

OPINION

by Associate Professor Albena Dasheva Yanakieva, Ph.D
Faculty of Public Health and Health Care at University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", city of Burgas,
member of the scientific jury, pursuant to Order No. RD - 82/01.03.2024 by the Rector of
University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", city of Burgas

Regarding: Participation in the Competition for the Academic Position of "Professor" in the Higher Education Field 7. Health Care and Sports, Professional Direction 7.4. Public Health (Health Tourism) for the needs of the Department of "Organization and Management of Health Care", at the FPHHC at University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", Burgas, announced in State Gazette No.1/02.01.2024.

The announced competition was entered and one candidate was admitted:

Associate Professor Zlatina Kaludova Karadzhova, Ph.D

I. General Description of the Materials Presented for the Competition

The candidate has submitted all the necessary documents for participation in the competition, meeting the requirements of the Law for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for its application, and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", city of Burgas.

II. Biographical and Professional Data of the Candidate

Associate Professor Zlatina Kaludova Karadzhova, PhD was born in Burgas, where she completed her higher education with a "Professional Bachelor" degree at the Institute of International Tourism. She obtained her Master's degree from the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" – Burgas, majoring in "International Tourism." In 2006, she earned her PhD in "Economic Management" with a dissertation on "The Quality of Bulgarian Seaside Tourist Product and its Management (case study of the Southern Black Sea Coast)." Associate Professor Karadzhova's professional career as a lecturer has developed intensively and successfully. She began her career as an assistant in 2008 at University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", Burgas. Two years later, she won a competition for the academic position of "chief assistant," and in 2012 became an associate professor in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management" in Professional Direction 3.9. Tourism. She carries out her scientific and teaching activities in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of "Marketing and Tourism." In 2016, she became a member of the "Organization and Management of Healthcare" department within the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care, and in 2023, she was elected as its head.

III. Evaluation of Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators

Associate Professor Zlatina Kaludova Karadzhova, PhD has presented comprehensive evidence containing detailed lists, references, summaries, and full-text copies of scientific works following her appointment as an associate professor, as well as certificates, diplomas, citation reports, and a declaration of originality and authenticity of the submitted documents. The scientific works are in the field and issue of the competition – Professional Direction 7.4. "Public Health," scientific specialty "Health Tourism." Presented are:

- One independent monograph (habilitation thesis);
- Two published monographs not presented as the main habilitation work;
- One published book based on the defended dissertation for the awarding of a PhD degree.
- Three collective monographs;
- One textbook;
- One publication (published in scientific journals, peer-reviewed and indexed in globally recognized databases of scientific information (Scopus);
- Fifty-four (54) publications and reports, published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific reviewing and indexed or published in edited collective volumes.

The documentation fully reflects the scientific and professional development of the candidate and provides the basis for an objective assessment. The scientometric values listed in the table below substantiate the claim that Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzhova, PhD meets all the conditions for the academic position of "professor" in field 7. "Healthcare and Sport," Professional Direction 7.4. "Public Health," scientific specialty "Health Tourism," in accordance with Article 29 of the LDASRB, the Regulations for its application, and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" – Burgas, and the minimum required points:

Group of Indicators	Professor, according to LDASRB and its regulations	Professor, according to the Regulations for Academic Staff Development at University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas	Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzhova
A	50	50	50
B	100	100	100
Г	200	250	1750
Д	100	150	485
E	100	120	285
Total:	550	670	2670

IV: Publication Activity and Scientific Contributions of Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzhova

Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzhova demonstrates significant publication activity focused on the following main directions:

1. **Health tourism as an alternative to seasonal vacation tourism** - explores health tourism as an opportunity to develop an all-year-round Bulgarian tourism product and analyzes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of public health care.
2. **Security and safety of the tourism product** - studies the impact of terrorism on tourism, with an emphasis on public health care.
3. **Quality and standards in tourism and health tourism** - examines the relationship and dependency between the quality of education and career development.
4. **Opportunities for Bulgarian tour operators in the field of health tourism** - analyzes the role of tour operators as intermediaries in offering health tourism services.

