

**To the Chairman of the Scientific Jury,**  
appointed by Order No. 15-03-190#2/24.07.2025  
of the Director of ASK UMBAL "Tokuda" EAD

**OPINION**

**By Prof. Dr. Petko Karagyozev, D.M., FASGE, Head of the Gastroenterology Clinic,  
Acibadem City Clinic UMBAL Tokuda EAD, Sofia**

Subject: Competition for the academic position of "Professor", in the scientific specialty "Thoracic Surgery" at the Clinic of Thoracic Surgery at ASK UMBAL Tokuda EAD, Sofia

One candidate applied for the competition - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsvetan Radnev Minchev, D.M., Head of the Clinic of Thoracic Surgery at ASK UMBAL Tokuda, EAD, Sofia.

Assoc. Prof. Tsvetan Minchev was born on 20.05.1965. He graduated from the Medical University of Sofia in 1989. He specialized in General Surgery at the Military Medical Academy in Sofia until 1991, and since 1992 he has been working at the Clinic of Thoracic Surgery at the St. Sophia Hospital of the University of Medicine and Surgery, Sofia, where he successively held the positions of resident, assistant, senior and chief assistant. In 2017, he defended his dissertation on the topic "Operative technique with pediculated omentum for the treatment of mediastinitis after cardiac surgeries" and since 2018 he has been an associate professor of Thoracic Surgery. The candidate masters practically all techniques in thoracic surgery and demonstrates the highest level of competence and expertise. I have the honor of working in the same institution with him since 2011. His innovative spirit, thinking and the help he provided in critical situations are also the basis for the development of interventional endoscopy in the hospital and the implementation for the first time in the country of techniques such as transesophageal biopsy under echoendo-control, endoscopic treatment of Zenker diverticula, endoscopic submucosal dissection of early esophageal tumors, oral endoscopic myotomy in achalasia, endoscopic techniques for closing perforations and a number of others. The combination of innovation with in-depth theoretical knowledge and high professional morals and ethics make the candidate extremely suitable for the position for which he is applying. Assoc. Prof. Minchev teaches residents in surgical specialties. From the employment record it is clear that for the period 01.2020- 12.2024 the candidate has 1016 eq. hours of teaching workload.

According to the list of publications "after Associate Professor" prepared by him (19.07.2025), the candidate participated in the competition with a total of 34 scientific works - dissertations, and 33 publications after acquiring the academic position of "Associate Professor". - of which one monograph, one co-authorship in scientific management, 13 publications - 5 articles and 8 summaries in refereed domestic and foreign publications, and 18 publications in Bulgarian non-refereed publications.

The submitted citation report from the Central Library of Medical University - Sofia proves 239 citations, of which in sources referenced in Scopus 93, in Web of Science 79 and 67 in Bulgarian sources from the library fund of the Central Library.

The candidate's scientific production is practically in all areas of thoracic surgery and interventional bronchology. Several areas can be outlined:

1. Minimally invasive treatment of esophageal perforations and leaks - together with the gastroenterology team, in two publications in prestigious international journals, the experience with endoscopic and videothorascopic treatment of iatrogenic and spontaneous esophageal perforations is presented.

2. Transthoracic biopsy under ultrasound control of mediastinal formations - again in co-authorship with a multidisciplinary team, in a publication in a prestigious international journal, the diagnostic possibilities and risks of the methodology are discussed.
  3. Transesophageal biopsy under echoendoscopic control of pulmonary tumor formations - at a prestigious gastroenterology conference in the USA, the experience with transesophageal biopsies under endosonographic control of pulmonary formations was presented in the form of a poster - in co-authorship with the gastroenterology team. The abstract was published in the prestigious journal GIE
  4. Vascular pathology - coronary subclavian "still" syndrome - publication together with the angiology team, as well as revascularization in traumatic injury of the right common carotid artery - a clinical case, published together with the angiology, vascular and neurosurgery teams of the institution where the author works.
  5. Surgery in diseases of the trachea - Tracheal resection and reconstruction in neoplastic diseases, as well as multidisciplinary management of a pediatric patient with post-intubation tracheal stenosis - two abstracts, published in a supplement to the Journal of Cardiothoracic Surgery
  6. Aggressive surgery in advanced lung cancer using cardiopulmonary bypass - publication in a supplement to the above-mentioned journal.
  7. Projectile extraction with robot-assisted thoracic surgery - a description of a clinical case, published in Annals of Case Reports
  8. Robot-assisted surgical interventions in benign lesions of the esophagus - duplication cysts, leiomyomas, epiphrenic diverticulum - the experience has been shared in several publications and collections.
  9. Early non-small cell lung carcinoma - in a publication together with the medical oncology team, the role of adjuvant immunotherapy after resection is presented.
  10. Surgical treatment of tumors of the esophagus and gastroesophageal junction. The candidate is a pioneer for the country in the field, introducing for the first time and sharing experience with a number of surgical techniques - videothoracoscopic + laparoscopic resection of the esophagus and esophagogastroplasty, subsequently robot-assisted surgery in tumors of the esophagus - also a pioneering technique for the country, introduced and described by the candidate. As an undisputed national expert, the candidate also participated in the creation of a multidisciplinary clinical guideline on the topic of esophageal and gastroesophageal junction carcinoma.
  11. Minimally invasive approach to the treatment of complicated pancreatitis with peripancreatic collections extending to the mediastinum and neck - a clinical case in a team with the gastroenterology clinic - a summary of the case, published in the same journal.
  12. Complications in esophageal and gastric surgery and methods of management - advanced endoscopic techniques / surgical interventions
  13. Robot-assisted surgery for tumors of the esophagus and gastroesophageal junction - an impressive experience, pioneering for the country, presented in several publications in collections of reports from national surgical congresses
  14. Robot-assisted lung resections - also a pioneering experience for the country, presented at the national annual surgical forums.
  15. Cryoanalgesia in thoracic surgery - for the first time in the country, an innovative intraoperative technique for analgesia in thoracic surgery has been presented.
  16. Techniques for plastic surgery of chest wall defects - presented in one publication.
  17. Extreme malignant tracheal stenosis - the author presents multidisciplinary experience in applying innovative techniques to deal with this difficult problem together with ENT specialists
  18. Treatment of Zenker's diverticulum - experience with oral diverticulostomy is presented, as well as a technique with flexible endoscopy, which is routine in the institution to which the candidate belongs.
- II Monograph - The candidate presents a monograph entitled "Robot-assisted surgeries in carcinoma of the esophagus and gastroesophageal junction"

