

## REVIEW

Regarding a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the area of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction 3.9. Tourism (Alternative Hospitality).

Reviewer: Associate Professor Veselina Ivanova Atanasova, Ph.D., Department of "Marketing and Tourism" at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas, region of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.9. Tourism.

### 1. General information

The basis for writing this review is Order No.: RD-198/10.07.2023 of the Rector of the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas for the approval of the Scientific Jury in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the area of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction 3.9. Tourism (Alternative Hospitality), announced in the State Gazette, no. 42 of 12.05.2023 and voted by Minutes No. 1/17.07.2023 of the scientific jury meeting for the election of the chairman and the appointment of reviewers for the competition.

The review was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LAD), the Regulations for its Application (LAD) and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas".

### 2. Contest details

The competition for the occupation of the academic position " Associate Professor" has been announced for the needs of the Department "Economics and Management of Tourist Services", College of Tourism at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas, and the advertisement was published in the State Gazette, No. 42/12.05.2023.

One candidate took part in the competition - Ch. Assistant Elena Damyanova Ilieva, PhD.

The materials and documents submitted by the applicant are in accordance with the minimum national requirements in the RASRB. Also, the candidate fulfills, even exceeds the points according to some criteria of the minimum university requirements in the Regulations for the conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas.

### 3. Biographical data of the candidate

The professional resume submitted by the candidate – Ch. Ass. Elena Ilieva, PhD gives me the reason to direct the attention of the scientific jury to the following important facts from

her professional development and academic experience, which give grounds for admission and participation in the competition, as follows:

Elena Damyanova Ilieva completed her secondary education at the High School with enhanced teaching of the German language, GPNE "Goethe - Burgas" in the period 2001 - 2006.

In 2010, he graduated from the University of Economics - Varna and obtained a bachelor's degree, and the following year a master's degree in "International Tourism Business". In 2015, he successfully defended her dissertation on the topic: "Possibilities of applying timeshare in the hotel industry of the Southern Black Sea tourist region" (Diploma No. 059/29.06.2015) and obtained a doctorate from the National Academy of Sciences, in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (Tourism) also at the University of Economics - Varna.

Elena Ilieva's academic professional experience started in 2018 as Chief Assistant in the department "Economics and Management of Tourist Services", College of Tourism at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas.

The labor activity of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva started in 2004 in the field of tourism and more specifically in the position of "tourist guide", continued as an animator, hotel administrator, hotel representative and airline agent. The applicant's rich tourist experience and professional development overlap with the areas of her scientific interests.

Ch. Ass. Dr. Elena Ilieva, has solid language skills: she is fluent in German and English, both written and spoken.

The academic career of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva successfully combined with scientific research activity by participating in a significant number of scientific publications and projects. Within her academic career Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva has over 40 scientific publications, including monographs, articles and textbooks in Bulgarian and foreign publications. She participates in scientific and educational projects at the university and at international level, one of which she is the project manager.

The achievements of Ch. Ass. Dr. Elena Ilieva and her commitment outside the lecture hall at the university are convincingly revealed by the expert activity in which she participates as a member of the Association "Rafael - info, culture and tourism".

#### 4. Quantitative and substantive characteristics of the presented scientific works

It is clear from the applicant's attached documents that the number and content of the publications are clear and are definite evidence of the quantitative and qualitative characterization of the creative and scientific achievements of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva.



For participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva presents herself with a total of 41 publications as follows:

- One independent monograph (habilitation thesis) according to indicator B.3.;
- One chapter of a collective monograph, according to indicator D.10.1.;
- One book based on a protected dissertation work for the award of the ONS "doctor" according to indicator D.5.1.;
- Two articles published in scientific publications, indexed in world databases of scientific information (Scopus; Web of Science) in English according to indicator D.6.;
- 31 (thirty-two) publications from indicator D.7. in full text, of which: 27 (twenty-seven) independent and 4 (four) as a co-author (publications and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review and indexed or published in edited collective volumes).
- One study published in scientific publications indexed in world databases of scientific information (Scopus; Web of Science) in co-authorship in English according to indicator D.8.
- One published university textbook on indicator E.20.;
- Three published teaching aids according to indicator E.21., of which 2 (two) independent and 1 (one) as a co-author.

The monographic work "State and prospects for the development of shared accommodation in the Bulgarian Black Sea tourist area, Sofia: Librum, 2023. ISBN 978-619-7690-14-9 is the first extensive and multi-aspect study of shared accommodation in Bulgaria.

In the monograph, the theoretical aspects for revealing the content of the essence of shared accommodation, the identification of the main entities in its implementation, as well as the factors with an intense influence on the formation and development of the system on a global scale are studied in depth. It is noteworthy that after a detailed analysis of the theoretical interpretations, as well as taking into account the topic of the scientific work, the author offers her own methodology for investigation of the state and possibilities for the development of shared accommodation in a tourist area.

