

 **Call for Applications - Project-based PhD Positions**
Institute of Philosophy and Sociology - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Context and form of the PhD

The Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IPS-BAS) is pleased to invite applications for **three project-based PhD positions** within its **Project 101183817 - ProSkills2Work - Progressing Promising Skills to Work in Bulgaria**, implemented by the IPS and funded by the Horizon Europe *Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence Programme* of the European Union.

ProSkills2Work (March 2025 - February 2030) is a European Research Area (ERA) Chair project, designed to attract high-level researchers with international experience and integrate them fully within the IPS research and academic activities on the topics of “dual” vocational education and transitions from education to work.

The PhD positions are embedded in the establishment of the ERA Chair Team led by ERA Chair Holder Prof. Christian Imdorf under the overall coordination of IPS Deputy Director Prof. Vassil Kirov. New members (one senior, two post-doctoral researchers, and three PhD students) are being recruited to complement the existing team comprising one internal junior and two senior IPS researchers, and a research officer.

More information on ProSkills2Work [here](#).

The successful highest-ranked candidates will be enrolled as PhD students on a **3-year part-time labour contract per the legislation of the Republic of Bulgaria with the IPS in Sofia, Bulgaria**. The PhD thesis defense shall take place by the end of 2029.

The enrollment of PhDs is intended to take place by 30 June 2026.

Under the guidance of lead IPS scientists on the ProSkills2Work ERA Chair Team, the PhD students will contribute with qualitative or quantitative and/or mixed-method analyses within the project’s research programme, which strives to explore the educational pathways and school-to-work transitions of vocational education and training (VET) graduates, and to compare their skills with the demands of the labour market.

The PhD Supervisors at the IPS will be Prof. Vassil Kirov, Prof. Rumiana Jeleva, and Assoc. Prof. Petya Ilieva-Trichkova.

Requirements

- master's degree in Sociology, Social Sciences, Educational Science, Political Science, Social Psychology, or Education Economics;
- interest in sociological research - qualitative, or quantitative and/or mixed-methods;
- no parallel enrollment in another PhD programme;
- fluent English language skills are a must; knowledge of Bulgarian is an asset;
- no previous contractual links to the IPS at any point in time;
- readiness to fulfill tasks related to the ProSkills2Work Project;
- Adeptness at working both collaboratively and independently.

Application deadline: 11 February 2026

Submit applications by email to delovodstvo@ips.bas.bg copying proskills2work@ips.bas.bg and **including electronic copies of the following documents:**

1. [Exams Application Form](#);
2. CV detailing your education, qualifications, employment record, publications, and any other relevant information;
3. Online link to the master thesis, or a copy thereof, and other documents/certificates showcasing the candidate's scientific interests and/or achievements;
4. Master degree certificate with the corresponding academic transcripts - notary-certified translation into Bulgarian if the original is not in that language;
5. For master degree certificates issued outside Bulgaria, academic recognition from the [National Centre for Information and Documentation of the Republic of Bulgaria](#) (NCID); an incoming registry number of the dossier at NCID will be accepted at the time of application;
6. [Declaration by the applicant that they are not and will not be enrolled in a PhD programme run by another academic or research entity](#);
7. Personal identity document (valid ID card or passport).

The following documents will be requested from the selected candidates prior to the PhD contract signature:

- The paper originals of the documents per points 4, 5, 6, 7 above;
- Medical certificate issued in the candidate's country of residence, and a legalised translation into Bulgarian if the original is not in that language;



- Judicial record certificate issued by the country of the applicant's nationality and/or residence, and a legalised translation into Bulgarian if the original is not in that language;
- Residence/work permit for Bulgaria in the case of citizens outside the European Union or the European Economic Area.

The PhD selection procedure will evolve as follows:

The candidates admitted to the written exam will be informed by 20 February 2026. A compendium for the written exam, covering topics related to the ProSkills2Work research programme and the education-to-work transition challenges in South-Eastern Europe, will be emailed to the applicants.

The **Written Exam** and the **Oral Exam** will take place online in the **week of 23 March 2026**.

The **English Language Exam** will take place online in the **week of 30 March 2026** - only for the candidates who have successfully passed the Written and Oral Exams.

The final ranking of the candidates will be announced by **17 April 2026**.

For technical or administrative queries, please contact:
delovodstvo@ips.bas.bg copying proskills2work@ips.bas.bg