

To
The Chairman of the Scientific Jury,
appointed by Order No. 83 / 16.03.2026
of the Director of the NCIPD, Sofia
Prof. Iva Hristova, MD, DSc

OPINION

by Prof. Neli Korsun, MD, DSc – member of the scientific jury
Regarding the participation of Dr. PETAR KRASIMIROV VELIKOV, Doctor of Medicine, in a competition for the academic position of "Assistant Professor" for the needs of the Department of Virology, National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases (NCIPD)

To participate in the competition, the candidate, Dr. Petar Velikov, submitted a list of documents that comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its Implementation in the NCIPB.

Dr. Petar Velikov graduated from the Medical University, Sofia, in 2016 with a Master of Medicine. In 2018-2022, he underwent clinical specialization at the same university and acquired the specialty in Infectious Diseases. From 2018 to 2025, he worked at the Infectious Hospital "Prof. Ivan Kirov" - Sofia as a physician-specialist in infectious diseases (specialist until 2022). During the period 2023-2025, he studied at the University of Tsukuba, Japan and acquired a Master's degree in Public Health. His Master's thesis has been awarded an Excellent Thesis Award. Since 12.2025, he has been working at the NCIPB - Sofia as Head of the NRL "Herpes and Oncogenic Viruses". He is recognized as a researcher (R2) under BG16RFPR002-1.014-0017-C01 by PNIIDIT.

Dr. Velikov's research interests are in the fields of:

- Pediatric infectious diseases, incl. respiratory viruses and SARS-CoV-2;
- Persistent and latent viral infections, incl. herpesviruses and oncogenic viruses;
- Vaccinology, immune response to viral infections and attitudes towards vaccines.

Dr. Velikov is actively involved in research organizations and projects: European Society for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID); European Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases (ESPID), in project 289/15.01.2015, funded by MU Sofia, and in 2 projects funded by the Scientific Research Fund.

I. Scientific and research activity:

In 2025, Dr. Petar Velikov defended his dissertation on the topic: "Clinical, epidemiological and laboratory characteristics of COVID-19 in childhood" - diploma No. SK35992 and received the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" in the doctoral program "Infectious Diseases", professional field/specialty of the regulated professions "Medicine". To participate in this

competition, he has submitted a declaration that he meets the minimum national requirements for acquiring the ESD “Doctor” and for occupying the academic position “Assistant Professor”.

The results of the overall scientific research activity of Dr. Petar Velikov are presented in a total of 27 journal articles and participation in scientific events, as follows:

- 18 publications in scientific journals with Impact Factor;
- 4 publications in international and Bulgarian journals, refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases without Impact Factor, but with Impact Rank;
- 2 publications in Bulgarian publications with scientific review;
- 3 other publications

The total Impact Factor of publications is **99.512**.

II. Dr. Velikov's teaching activities include:

- Assistant Professor in University of Tsukuba, June 2024;
- Lecturer in international courses and seminars (ESCMID, ESPID)

Dr. Velikov is fluent in several languages at a high level: English – level C2, French – level B1, Italian – level A2 and Japanese – level A1. He has the ability to analyze scientific data (SPSS, SAS); work in international scientific teams, scientific communication and publication activity.

From the documents submitted for participation in the competition and the above, it is clear that the candidate Dr. Petar Velikov covers and exceeds both the minimum national requirements specified in the ZRASRB and the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the requirements specified in Annex 1 to the Regulations for the implementation of the ZRASRB in the NCIPB.

Indicator 7: Publications in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases (WoS/Scopus): **18** publications in international journals, including in journals from Q1–Q3: **128.26 points**.

Indicator 8: Publications in non-refereed journals with scientific review or in edited collective volumes: 6 publications: **43.75 points**.

Overall compliance with the MNR:

Indicator Group	Minimum Requirement	Achieved
Group A	50 points	50 points
Group G	no minimum threshold	172.01 points

Conclusion

Based on the above, I give my positive assessment of the candidacy of Dr. Petar Velikov for the academic position of "Assistant Professor " in the field of higher education: 7. Health and Sports, Professional field: 7.1. Medicine, Scientific specialty: Virology for the needs of the Virology Department of the National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases.

Prepared the opinion:

/Prof. Neli Korsun, MD, DSc/