

## REVIEW

on a competition for the occupation of an academic position "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional field 7.4. Public Health (Health tourism), University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas

announced in State Gazette № 1/02.01.2024  
with the candidate: associate professor Zlatina Kaludova Karadzova, PhD

Member of the scientific jury: Professor, Stoyanka Petkova Petkova-Georgieva, PhD  
University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas,  
Department of "Organization and Management of Public Health Care"

The present review was prepared on the basis of documents received through a competition announced by the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas (SG, № 1/02.01.2024) and on the university's website for the needs of the Department of Health Care Organization and Management, Faculty of Public Health and Health Care. Presented by candidate assoc. prof. Zlatina Kaludova Karadzova, PhD papers are approved by the Commission for admission to the competition.

### **I. General characteristics of the candidate**

Zlatina Karadjova was born in the city of Burgas, where she graduated from the French language school "Georgi Sava Rakovski" in 1992. In 1995, he graduated from the "Organization and Management of the Hotel and Restaurant" specialty at the Institute of International Tourism "Aleko Konstantinov", with the qualification of hotel/restaurant manager.

She graduated as an economist with a master's degree in "International Tourism" at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", Burgas, in 1999.

In 2005, she defended a PhD degree in the field of "Social Management" for the defense of a dissertation on „The quality of the Bulgarian marine tourism product and its management (on the example of the Southern Black Sea Coast)".

Parallel to his scientific interests, she also built a tourism career, successively occupying the positions of administrator, deputy manager, manager, complex manager in hotel complexes in "Sunny Beach". She is currently a licensed tour guide, registered in the National Tourist Register under № E 00212. She speaks French, English and Russian.

Zlatina Karadjova's academic career began as an assistant at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", Burgas in 2008. Since 2010, she has been ch. assistant professor at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", she has habilitated in 2012.

At the moment, the candidate is the head of the "Organization and Management of Health Care" department, tutor of "Tourism" and "Health Tourism" specialties, member of the Quality Commission, member of the educational methodical council, faculty council member, etc.

Zlatina Karadjova is on the control board of the Southeast Union of Tour Guides "Vanya Raykova", in the management board of the Bulgarian Association for Climate Treatment and Health Tourism and a member of the Bulgarian Scientific Society for Public Health.

### **II. Teaching and learning activity**

The academic load of Assoc. prof. Zlatina Karadjova, PhD is sufficient for holding the academic position of "professor" for the needs of the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", proof of which is her participation as the holder of:

- seven disciplines for the specialty "Health Management", "Bachelor" degree;
- six disciplines in "Master" degree - specialty "Health Management";
- one discipline "Health tourism" for "Master" degree, specialty "Balneo, spa and wellness management";
- six disciplines for "Master" degree, specialty "Health Tourism";
- two disciplines for the specialty "Tourism", "Bachelor" degree;
- four disciplines for the specialty "Tourism Management", "Master" degree.

Under the standard 360 hours (up to academic year 2020-2021) and 400 hours (from academic year 2021-2022) at the University "Prof. Dr. As. Zlatarov" Burgas, her workload is on average one hundred (100) hours overtime in the "Bachelor's" and "Master's".

In parallel with his tutoring duties, she is actively involved as a scientific supervisor and consultant in the student scientific sessions and conferences organized in the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Public Health and Healthcare.

Zlatina Karadzova is the academic supervisor and reviewer of Masters - graduates from the specialties "Health Management", "Economics and Organization of Tourism Business", "Tourism Management", "Tourist Destination Management". Three of the graduate masters at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" are her doctoral students who have successfully defended their dissertations and are already performing in the scientific field.

