. Participates as a lecturer in the basic course "Microbiology", module "Sanitary Microbiology - for the acquisition of the medical specialty" Microbiology "at NCPHA.

### **CONCLUSION**

The provided documents confirm the rich research experience, productive scientific and research work, professional competence and teaching experience of Assistant Vessela Ivanova Georgieva, PhD.

The analysis of the overall research, publication and learning and teaching activities of Assistant Vessela Ivanova Georgieva, PhD gives me reason to claim that they fully comply with the scientometric requirements and criteria for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", defined in for holding "Associate Professor", defined in the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions in the NCPHA and the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Based on the above, I express a positive assessment and strongly recommend to the esteemed Scientific Jury to vote " IN FAVOR" the holding of the academic position "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" by Assistant professor Vessela Ivanova Georgieva, PhD in the field of higher education 7. "Health and Sports", professional field 7.1 "Medicine" in the scientific specialty "Hygiene" for the needs of the Department of Microbiological Factors, Directorate "Analytical and Laboratory Activities" at the National Center of Public Health and Analysis.

10.06.2021

Prof Vesselka Duleva, MD, PhD:.....