

## OPINION

by

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### **REGARDING:**

Competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sports, in the professional field 7.1. Medicine – medical-clinical area and scientific specialty Dermatology and Venereology, for the needs of the competition announced in the State Gazette No. 106 of 17.12.2024 for "Professor" at the external organization "ASMP - Group Practice in Dermatology - Euroderma Clinic" Ltd., Sofia, with the sole candidate who applied within the legal two-month period – Associate Professor Jana Stoyanova Kazandjieva-Tzankova, MD.

### **I. INFORMATION REGARDING THE PROCEDURE**

The competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sports, in the professional field 7.1. Medicine – medical-clinical area and scientific specialty Dermatology and Venereology, was announced in the State Gazette No. 106 of 17.12.2024.

This opinion has been prepared based on Protocol No. 55 of 28.11.2024, according to the decision of the Scientific Council of "Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital JSC" regarding the competition published in the State Gazette No. 106/17.12.2024 – Sofia. Based on this order, I was appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury. All procedural requirements regarding the announcement of the competition, the application deadline, and the selection of the Scientific Jury have been met.

The opinion has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), its implementing regulations, and the Regulations on the Conditions and Procedures for Acquiring Academic Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at "Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital JSC."

Documents for participation in the competition were submitted by Associate Professor Dr. Jana Stoyanova Kazandjieva-Tzankova. She is the sole candidate who applied within the legal two-month period.

The documents submitted by the candidate for participation in the competition meet the requirements of the ZRASRB and the Regulations on the Conditions and Procedures for Acquiring Academic Degrees and Holding Academic Positions. I have no objections regarding the materials provided for review. I have no conflicts of interest in this competition.

### **II. BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL DATA, EDUCATION, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

Jana Stoyanova Kazandjieva-Tsankova completed her higher education in medicine in 1985 at the Higher Medical Institute – Pleven, diploma No. 001053/1985.

In 1992, she obtained a specialization in Dermatology and Venereology – diploma No. 39016/15.01.1992. Since 2021, she has held a Master's degree in Healthcare Management, with diploma TrU No. 350521/reg. 6811 dated 26.10.2021.

Since 1985, after successfully passing a competition, Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva- began working as an assistant at the Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Higher Medical Institute – Pleven. In 1986, she moved to Sofia and worked as a resident physician at the City Dermatology Dispensary – Sofia. After a competition, in 1993, she became an assistant at the Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University – Sofia. In 2002, she was appointed senior assistant professor, and in 2008, she became an associate professor at the same department.

She has completed prestigious specializations in Dermatology and Electron Microscopy in Vienna, Austria (1992) and in Laser Therapy for Dermatological Diseases in Zurich, Switzerland (1999).

In 2005, she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation on "Exogenous Pigmentary Disorders – Dermatological Aspects and Therapeutic Possibilities," diploma No. 29702/05.05.2005, awarded by the Higher Attestation Commission. After winning a competition in 2008, she was appointed Associate Professor at the Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University – Sofia. She currently works as a physician-associate professor at the same department and the First Division of the Clinic of Skin Diseases, University Hospital "Alexandrovska."

### **III. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

#### **ANALYSIS OF THE SCIENTIFIC WORKS SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW**

In the current competition, Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva has submitted 281 scientific works published after obtaining the academic title of "Associate Professor." These include: 251 scientific articles, 1 independent monograph, contributions to 17 book chapters, 7 textbook chapters, 5 teaching aids and manuals.

The scientific works are distributed according to the national criteria for obtaining the academic position of "Professor":

#### **251 published articles and chapters in textbooks and monographs**

- 79 real publications (beyond the "Doctor" and "Associate Professor" levels) referenced in Scopus and Web of Science, including: 39 articles published in impact-factor journals and 40 articles published in journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science but without an impact factor
- 171 publications in Bulgarian journals (beyond the "Doctor" and "Associate Professor" levels), referenced in the National Reference List of NACID (National Centre for Information and Documentation)
- 1 independent monograph, which is not presented as the main habilitation work
- co-authorship in 17 book chapters, 13 of which are in English
- co-authorship in 7 textbook chapters and 5 teaching aids, including 1 textbook in English

#### **462 participations in scientific forums**

Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva has participated in 462 scientific forums with lectures and poster presentations after obtaining the academic title of "Associate Professor." These include: 72 invited lectures at prestigious international forums abroad, 87 poster presentations at international forums, 9 of which have been published in journals with an impact factor.

#### **h-index, g-index, and Impact Factor**

According to the report from NACID (National Centre for Information and Documentation) and CML (Central Medical Library): h-index: 22, g-index: 40.

Total impact factor from scientific articles: 113.697 (94.988 from scientific articles published after obtaining the academic title of Associate Professor)

#### **Citations**

The report from NACID, dated 12.02.2025, states that Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva has 1774 citations in international databases such as Web of Science and SCOPUS. According to the Central Medical Library (Medical University – Sofia) she has 280 citations in Bulgarian sources (journals, dissertations, and books) from the Central Medical Library Depository.