It treats the important topic of surgical treatment of cancer of the esophagus and gastroesophageal junction. The author presents robot-assisted surgery of the esophagus (RAMIE), taking into account both its advantages and disadvantages. Critically analyzes the latest studies and meta-analyses on the topic. He breaks down the published data through his vast experience of 100 operated patients. The technical aspects of the operation, the requirements for anesthesia, the patient's position, etc. are presented in extremely detailed and illustrated with his own photographs. This makes it a valuable clinical guide for all those intending to treat this serious medical problem. The presentation of complications, including his own experience and approaches to dealing with them, is especially valuable. The work is original, with undeniable scientific and practical value.

III Dissertation - The candidate presents a dissertation on the topic "Operative technique with pediculated omentum for the treatment of mediastinitis after cardiac surgery". It treats a complex problem, such as mediastinitis after cardiac surgery. The author presents his experience with omentoplasty as a one-stage operation for the treatment of both acute and chronic mediastinitis, specifies the indications, explains the surgical technique, presents the management of patients in the postoperative period. Treatment and prevention of postoperative osteomyelitis of the sternum is proposed, which is one of the essential contributions of the dissertation.

The creative achievements and scientific and applied contributions of the candidate are of unquestionable great importance for the development of thoracic surgery in the country. Several directions are distinguished:

1. Robot-assisted surgery of the esophagus, lung and mediastinum - presentation of vast personal experience, ranking him among the leading experts not only at the national, but actually at the world level. The author is a pioneer and the first to introduce these surgical techniques in the country. Experience is presented, both with tumor diseases and benign diseases of the esophagus, as well as a clinical case of robot-assisted projectile extraction.
2. Developments in the field of minimally invasive therapy for esophageal perforations and leaks - the candidate is an undisputed expert on the subject. The scientific developments he makes are pilot for the country and with an undeniable contribution to national science.
3. Biopsy techniques for tumors of the lung and mediastinum - two minimally invasive techniques with excellent results are described - transthoracic biopsy under ultrasound control and transesophageal biopsy under endosonographic control.
4. Management of malignant and benign tracheal stenosis - a multidisciplinary approach, techniques and algorithms for dealing with this very complex problem
5. Treatment of mediastinitis and prevention and treatment of osteomyelitis of the sternum as a complication after cardiac surgery - new techniques for surgical treatment are proposed and extensive experience is shared.
6. Surgery for advanced lung cancer using extracorporeal circulation - an innovative approach for the country, offering a solution for intractable cases.
7. Cryoanalgesia - an intraoperative pain relief technique, applied for the first time in the country in thoracic surgery
8. Complications after surgical interventions and strategies for dealing with them - of great benefit not only for surgeons, but also for endoscopists, interventional radiologists and pulmonologists.
9. Zenker diverticulum - the candidate presents practically all mini-invasive treatment strategies.
10. Rare conditions - collections extended into the mediastinum and neck in acute pancreatitis - valuable guidance for recognition and minimally invasive management of this complex problem.

Considering the serious theoretical and practical training of Assoc. Prof. Tsvetan Minchev, his teaching activities, scientific publications and developments, participation in prestigious national and international scientific forums, and vast experience as a surgeon, fully covering and even exceeding the requirements set forth in the ZRASRB and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the National Board at ASK UMHAL Tokuda EAD, I recommend to the

esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to give a positive vote and elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsvetan Minchev, MD, for Professor. I have the honor to know the candidate personally and to have worked with him for 14 years and I am fully convinced of his professional qualities, ethics, high morals, as well as his potential for academic growth.

08.08.2025  
City of Sofia

Respectfully:.....  
Prof. P. Karagyozov, D.M., FASGE/

