

To

The Chair of the Academic Committee,
appointed by Order No. RD-205/23.06.2025
of the Rector of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas

OPINION

by

Subject: Competition for the academic position of **Professor** in the scientific specialty "Oncology", within professional field 7.1 "Medicine", announced for the needs of the Faculty of Medicine at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas. The competition was announced at a meeting of the Academic Council of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University (Protocol No. 33, held on 27.03.2025) and published in the State Gazette, issue No. 34 dated 22.04.2025.

By Order No. RD-205/23.06.2025 of the Rector of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University, I was appointed as a member of the academic committee, and at the first meeting, I was assigned to prepare an opinion. The sole candidate is Associate Professor Kiril Georgiev Kirov, MD, PhD. All submitted documents comply with the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) and the Regulations for acquiring academic degrees and occupying academic positions at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas.

1. Brief biographical data of the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Kiril Kirov, MD, PhD, was born on January 22, 1966. He graduated in Medicine in 1993 from the Medical University – Varna. In 1998, he obtained a specialization in surgery after training and clinical practice at the Second Surgical Clinic of the Regional Hospital – Varna.

His professional career began at the Department of General and Operative Surgery at University Hospital "St. Marina" – Varna, where he worked until 2008. Subsequently, he held the position of Head of the Department of Oncological Surgery at the Specialized Hospital for Active Treatment of Oncology "Dr. M. Markov" – Varna, and later headed the Surgical Oncology Department of the Comprehensive Cancer Center – Shumen.

Since December 2024, Assoc. Prof. Kirov has been part of the Surgical Department of the Comprehensive Cancer Center – Burgas, and since May 2025, he has been appointed as Head of the newly established Clinic of Oncological Surgery at the same institution.

He is fluent in English and Russian, which enables him to maintain active academic and professional international contacts. His postgraduate education includes numerous specialized trainings both in Bulgaria and abroad. Noteworthy are courses in hepatobiliary and transplant surgery (Israel), kidney and pancreas transplantation (USA), diagnostic and operative laparoscopy (Medical University – Pleven), surgical stapling techniques (USA), abdominal ultrasound (Medical University – Varna), conventional gastrointestinal endoscopy with biopsy (MU – Pleven), as well as open and laparoscopic hernia surgery (Greece).

2. Scientific, medical activity and publications

In 2015, Assoc. Prof. Kiril Kirov defended a dissertation on the topic: "*Optimizing Outcomes in Conventional and Laparoscopic Colorectal Resections*", earning the educational and scientific degree "Doctor." The research focused on the effectiveness, safety, and clinical outcomes of various surgical approaches in colorectal surgery, emphasizing minimally invasive techniques. In 2017, he was habilitated and awarded the academic title of "Associate Professor" in Oncology.

His scientific output includes more than 50 publications in reputable Bulgarian and international journals. His work covers surgery, oncology, gastroenterology, and coloproctology. A substantial portion focuses on the

multidisciplinary treatment of colorectal neoplasms, techniques for preventing and treating anastomotic complications, and the optimization of surgical algorithms for malignancies of the gastrointestinal tract.

He is the author of two monographs that make a significant contribution to the literature in the field:

- *“Colorectal Precancerous Lesions”* (2017), which systematizes diagnostic and therapeutic approaches to precancerous conditions of the colon and rectum;
- *“Colorectal Anastomotic Leakage: Prevention, Consequences, and Treatment”* (2021), submitted as his habilitation work in this competition, offering an in-depth clinical and analytical review of the causes and current strategies to mitigate anastomotic insufficiency.

As part of the current habilitation procedure, Assoc. Prof. Kirov has submitted a total of 27 scientific works, distributed as follows:

- Habilitation work – 1 (monograph);
- Scientific articles and reports indexed in international databases (Scopus and Web of Science) – 12;
- Publications and reports in peer-reviewed journals or edited collections – 14.

In 16 of these, Assoc. Prof. Kirov is the first or sole author, indicating his leading role in research activity.

Surgical activity: Over the past three years, Assoc. Prof. Kiril Kirov has performed a total of 804 surgical interventions. He was the primary surgeon in 685 of these operations, of which 413 were classified as complex or highly complex, and 272 as moderate or minor. Additionally, he participated as an assistant in 119 operations – 78 complex and 41 of moderate or low complexity.

Since early 2022, he has introduced the laparoscopic TAPP (Transabdominal Preperitoneal Patch) technique using ProGrip® self-fixating mesh in the Oncological Surgery Department at CCC – Shumen. To date, over 150 such interventions have been performed, all with a

complete absence of CPIP (chronic postoperative inguinal pain). The clinical outcomes of this approach are presented in an international peer-reviewed journal with an impact factor.

His primary surgical expertise lies in colorectal surgery. In addition to standard operative approaches, he performs highly specialized multivisceral resections in advanced colorectal carcinoma. Some of these cases involve patients initially deemed inoperable, highlighting both the complexity of the interventions and the high level of surgical planning and execution.

3. Teaching activity

Assoc. Prof. Kirov actively participates in the training of students, residents, interns, and PhD candidates.

In the 2015/2016 academic year, he taught at the Medical University – Varna, Department of Clinical Medical Sciences, with a teaching load of 180 hours in the subject “Surgical Diseases.” From 2021 to 2025, he delivered a lecture course on “Medico-social Aspects of Oncological Diseases” at the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Pleven. The curriculum spans four semesters, with 25 lecture hours and 5 hours of practical exercises per semester.

He supervises three PhD students, one of whom successfully defended their dissertation in 2023. He has also mentored one surgical resident who obtained their specialization, and three interns at the Oncological Surgery Department of CCC – Shumen.

Assoc. Prof. Kirov participates in three interdisciplinary scientific research projects of high theoretical and practical value.

4. Conclusion

Assoc. Prof. Kiril Kirov, MD, PhD, is a well-established specialist with over 25 years of experience in surgery, 17 of which in oncological surgery.

His high level of medical competence and innovative thinking make him one of the notable oncological surgeons in the country.

Having reviewed the scientometric data submitted by the candidate, I find that he meets all the requirements of the LDASRB and the internal regulations of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas for appointment to the academic position of **Professor** in the scientific specialty "Oncology", within the professional field 7.1. Medicine, at the Faculty of Medicine of the said university.

As a member of the Academic Committee, I give my **positive assessment** and recommend to the Honorable Committee that Associate Professor Kiril Georgiev Kirov, MD, PhD, be awarded the academic title of **Professor** in Oncology.

Prepared by: