REVIEW

by Professor Krasimira Sredkova, PhD

concerning the competition for the academic position of **Professor of Labour Law and Social Security Law** at the Institute for the State and the Law at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences — professional field 3.6 “Law”, academic specialty “Labour Law and Social Security Law”, announced in the State Gazette, Issue No. 24 of 6 March 2026, with Associate Professor Andrey Sashev Alexandrov, PhD in Law, as the sole candidate

By Order No. RD-09-45 of 1 April 2026 of the Director of the Institute for the State and the Law at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, I was appointed as a member of the academic jury for conducting a competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in Labour Law and Social Security Law — professional field 3.6 “Law”, announced in the State Gazette, Issue No. 24 of 2026. By decision of the jury dated 7 May 2026, I was assigned to prepare a review of the competition.

The sole participant who submitted documents and was admitted to take part in the competition is Associate Professor Andrey Sashev Alexandrov, PhD in Law. The exceptionally well-prepared documents submitted by the candidate, together with my direct personal impressions, provide the grounds for the categorical opinion expressed below that he should be appointed to the academic position for which he is applying.

I. FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The candidate, Andrey Alexandrov, holds the **educational and academic degree of Doctor of Law**. He is an Associate Professor of Labour Law and Social Security Law at the Institute for the State and the Law at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Prior to that, he worked as a legal adviser at the State Commission on Information Security. Since 2008, he has practised as an attorney-at-law and is a member of the Sofia Bar Association. He undertook specialised studies at the University of Hamburg, Germany.

2. Although the scope of activity of the academic institution to which he is applying does not include **teaching**, Andrey Alexandrov has extensive experience in this field. For four years, he was a part-time assistant lecturer in Labour Law and Social Security Law at the Faculty of

Law of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, and since 2020 he has held an additional external appointment as Associate Professor at South-West University “Neofit Rilski”.

3. The candidate has submitted the **monograph** entitled Problems of Employment Relations under a Declared State of Emergency or a Declared Emergency Epidemic Situation (Sofia, 2022, 195 pages).

In addition to the above-mentioned monograph, the candidate has submitted 52 of his total of 353 **articles and scholarly studies**. He has also authored 264 highly useful popular-science publications.

4. A total of 182 **citations** of works by Andrey Alexandrov have been identified in the academic literature.

I therefore find that the formal prerequisites under Article 29(1) of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria and Article 60 of the Regulations for its implementation have been fulfilled for appointment to the academic position of Professor.

II. RESEARCH ACTIVITY

1. Andrey Alexandrov’s **scholarly output** is exceptionally extensive, diverse in content, rich in interesting scientific conclusions, and of considerable practical significance. It comprises hundreds of scholarly and scholarly-practical publications, including monographs, practical manuals, studies, articles, and practical analyses published in well-established academic journals as well as widely read professional periodicals. Although, naturally, only part of this body of work has been submitted for the purposes of the present competition, it clearly demonstrates the breadth of the candidate’s scholarly interests and research abilities.

It should, however, be noted that the author's scholarly work is concentrated predominantly in the field of labour law. Social security law is represented to a lesser extent. This is an aspect to which the author should devote greater attention in the future.

2. The **habilitation thesis** entitled Problems of Employment Relations under a Declared State of Emergency or a Declared Emergency Epidemic Situation addresses a topic that has not previously been researched, yet is of considerable practical importance under contemporary conditions. The analyses presented therein may contribute both to the practical application of the law and to the improvement of labour legislation.

(a) The author has conducted a conscientious review of the relevant **literature** (e.g. pp. 14, 16, 89, etc.). He adopts positions expressed by other scholars where appropriate, while convincingly criticising those with which he disagrees.

In this respect, however, the work contains at least two serious issues.

Unfortunately, the analysed literature consists only of Bulgarian sources and two German publications. In my view, this is insufficient. There is no reference whatsoever to European foreign scholarship, despite the fact that the issues examined in the monograph are by no means unique to Bulgaria. It should nevertheless be emphasised that the cited literature is not used merely as an illustration of existing opinions; wherever scholarly criticism is presented (including criticism of my own views), it is accurate, balanced, and well substantiated.

Another weakness is the author's excessive reliance on lengthy verbatim quotations extending over more than one page from academic publications and judicial decisions (pp. 78–79, footnote 61; p. 80, footnote 62; pp. 80–81, footnote 63; p. 9, footnote 69, etc.).

(b) The author presents the **administrative practice** accurately, particularly that of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Commission for Protection against Discrimination (owing to the scarcity of relevant case law).

(c) The **language** of the habilitation thesis is precise, accurate, and accessible. It demonstrates an excellent command of the subject matter and the ability to present it in a clear and legally rigorous manner.

3. The topic announced in the **title** of the habilitation thesis is examined comprehensively, although without a unifying conceptual framework. Even the smallest issues have been identified and analysed. In striving for completeness, however, the author has also included issues that are not directly related to the emergency situation—for example, the procedure for adjudicating individual labour disputes. Conversely, there are also certain omissions—for example, with regard to employers' obligations concerning compliance with working time requirements, remote work and quarantine, as well as the examination only of accidents legally equated with occupational accidents, rather than occupational accidents in the strict sense.

Overall, the monograph submitted for the competition, together with the candidate's other publications, constitutes **original scholarly research** containing scientific and practical results that represent an original contribution to legal scholarship. They demonstrate that the candidate possesses extensive and profound legal knowledge and the ability to conduct independent scientific research. The submitted work contains theoretical generalisations and solutions to important theoretical and practical legal issues, fully corresponding to contemporary achievements in legal science and representing a substantial and original contribution to labour law scholarship.

In addition to the work's overall scientific contribution, particular attention should be paid to **several especially original contributions**.

Among the many examples may be mentioned the analysis of the legal form of state measures adopted during emergency situations, their content (for example, regarding the contents of employment contracts for home-based work), and many other issues. The author's proposals for improving the legislation deserve support. Naturally, there are also views with which I do not agree—for example, regarding the inadmissibility of refusing work under Article 283 of the Labour Code where personal protective equipment is not provided for home-based and remote work, as well as the proposed rules concerning the return of employment record books. These differences, however, merely reflect my personal understanding of these issues and do not diminish the value of Andrey Alexandrov's scholarly positions.

Overall, the habilitation thesis constitutes an **original theoretical scientific achievement of practical significance**. It contains theoretical generalisations and solutions to scientific and applied legal problems consistent with contemporary developments and representing a substantial and original contribution to legal scholarship. It offers a critical analysis of the legal framework, draws well-founded scientific conclusions, and proposes improvements both in the application and the further development of the law. The work is original both as a whole and in many of its individual parts.

In addition to its overall scholarly contribution, particular mention should be made of several **especially original contributions**, including:

(a) the critical analysis of legislation (pp. 2–24, 27–29, 43–44, and many others) and of administrative practice (pp. 28–30, etc.). It is commendable that, alongside this analysis, the author proposes improvements to both the legislative framework and administrative practice;

(b) the comparative legal analysis (pp. 33–38). The presentation of legislation and practice in other European countries is useful for the possible further development of the Bulgarian legal framework;

(c) the theoretical and practical analysis of general institutions of labour law under the special conditions of a state of emergency or an epidemic emergency situation, including part-time work and home-based work;

(d) the proposals for improving legislation. These would be particularly useful in the event of future situations similar to a state of emergency. Some of them have already been adopted—for example, those relating to the electronic employment record.

4. In addition to the above-mentioned habilitation thesis, the candidate for the position of Professor, Andrey Alexandrov, has submitted **52 scholarly articles, 7 studies, and 4 chapters in collective research publications**. This represents an exceptionally extensive and substantively rich body of scholarly work, published in well-established academic journals, edited volumes, and other recognised scientific publications. The author's contributions may be summarised in several principal areas:

(a) Protection against discrimination and workplace harassment, including, inter alia, Protection against Discrimination – Legal Issues…, On the Validity of Prohibitions…, Data Protection Officer…, Mandatory and Voluntary Vaccination…, Processing of Personal Data…, and Guarantees of the Right to….

(b) Collective labour relations, particularly the right to freedom of association, including works such as On Certain Problematic Issues… and On the Relationship between Extrajudicial….

(c) Elements of the content of the individual employment relationship, including studies devoted to: labour remuneration (Additional Remuneration for Acquired…, Remuneration for Work – Commentary, On the Set-off of…, New Rules on the Payment of…); protection of personal data (Some Observations on the Bulgarian…);

professional qualifications (On Certain Legal Problems…); working time (Legal Consequences of Performing…).