5. **Diversification and innovation in the Bulgarian tourism product** - investigates the opportunities for innovation and diversification of the Bulgarian tourism product in the context of sustainable development and its impact on emotional and mental health, including communication channels for recognition.

Associate Professor Karadzova's contributions are particularly important in the context of developing and positioning Bulgaria as a preferred destination for health tourism. Through her research, she demonstrates the significance of health tourism not only as a means for physical recovery and stabilization of mental state outside of hospital settings but also as a potent economic resource. Her works include the development of standards and certification systems in health tourism, underscoring her commitment to introducing high-quality norms in the sector.

V: Teaching Activities

The provided report indicates that Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzova's teaching load meets the standards required by "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" University in Burgas, qualifying her for the academic position of "professor". Associate Professor Dr. Karadzova teaches lectures and seminars across 14 different academic disciplines for students majoring in "Health Management," "Tourism," and "Balneology, SPA, and Wellness Management," at both Bachelor's and Master's levels. She has co-authored 30 educational programs for the specialties of "Health Management" and "Tourism" and has developed teaching materials and resources for the courses she instructs. Her engagement with students is particularly noteworthy. She serves as a scientific advisor and consultant at student conferences and sessions for majors in "Health Management" and "Tourism" within the Faculty of Public Health and Faculty of Economics. She has been a scientific advisor and reviewer for master's degree candidates in specialties such as "Health Management," "Economics and Organization of the Tourism Business," "Tourism Management," and "Management of Tourist Destinations." She has also guided three PhD candidates who successfully defended their dissertations. Furthermore, she has participated in 15 research projects (7 national, 4 international, and 4 internal university projects), two of which she led.

VI: Administrative Responsibilities

According to the author's statement, Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzova holds several key administrative roles, demonstrating her active involvement in both academic and professional communities. Her responsibilities include:

- **Tutor for the "Tourism" specialty**, Bachelor's level, and for "Health Tourism," Master's level. She guides and supports students throughout their academic journey in these programs.
- **Academic mentor for students** participating in the "Student Practices" project, both phase 1 and phase 2. This role involves advising students on practical training and internships, enhancing their professional development.
- **Member of the Quality Committee** at the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care. This position involves overseeing and ensuring the quality of education and faculty operations within the faculty.

- **Member of the General Assembly** at the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care, participating in the decision-making processes that affect the faculty's academic policies and strategies.
- **Member of the Election Committee** at the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care, which is responsible for managing and overseeing elections within the faculty.
- **Member of the Southwest Union of Tour Guides "Vanya Raikova"** in Burgas, which indicates her involvement in the regional tourism sector, enhancing her professional network and contributing to the tourism industry's development.

These roles underscore her commitment to contributing to her institution's governance and her active engagement in enhancing the educational and professional environment for her students and colleagues.

VII: Personal Impressions

I know Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzhova both as a colleague and as a teacher, and I can confidently express my personal opinion of her as an exceptionally loyal, responsible, disciplined, and science-devoted specialist. Her advancement in the department of "Healthcare Organization and Management" is founded on her scientific achievements, teaching activity, administrative load, and contributions to the department's development.

VIII: Critical Remarks – None.

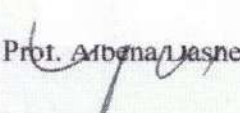
Conclusion

The materials presented in the current competition for the academic position of "professor" show that Associate Professor Zlatina Kaludova Karadzhova, PhD meets all the quantitative and qualitative requirements and convincingly exceeds the mandatory and specific conditions and scientometric criteria for the academic position of "professor," according to the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in Bulgaria and the Regulations for the conditions and order for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" in Burgas.

This determines the POSITIVE ASSESSMENT, in line with the scientometric requirements and based on her educational-teaching and scientific-practical activity. I propose to the members of the Scientific Jury to also vote positively and to award the academic position of "professor" in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sport, professional direction 7.4. Public Health, in the scientific specialty "Health Tourism" to Associate Professor Zlatina Karadzhova, PhD.

Dated: 22.04.2024
City: Burgas

Signature:

/Assoc. Prof.  Vasneva Yanakieva, Ph.D./