#### **Evaluation of the Habilitation Work Submitted for the Competition**

The habilitation work consists of 10 impact-factor articles published in prestigious international journals. The description of scientific contributions in the habilitation report is structured according to the candidate's research directions. The articles cover contributions in the following areas: Dermatoallergology, Therapy of infantile hemangiomas, Systemic and peculiar aspects of certain skin diseases. The scientific articles focus on significant allergic diseases, including contact dermatitis to specific allergens and angioedema. They summarize the candidate's experience in studying contact allergy and angioedema, the specificity of individual allergens, epicutaneous testing, and contact dermatitis therapy. A unifying element between the two main research directions is a rare case of allergic contact dermatitis to timolol gel, used for treating infantile hemangioma, published in 2024. The application of local treatment for infantile hemangiomas is a significant contribution to the rapidly evolving therapeutic strategy for beta-blocker treatment. The other scientific articles in the habilitation work are part of numerous publications by Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva on: Drug-induced dermatoses, Systemic skin diseases, and The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the skin.

#### **Main Areas of Scientific Activity and Contributions**

Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva's primary contributions are in the fields of: Contact dermatitis, Atopic dermatitis, Chronic urticaria and angioedema, Infantile hemangiomas, Systemic skin diseases, Drug-induced dermatological conditions

##### **1. Scientific Contributions in Dermatoallergology**

**Contact Dermatitis:** She has authored 106 scientific papers on contact dermatitis, 97 of which were published after obtaining the academic title of "Associate Professor." Her publications in this field include: 1 independent monograph, 17 articles in English, 57 articles in Bulgarian, 4 book chapters in English and 15 lectures on contact dermatitis presented at prestigious international forums abroad. Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva is the lead author of four national consensus guidelines of the Bulgarian Dermatological Society (BDS) on contact dermatitis: 2 on contact dermatitis (2011, 2023) and 2 on hand eczema (2014, 2024).

Atopic Dermatitis: Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva has published 31 scientific papers on atopic dermatitis, 30 of which were published after becoming an Associate Professor. Her publications in this field include: 6 articles in English, 14 articles in Bulgarian, 1 textbook material, 4 teaching aids – 2 for doctors and 2 for patients. Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva is the lead author in all national consensus guidelines and significant scientific documents on atopic dermatitis, including: The first national consensus on atopic dermatitis by the BDS (2012), The Bulgarian White Book on Dermatology: Atopic Dermatitis – Modern Data on Etiopathogenesis, Clinical Features, Diagnosis, and Treatment (2019), Therapy for Atopic Dermatitis – BDS Consensus (2021), Standard for Medical Care for Patients with Atopic Dermatitis (2023).

## **2. Scientific Contributions in Infantile Hemangiomas**

Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva has 29 scientific publications in vascular dermatoses, which include: 13 articles in English, 15 articles in Bulgarian, 1 book chapter in English (Skin and the Heart, Springer, 2021), 1 poster (No. 359) published as an abstract in the British Journal of Dermatology (impact factor journal). Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva is the lead author of Bulgaria's first National Consensus on the Treatment of Infantile Hemangiomas in Infants and Young Children, created in 2017 in collaboration with the Bulgarian Dermatological Society and the Pediatric Society.

## **3. Scientific Contributions in Drug-Induced Dermatoses**

Drug-induced dermatoses are addressed in 30 scientific papers by Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva, 25 of which were published after she became an Associate Professor. Among them: 9 articles in English. Her papers on drug-induced psoriasis, lupus, and acne have received a total of 382 citations (NACID, 2025). The characteristics of drug-induced acne were described, as well as a case of recall dermatitis following paclitaxel treatment. This paper is among the first 10 in the world and the first in Bulgaria to describe so-called recall reactions or immunological memory responses in the skin. Case series of granulomatous reactions to injectable vitamins were published that are the first of their kind described in the medical literature.

## **4. Exogenous Pigmentary Disorders and Skin Complications from Temporary and Permanent Tattoos**

She has authored 10 scientific papers. One of her key contributions is a published paper on a new tattooing trend, "Skin Cryobranding", which was the first in the world to describe skin changes associated with this technique.

## **5. The Skin as a Target Organ in Multisystem Diseases**

The role of the skin as a target organ in multisystem diseases is a major focus of her research, with 19 scientific papers published post-habilitation on the topic. Her publications have strongly contributed to proving the systemic nature of dermatological diseases. The 12 papers published in English are considered among the first in the world to provide clear evidence for the systemic nature of skin diseases. Her contributions in this area are also reflected in: 2 monographs and 1 textbook in English.

## **6. Dermatological Changes During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva has published 13 articles on dermatological changes during the COVID-19 pandemic: 4 in English, 9 in Bulgarian. Her internationally published articles have received a total of 75 citations and cover the following topics: Skin reactions linked to COVID-19 vaccines, the impact of COVID-19 on the skin barrier and hair and dermatological care during COVID pandemic and also casuistic case reports.