(d) Termination of individual employment relationships, including works such as Termination of Employment Relationships…, Legal Issues Related to…, and On Certain Controversial Questions….

(e) Digitalisation of employment relations, including Continuation of the Processes of…, Current Problems in the Legal Regulation of Remote…, and On the Processes of Digitalisation….

(f) Supervision and enforcement of labour legislation, including On Certain Alarming Trends… and Is It Permissible and Necessary….

(g) Particular mention should be made of the author's growing interest in ***social security law and social assistance***, a field that had not featured prominently in his earlier scholarly work. This is reflected in publications such as Long-term Care for the Elderly…, On "Replacement" Income…, and How Effective Is the Protection….

The above-mentioned publications, together with many other high-quality scholarly works not submitted in the present competition, have appeared in respected and well-established legal journals and other recognised publications. They establish Andrey Alexandrov as a sought-after and highly respected author within the legal community. All of these articles address new, significant, and previously unexplored legal issues. They constitute a substantial contribution to legal theory and provide valuable guidance for legal practice, for which the author deserves particular recognition.

5. In addition to his published research, Andrey Alexandrov's scholarly activity is distinguished by his active personal participation in **academic, professional, and consultative initiatives**. He is an active organiser and participant in all activities of the Bulgarian Association for Labour Law and Social Security Law, where he serves as Scientific Secretary. He also actively participates in the initiatives of the Department of Labour Law and Social Security Law at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", the Institute for the State and the Law at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, New Bulgarian University, and other academic institutions.

6. Andrey Alexandrov is a well-known Bulgarian scholar in the field of labour law. This is further evidenced by the 182 **citations** of his scholarly publications.

III. TEACHING AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY

1. Andrey Alexandrov has more than satisfied the **teaching and educational requirements** for the academic position of Professor. He served for four years as a part-time Assistant Lecturer at the Faculty of Law of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", where he received highly positive evaluations. Since 2020, he has been lecturing in Labour Law and Social Security Law at South-West University "Neofit Rilski", delivering on average more than 350 teaching hours per year, and in certain years up to 516 hours, which, in my opinion, cannot be regarded as a normal teaching workload.

2. A substantial part of Andrey Alexandrov's academic activity consists of the **supervision of doctoral candidates**. He has supervised eleven doctoral students, two of whom have successfully defended their dissertations.

Considering, however, that six of these doctoral candidates are enrolled not only outside the Institute for the State and the Law at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences but also at other academic institutions, including institutions outside Sofia, it is difficult to accept that effective and high-quality academic supervision can realistically be provided in all such cases.

IV. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above assessment of the habilitation thesis Problems of Employment Relations under a Declared State of Emergency or a Declared Emergency Epidemic Situation, as well as the numerous scholarly publications of Andrey Sashev Alexandrov and my own direct personal impressions, I propose that the Academic Jury establish the following:

1. ***The formal requirements*** of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its Implementation, and the respective Regulations of the Institute for the State and the Law at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences have been fully satisfied.

2. Andrey Alexandrov's ***professional development*** as a doctoral candidate and subsequently as an Associate Professor has enabled him to acquire extensive research experience and to produce scholarly publications of a high academic standard.

3. The submitted ***monograph and the remaining publications*** constitute original scholarly achievements resulting entirely from the author's independent research. They are devoted to resolving important and contemporary theoretical and practical issues of labour law and social security law, have been prepared in accordance with the modern achievements of Bulgarian legal scholarship, and creatively develop and expand them further. These works are of a high theoretical standard and contribute to the resolution of important and highly topical legal issues. The candidate's scientific achievements enrich the existing body of knowledge in labour law and social security law, introduce novel developments in legal theory, and are of substantial importance both for legislative drafting and for the practical application of the law.

The above achievements, together with the candidate's previous scholarly accomplishments, have led me to the firm conviction, pursuant to Article 29 of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria, to propose to the Academic Jury that the academic position of Professor at the Institute for the State and the Law of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences be awarded to Associate Professor Andrey Sashev Alexandrov, PhD in Law. He fully deserves this recognition in view of his overall research achievements, his teaching activity, and his contribution to legal practice.

Sofia, 10 July 2026

Reviewer:

(Professor Krasimira Sredkova, PhD)