

## OPINION

regarding a competition for the academic position of Professor  
in Professional Field 4.4 Earth Sciences, Scientific Specialty “Paleontology and Stratigraphy”

*Candidate:* Assoc. Prof. Boris Vladimirov Valchev, PhD,  
Department of Geology and Geoinformatics, Faculty of Geology and Exploration,  
University of Mining and Geology “St. Ivan Rilski”

*Member of the Scientific Jury:* Prof. Valeri Valentinov Sachanski, PhD,  
Department of Geology and Geoinformatics, Faculty of Geology and Exploration,  
University of Mining and Geology “St. Ivan Rilski”

This opinion was assigned to me on March 11, 2026, at the first meeting of the Scientific Jury, appointed by Order No. RD 13-6/10.02.2026 of the Rector of the University of Mining and Geology “St. Ivan Rilski”. It has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Act, the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, the internal rules of the University, as well as the national minimum requirements and institutional criteria.

The competition for the academic position of “Professor” in Professional Field 4.4 Earth Sciences, Scientific Specialty “Paleontology and Stratigraphy”, for the needs of the Department of Geology and Geoinformatics, was announced in the State Gazette, issue No. 1/06.01.2026. Within the prescribed deadline, only one application was submitted—by Assoc. Prof. Boris Vladimirov Valchev, PhD—who was admitted to participate in the procedure.

### **1. Brief profile of the candidate and submitted materials**

Assoc. Prof. Boris Valchev graduated from Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” in 1996 with a Master’s degree in Geology, specializing in Paleontology and Stratigraphy. In 2002, he obtained his PhD degree in Paleontology and Stratigraphy from the same university.

His entire professional career has been associated with the Department of Geology and Geoinformatics at the Faculty of Geology and Exploration, University of Mining and Geology “St. Ivan Rilski”. He was appointed Assistant Professor in 2001, promoted to Chief Assistant shortly thereafter, and has held the position of Associate Professor since 2012. Since 2020, he has served as Dean of the Faculty. From late 2025 to early 2026, he served as Acting Rector of the University.

For the purposes of the competition, the candidate has submitted 46 scientific publications, in which I have not identified plagiarism. They have been duly evaluated in the report for compliance with the minimum national and institutional requirements. Approximately 70% of these are in English; at 3 he is the sole author, in 28 he is the first author, and in 11 the second author. This clearly demonstrates his leading role and substantial personal contribution.

None of the submitted publications have been used in previous procedures for obtaining a PhD degree or for appointment as Associate Professor.

All required documents have been submitted and comply with the applicable regulatory requirements.

## **2. Main scientific contributions**

Assoc. Prof. Valchev has clearly and convincingly outlined his scientific contributions, which can be grouped into several main research fields.

The first and most prominent field concerns Paleogene paleontology and stratigraphy. Comprehensive studies have been conducted on the taxonomy, systematics, and stratigraphic distribution of Paleogene foraminifera. These results significantly contribute to the development of biostratigraphy and to the refinement of stratigraphic frameworks in Bulgaria and the Balkan region.

The second field includes lithostratigraphy and geological modeling. Complex studies have been carried out on the structure and distribution of Paleogene lithostratigraphic units, leading to the development of new spatial models. A particularly important contribution is the application of 3D geological modeling based on the integration of borehole and seismic data.

The third field focuses on regional geology, sedimentology, and paleogeography. New data have been obtained on geological structure, tectonic features, and sedimentary processes within the Moesian Platform and adjacent areas.

The fourth field covers geological heritage and applied geology. Numerous geological phenomena and geosites have been identified, described, and evaluated in terms of their scientific, educational, and cultural value.

Taken together, these research fields outline a coherent and integrated research profile combining fundamental and applied scientific approaches.

## **3. Teaching activity**

Dr. Boris Valchev is actively involved in teaching a wide range of courses, seminars, and field practices at both Bachelor's and Master's levels, including Paleontology, Paleontology and Stratigraphy, Geological Data Visualization, Field Geology, Geological Heritage, Historical Geology, General Geology, Micropaleontology, Paleoecology and Taphonomy, Geological Mapping, and Regional Geology.

He has also supervised a successfully defended PhD student.

His teaching activity is extensive and demanding. I have personal impressions of his teaching skills and professional reputation. Through his interactive approach, broad geological and general knowledge, dedication, and sense of humor, he succeeds in engaging students and motivating them in the learning process.

#### **4. Indicators / visibility**

According to the Web of Science database, the candidate has 38 citations across 14 publications, with an *h*-index of 4. Additional citations are found in peer-reviewed monographs and edited volumes, as well as in non-indexed scientific journals.

Some citations refer to publications issued before his appointment as Associate Professor, while others are from the subsequent period. All citations are properly documented and correctly reported.

I have not identified any self-citations or citing articles published before Dr. Vălchev assumed the academic position of Associate Professor.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The comprehensive analysis of the scientific works, supporting materials, and documents submitted by Assoc. Prof. Boris Vladimirov Valchev, PhD, clearly demonstrates that the candidate not only meets but significantly exceeds the national minimum and institutional requirements for the academic position of Professor.

His scientific output is characterized by a high degree of originality, thematic consistency, and a clearly identifiable personal contribution. The outlined research fields demonstrate sustained development, interdisciplinarity, and the ability to integrate modern methodologies in the fields of paleontology, stratigraphy, and regional geology. Particularly noteworthy are his contributions to biostratigraphy, geological modeling, and geological heritage studies.

The indicators of scientific visibility and citation confirm the recognition of his work within the specialized scientific community. His teaching activity reflects long-standing commitment, high pedagogical competence, and contribution to the training of young specialists and researchers.

In light of the above, I consider Assoc. Prof. Boris Vladimirov Valchev to be a well-established scholar and educator with a significant contribution to the development of geological sciences in Bulgaria.

On this basis, I give my unequivocally positive assessment and strongly recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Geology and Exploration at the University of Mining and Geology “St. Ivan Rilski” the election of Assoc. Prof. Boris Vladimirov Valchev to the academic position of Professor in Professional Field 4.4 Earth Sciences, Scientific Specialty “Paleontology and Stratigraphy”.

Sofia  
April 14, 2026

Prepared by:  
(Prof. Valeri Sachanski)