The main conclusions of the analysis have been highlighted, an objective assessment of the state of shared accommodation in the Bulgarian Black Sea tourist areas has been made, and the main perspectives and recommendations for its development have been outlined.

There is a sufficient number of publications that cover a wide range of scientific works, with independent scientific papers occupying a significant share of the scientific output. The careful reading of the candidate's scientific work reveals current issues regarding modern aspects in tourism.

#### 5. Quantitative and qualitative assessment of the candidate's educational and teaching activities

In the attached documentation, a reference has been developed for the educational and teaching activities of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva.

In the period from her appointment to the academic position until now, the candidate leads lecture courses, seminars and practical exercises in various academic disciplines in the process of student education at the educational degrees "Prof. Bachelor" and "Bachelor", directly related to the subject of the announced competition.

Proof of this are the disciplines indicated in the attached references, as follows: "Hotel and restaurant economics"; "Pricing policy in tourism"; "International Economic Relations"; "Economics of the Tourism Enterprise"; "Tourist practice in a working environment"; "Educational manufacturing practice"; "Tourism specializing practice". Ch. Ass. Elena Ilieva fulfills a full workload as a lecturer and participates in the development of curricula as an author and co-author.

#### 6. Identification of the contributions in the candidate's research work

I support the highlighted scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the presented reference from Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva. I highlight some of the essential ones:

The author's work "Status and prospects for the development of shared accommodation in the Bulgarian Black Sea tourist areas", as well as thematically related publications related to the development, state and modern business formats in the alternative hospitality industry, have made significant contributions to:

- conceptualizing the nature and features of shared accommodation as an integral part of the shared economy and the tourism industry, emphasizing the hybrid nature of the system.
- Introduction of a new and precise author's methodology for researching the state and possibilities for the development of shared accommodation in a tourist area.;
- Comparative characteristics between users and non-users of shared units in the studied area are highlighted, contributing to the practical orientation of the study;
- Presentation of a scientific and applied author's methodology for researching the development and applicability of timeshare in the hospitality industry of a tourist area;
- The author's proposed assessments of the state and application of timeshare are useful for improving the environment in the studied tourist areas.

In some of the studies related to the economic aspects of tourism and hotel industry - current influence, modern changes and prospects for development, I highlight the following contributions:



- Revealing the main types of complaints in the hospitality industry, researching the approaches to their processing and indicating management techniques;
- Characterization of Airbnb's business model and its specific features;
- Performing an analysis of the economic impact of Airbnb shared accommodation on national and local economies of various tourist destinations;
- An assessment of the economic impact of shared accommodation on Airbnb with an emphasis on the US and European markets and an outline of the prospects for further growth.
- Revealing the economic meaning of the price and pricing policy in tourism, the variety of price types and approaches in their formation and management, as well as the specifics of the cancellation prices and policies of the tourist enterprise.

In summary, in view of the results in the presented scientific works, it is necessary to assess that there is a solid scientific analysis of the investigated issues. The research and teaching activities of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva correspond with the education of the students. The presented scientific production significantly enriches science and practice regarding the possibilities for the development of the tourism industry.

#### 7. Critical remarks and recommendations to the candidate

I have no specific remarks about Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva. Taking into account the content and subject matter of the scientific works proposed for review, I can formulate the following recommendations:

- To develop and strengthen her position as a researcher of modern problems in tourism, resp. in alternative hospitality.
- To expand her publication activity in journals that are refereed and indexed in world databases of scientific information (Scopus; Web of Science).

#### 8. Conclusion

The overview of the publications of Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva gives me a reason to emphasize their merits and the achieved results in scientific and research activities, including:

Thoroughness and precision in the conducted scientific research and published publications;

Correctness and integrity in the presentation of the scientific production and conducting the teaching work.

According to the presented documents and the achieved research and teaching results Ch. Assistant professor Dr. Elena Ilieva meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ZRASRB and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of to occupy the position of "associate professor" at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov"-Burgas. The candidate meets the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3, respectively the requirements under Art. 2.b, para. 5 of ZRASRB.

Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva declared 912.5 points for the fulfillment of the minimum requirements specified in the Appendix of the Regulations for the conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov"-Burgas.

The quantitative and qualitative requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" have been met by all indicators.

There is no proven plagiarism in scientific works according to the law.

Ch. Assistant Dr. Elena Ilieva is characterized by recognition in scientific circles, which is proven with the available 22 citations.

**In conclusion, on the basis of the positive aspects of the information provided, the scientific achievements and the personal contribution of the candidate, I confidently give my positive assessment for her to be elected to the academic position of "Associate Professor", in the area of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction 3.9. "Tourism (Alternative Hospitality) at University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas.**

08.09. 2023

City of Burgas

Reviewer:

/Assoc. Ph.D. Veselina Atanasova/