#### **IV. TEACHING AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

According to the certificate issued by MF-MU-Sofia, over the past five academic years, the teaching workload in the specialty of Dermatology and Venereology has included practical exercises with students in both Bulgarian and English, lectures, and participation in continuing medical education (CME). For the last two years (2023 and 2024), the total teaching workload amounts to 870 hours, while for the six-year period from 2019, it totals 4,272 hours.

She has also served as the scientific supervisor of five successfully defended doctoral candidates: Dr. B. Kamuna, Dr. K. Gospodinova, Dr. K. Semkova (co-supervised with Prof. S. Marina), Dr. Y. Velevska (co-supervised with Prof. S. Marina), Dr. B. Kotevska (co-supervised with Prof. Z. Demerdzhieva)

#### **V. CLINICAL AND DIAGNOSTICAL ACTIVITIES**

Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva is a recognized authority in Bulgarian dermatology, with extensive experience in clinical, laboratory, diagnostic, and therapeutic activities. She is the founder and head of the Bulgarian Dermatoallergology Network, which includes 10 centers across the country and organizes annual campaigns for free diagnosis and prevention of allergic skin diseases. To date, 16 campaigns have been conducted, leading to the establishment of a national database on contact hypersensitivity to various allergens in Bulgaria.

#### **VI. MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND EDITORIAL BOARDS**

##### **1. Participation in Professional Organizations**

Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva holds leadership roles in the following organizations:

Head of the Dermatoallergology Section of the Bulgarian Dermatological Society (BDS) since 2010.

Head of the Vascular Dermatoses Section of the BDS.

She is also an **active member** of prestigious international societies:

European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) – Board Member (2012-2018).

Ethics Committee of EADV (2011-2015).

German-Bulgarian Dermatological Society – Secretary (2001-2012).

European Society for the History of Dermatology and Venereology (ESHDV) since 2005.

European Organization for the Prevention of Occupational Skin Allergies (EPOS).

Honorary Member of the Serbian Dermatological Society.

Honorary Member of the Macedonian Dermatological Society.

Member of the Ethics Committee of the Bulgarian Medical Association (BMA) – Sofia (2016-2018).

Founder and Board Member of the "Eczema Bulgaria" Foundation (since 2014).

##### **Participation in Editorial Boards**

##### **International Journals**

Serbian Journal of Dermatology – Editorial board member

Clinics in Dermatology – Guest editor for the special issues Are Skin Diseases Systemic Ones? (Volumes I, II, III in 2019, 2015, and 2014, respectively)

Bulgarian Journals

Dermatology and Venereology (ISSN 0417-0792)

Academic Journal Dermatocology (2023/2024) (ISSN 2815-4223)

GPMedic and Medic Art (for dermatology-related issues)

Editor of the monographs: Atopic Dermatitis – Part 1 and Part 2, edited by M. Trashlieva and Zh. Kazandjieva Aksel Sofia, 2021; Editor of the monograph: Atopic Dermatitis – A Guide for Parents and Patients (Part 1); Atopic Dermatitis: Etiology, Clinical Features, and Treatment (Part 2) edited by M. Trashlieva and J. Kazandjieva. Published by Eczema Bulgaria Foundation, Second expanded and revised edition, ISBN 978-619-92791-0-6 (2024)

Reviewer of Textbooks: Reviewer of 2 textbooks on Dermatology and Venereology: Dermatology and Venereology: A Textbook for Medical, Dental, and Pharmacy Students, Medical University – Varna, 2020 Editors: Sonya Marina, Zhenya Dimitrova, Valentina Broshtilova, Filka Georgieva (ISBN 978-619-221-233-9) Dermatology and Venereology: Handbook for Medical, Dental, and Pharmacy Students, Medical University – Varna, 2018, Editors: S. Marina, V. Broshtilova (210 pages); Reviewer of 19 doctoral dissertations; Reviewer in 6 competitions for academic positions

**VII. Compliance with National and Medical University – Sofia Requirements for the Academic Position of "Professor"**

Assoc. Prof. Kazandjieva meets and significantly exceeds the criteria for obtaining the academic title of Professor (as per the candidate's official report).

**CONCLUSION**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jana Stoyanova Kazandjieva-Tsankova is an established specialist, dermatologist, and dermato-allergologist, as well as an excellent lecturer, educator, and researcher.

Her scientific and research activity focuses on diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of modern dermato-allergic diseases, infantile hemangiomas, and systemic skin diseases.

Her scientific output far exceeds both in volume and quality the requirements for a Professor in Clinical Dermatology.

Based on the above, I recommend that the Scientific Jury award Assoc. Prof. Jana Stoyanova Kazandjieva -Tsankova the academic title of "Professor" in the field of Higher Education 7. Healthcare and Sports, in the professional direction 7.1. Medicine and the scientific specialty "Dermatology and Venereology" for the needs of the external organization "ASMP - Group Practice in Dermatology - Euroderma Clinic" Ltd., Sofia.

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