### III. Research activity

Assoc. Dr. Zlatina Karadjova submits for review 63 scientific works that do not repeat those submitted for "Assoc. Prof." and are outside the list of publications from the dissertation for the educational and scientific degree "PhD". In accordance with the field of higher education, the professional direction and the scientific specialty of the announced competition are presented:

1. One independent monograph (habilitation thesis) by indicator B.3.1;
2. Two published monographs that are not presented as the main habilitation thesis by indicator Г 5.1., Г 5.2.
3. One published book, based on a defended dissertation work for the award of the "PhD" by indicator Г6.
4. Three collective monographs, by group of indicators Г9.1., Г9.2., Г 9.3.;
5. One textbook of indicator E 20.;
6. One publication per metric Г7. (Scopus)
7. Fifty-four (54) publications of a indicator Г8. in full text, of which: 36 independent and 18 co-authored, 17 in English and 5 in Russian. (Publications and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals and indexed or published in edited collective volumes).

Independent participation and co-authorship of the candidate is a definite proof of the author's strong presence and competence in the field of Health Tourism and its place and role in the context of public health.

The presented works are summarized results of the many conducted empirical studies, on the basis of which numerous recommendations were formulated in the following directions:

- I. Health tourism as an alternative to seasonal vacations for the development of the offer of a year-round Bulgarian tourist product. Impact of the Covid 19 pandemic in the context of public health. (scientific works and publications under B 3.1, Г 5.1, Г 8.2, Г 8.5, Г 8.6, Г8.7, Г8.10, Г 8.11, Г8.12, Г 8.13, Г 8.14, Г 8.15, Г 8.16, Г 8.17, Г 8.18, Г 8.19, Г8.26, Г 8.38, Г 8.43, Г 8.45, Г 8.48, Г 8.49, Г 8.51, Г8.54, Г 9.1, Г 9.2.)
- II. Security and safety of the tourism product, impact of terrorism on tourism - in the context of public health. (Scientific works and publications under Г 5.2, Г 7.1, Г 7.2, Г 8.1, Г 8., Г8.8, Г 8.22, Г 8.23, Г 8.41, Г 8.46, Г8., Г 8.47).

- III. Quality and standards in tourism and health tourism. Relationship and dependence between the quality of education and career development. (Г 6, Г 8.3, Г8.28, Г 8.29, Г 9.3; Г 8.21; Г 8.24; Г8.25; Г8.33; Г8.34, Г8.52.)
- IV. Possibilities of the Bulgarian tour operators for mediation in the field of health tourism. (scientific papers and publications by indicator Г 8.9, Г 8.20, Г8.35, Г 8.36, Г 8.44, E 20.1)
- V. Possibilities for diversified supply and innovation of the Bulgarian tourist product, in the context of sustainable development and emotional and mental health. Communication channels for recognition.( publications by indicator Г 8.4; Г 8.27, Г 8.30, Г 8.31, Г 8.32, Г 8.39, Г 8.40, Г 8.42; Г8.50.)

A reference is also presented for 66 citations noticed, 21 of which are in monographs. service notes for participation in national, international and projects are presented:

- Project NIH 428/2019 - "Analysis of the opportunities for the development of health tourism in the Burgas region";
- project NIH 443/2020 - " Analysis of the possibilities for integrating marine and medical tourism along the Bulgarian southern Black Sea coast";

As can be seen from the attached certificates, she applies the "Life long learning" concept in practice, participating in various trainings to increase her qualifications.

I believe that the presented publications have a high scientific level, and the problems that are investigated in them are current and significant. They fully correspond to the scientific specialty of the announced competition, namely "Health Tourism".

The evidence of fulfillment of the minimum national requirements and those of the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov":

**Table 1. Total number of points by groups of indicators for the various scientific degrees and academic positions**

Indicators	PhD	Chief assistant	Fulfilling the requirements for professor	Minimum university requirements for a professor
<b>A</b> Indicator 1	50	50	50	50
<b>Б</b> Indicator 2			0	0
<b>В</b> Indicator 3			100	100
<b>Г</b> Indicator 4			0	0
<b>Д</b> Sum of indicators 5 to 9		30	1750	250
<b>Е</b> Sum of indicators 10 to 12			485	150
<b>Ж</b> Sum of indicators from 13 till the end For a professor, the minimum number of points per indicator E 14=60			285 E 14=60	120
<b>Total for a professor:</b>			<b>2670</b>	<b>670</b>

#### **IV. Basic scientific and scientific-applied contributions**

The contributions contained in the works submitted for participation in the competition can be summarized as follows:

1. The leading role of health tourism as a prospective direction for increasing the competitiveness of destination Bulgaria on the world /domestic and international market/. Its importance as an alternative to mass sea and mountain tourism is justified in order to overcome staff turnover and create year-round employment.
2. A target classification of the types of health tourism is formed, the profile of the user of a health tourism service is presented. The resources of the Burgas region for the development of this type of tourism are described, as well as the prerequisites for choosing the Bulgarian Southern Black Sea coast as a tourist destination for medical purposes, the motivational factors for choosing health-oriented tourism in Bulgaria, and the prospects for improving the activities, practices and activities in the sector.
3. Research is presented that reveals the socio-economic impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, the impact on people's motives for traveling and the opportunities for sustainable development of modern society through prevention, prevention and health-restorative procedures.
4. A scientific-practical study was made, through which the possibility of positioning Bulgaria as a destination for health tourism is analyzed with the active participation of tour operators as intermediaries between the primary tourist demand and supply and especially as providers of health-tourism services (medical facilities, spa hotels and recreation centers).
5. The impact of terrorist and cyber-attacks on tourist behavior was investigated and a survey conducted among Bulgarian hoteliers was presented in order to establish the degree of readiness for reaction of the hotel complexes on the Southern Black Sea coast in case of possible terrorist acts and cyber-attacks. Recommendations for specific actions have been formulated, which, implemented in practice, guarantee the physical, moral and emotional security and safety of Bulgarian and international tourists in the context of public health.
6. The leading role of quality as the main competitive advantage is proven. The criteria for the quality of services in health tourism are derived. The principles for developing a quality system in health tourism are formulated, the main quality standards are presented, a certification technology is developed, the benefit of implementing standards is proven.
7. The possibilities for diversifying and innovating the Bulgarian tourist product and its sustainable development by enriching the product with alternative types of tourism are presented – cultural, sports, adventure, yacht, cruise, which offered as a complex tourist product on the national and international tourist market will contribute to improving the image of Bulgaria as a well-known and competitive destination on the world market of health and rehabilitation services.
8. The relationship and dependence between the opportunities for recreation and recovery of a person's physical and mental strength and his health is exposed. A scientific-practical study by the author is presented, aiming to reveal the most preferred ways of recreation, the suitability of Bulgaria to position itself as a four-season recreational destination and the role of tour operators in promoting it as such. Guidelines are given regarding the positioning of our country as a year-round destination offering wonderful opportunities for active and passive recreation.
9. The modern trends in the development of our society, the challenges to the management of human resources as the basic capital of society and the impact of today's hectic everyday life on human health are examined. The connection and dependence between the quality of education, career development and quality of life is highlighted.
10. With her active participation, a new master's program "Health Tourism" was created in 7.4 "Public Health" from the Department "Organization and Management of Health Care", University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov» - Burgas, which is also inspired by business requirements, namely: medical and rehabilitation centers and medical facilities planning to conclude contracts with the health funds of other countries, spa and wellness hotel complexes, increasingly emphasizing health services, specialized hospitals for treatment and rehabilitation, centers for

complex medical and social care, hospices for rehabilitation and palliative care and all healthcare infrastructure stakeholders.

#### **V. Notes and recommendations**

I believe that the scope of the scientific works confirms the contribution and role of Assoc. prof. Zlatina Karadjova, PhD in transforming the research results on the topic of the competition into systematized knowledge about health tourism in the context of public health. Zlatina Karadjova has the potential to intensify her publication activity in world-famous databases with scientific information. The mentioned notes do not diminish the achievements, contributions and justified application of the author for the academic position under the current competition.

#### **VI. CONCLUSION**

After familiarizing myself with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I give my positive assessment and with conviction I recommend to the Scientific Jury to propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas to elect Assoc. prof. Zlatina Karadjova, PhD to occupy the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional field 7.4. Public Health (Health tourism).

**Date:**

Burgas,

30/04/2024

**SCIENTIFIC JURY MEMBER (REVIEWER):**

/prof. Stoyanka Petkova Petkova-Georgieva, PhD/