O P I N I O N

by **Prof. Dimo Atanasov Atanasov, PhD**
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on the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the area of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences," professional field 3.8. "Economics," and scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Healthcare)."

In the competition for the academic position of "Professor," announced in the State Gazette, issue 50 of June 20, 2025, for the needs of the Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism" within the Department of Economics and Management, at the University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, the only candidate is Assoc. Prof. Dr.Sc. Ivo Anastasov Dimitrov.

1. Brief Biographical Data

Ivo Atanasov Dimitrov was born in 1976. Between 1996 and 2003, he studied "Finance" at the Academy of Economics D.A. Tsenov in Svishtov. He graduated with a Master's degree in two specializations: "Finance" and "Accounting and Control." Later, he turned towards the field of the humanities. He prepared and defended a dissertation titled *"The Influence of Communication Skills on the Main Characteristics of the Work Environment in Healthcare Organizations"* at the Medical University of Sofia, for which he received the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Social Medicine and Organization of Healthcare and Pharmacy in 2016. In 2019, he also obtained a Master's degree in Healthcare Management from the same university.

His education and training have been applied professionally in various institutions and organizations. From the submitted documents, it is evident that since 2018, Ivo Atanasov Dimitrov has held a number of positions. He was an advisor in the Parlament until 2021, and at present he combines several roles: Director of Investor Relations at St. Karidad General Hospital, Associate Professor in Healthcare Management at the University of Agribusiness and Regional Development (UARD), member of the Board of Trustees at the University of Food Technologies, Rector of the International Higher School of Informatics and E-Leadership "Mahatma Gandhi" in Plovdiv, member of the Board of Directors of Tech Park Plovdiv, Manager of the Institute for

Information and Innovative Technologies in Plovdiv, and Deputy Chairman of the Management Board of the Deep-Tech Innovation Valley in Plovdiv.

The activities of Ivo Atanasov Dimitrov and his contributions to the institutions where he works, as well as to society, led to his election as Doctor Honoris Causa at the University of Food Technologies in 2025. A year earlier, he defended his Doctor of Economic Sciences degree at UARD. He is also the recipient of numerous awards, medals, certificates, and honorary distinctions.

2. General Description of the Submitted Materials

The candidate, Associate Professor Dr.Sc. Ivo Anastasov Dimitrov, participates in the competition with the following materials:

- Monographs – 3
- Studies – 0
- Articles – 7
- Scientific Reports – 0
- Textbooks – 2
- Teaching Aids – 0
- Other Publications – 0

3. Impact of the Candidate's Scientific Publications in the Literature (Known Citations)

The candidate has indicated a total of 18 citations of his scientific works. All of these citations are found in monographs and collective volumes with scientific peer review. There are no citations in scientific journals indexed and referenced in internationally recognized scientific databases.

4. General Characterization of the Candidate's Activities

4.1. Teaching and Pedagogical Activities (Work with Students and Doctoral Candidates)

From the documents submitted for the competition, it is evident that Ivo Atanasov Dimitrov has had three periods of part-time work as an Associate Professor (2 hours per week) at UARD: from September 25, 2020, to March 1, 2021; from November 10, 2021, to February 1, 2023; and from October 24, 2023, to August 1, 2025.

4.2. Scientific and Applied Scientific Activities

The scientific and applied scientific activities of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sc. Ivo Atanasov Georgiev are reflected in the scientific works he has submitted. He has published three monographs: *"Healthcare Financing"*, *"Financial Instruments in the Context of Sustainable Development"*, and *"Public Health Management in the EU and Bulgaria"*, as well as seven articles: *"Assessing EU*

Environmental Policies Effectiveness on the Economic Development of Bulgaria", *"Study of Group Processes in Healthcare Organizations"*, *"Analysis of Ethical Aspects in the Healthcare System of the Republic of Bulgaria"*, *"Analysis of Group Cohesion in Healthcare Organizations"*, *"Study of the Role of IT Technologies in Communication Among Healthcare Workers"*, *"The Influence of Communication Among Medical Staff on the Work Climate in Healthcare Institutions"*, and *"Study of the Role of Nonverbal Components in Communication Among Healthcare Workers"*.

He has also authored two textbooks: *"Health Policies and Strategies"* and *"Health Insurance"*.

4.3. Implementation Activities

No information is provided in the documents submitted for the competition.

4.4. Contributions (Scientific, Applied-Scientific, Practical)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sc. Ivo Atanasov Georgiev indicates six scientific contributions and six applied-scientific contributions. Although the candidate's specific role in some of these contributions cannot be clearly distinguished, I accept the overall summary provided. In my opinion, the most important contributions to science and practice are:

1. The identified models of healthcare financing in different countries, and the comparison made between tax-based models and mixed models with insurance elements.
2. A critical analysis of the current healthcare model in Bulgaria, highlighting the shortcomings of the insurance system amid existing demographic and economic challenges.
3. Analysis of the impact of investments in healthcare on human capital and national security.
4. Proposals for the introduction of Diagnosis-Related Groups (DRGs) and a forecast model for the period 2020 – 2025 to achieve more efficient resource allocation.
5. Proposed strategies for reducing healthcare costs and optimizing health services through the implementation of shared-resource mechanisms.

5. Critical Remarks

Although the candidate meets the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "Professor," it is noticeable that he participates in the competition with a relatively small number of scientific publications. With the exception of one, all are in Bulgarian language and are not published in journals indexed in internationally recognized databases. The

citations he provides come only from three Bulgarian authors, and these are also in publications not indexed in internationally recognized databases. My recommendation is that he expand his publication activity, particularly in prestigious journals in SCOPUS or Web of Science. This would give his scientific and applied-scientific work broader visibility. It is also necessary for him to strengthen his participation in prestigious scientific forums both in Bulgaria and abroad, as well as in Bulgarian and international scientific and educational projects.

6. Conclusion

The works submitted for the competition exceed the minimum national requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and the Regulations for its Implementation at UARD. Based on this, and on the analysis of the candidate's pedagogical, scientific, and applied-scientific activities, **I give a positive evaluation and recommend that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sc. Ivo Atanasov Dimitrov be appointed as Professor** in the area of higher education 3: "Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences," professional field 3.8: "Economics," and scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Healthcare)," in the Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism" within the Department of Economics and Management at the University of Agribusiness and Regional Development.

25.09. 2025 г. Member of the scientific jury: