

**To the members of the Scientific Jury  
in the competition for associate professor  
in BAS, NIGGG**

**OPINION**

**Dear members of the Scientific Jury,**

this opinion has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), its Implementing Regulation (PPZRASRB), the Regulation of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Regulation for the Implementation of the Law in NIGGG. The procedural requirements for assuming the academic position of associate professor in the Department of Geography are respected.

**1. General information**

**Opinion is prepared by: Prof. PhD Galina Krasteva Rashkova**

SU "St. Kliment Ohridski ", Department of "Geography of Tourism"

Higher education field 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences"

Professional Direction 3.9. "Tourism (financial management of the tourism enterprise)".

**Reason for writing the opinion:** Order No. 01- 32 / 18.02.2019 in connection with a decision of the SB for Scientific jury on the procedure for participation in a competition for an academic position Associate Professor.

**2. Information about the competition**

The competition for the academic position "Associate professor" has been announced for the needs of the Department of Geography at the National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in the professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences, scientific specialty "Economic and Social Geography" (Tourism Geography). The competition was promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 104 of 14.12.2018.

**3. Brief information about the candidate in the competition**

The only candidate in the competition - Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova graduated Bachelor and Master in Tourism from the University of National and World Economy, as well as a master's degree in Spanish Philology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ". She holds other educational and training diplomas and certificates related to the competition.

In 2010, VAK awarded Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova (Penkova) with an educational and scientific PhD degree in scientific specialty 05.02.18 "Economics and Management" on the basis of a defense thesis on "Improving the Organization of Urban Tourism". She speaks Spanish, English, French and Russian.

**Assoc. Prof. Dessislava Georgieva Varadzhakova** started her career in 2002 as a travel agent in a number of travel agencies and tour operators until 2015. In the period 2011-2015 she was the Executive Director of Rozzi Travel Ltd. At the same time, in 2010-2011 she is a lecturer at the University of Forestry, the University of Plovdiv, Kardzhali branch and from 2011 to 2016 Chief Assistant at the University of Plovdiv, Kardzhali Branch. Since 2016 she is associate

professor at Veliko Tarnovo University "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", for which only a copy of a work booklet is attached.

#### **4. Compliance with mandatory requirements**

The presented papers in the competition show fulfillment of the mandatory requirements for occupying the academic position "associate professor" in the Department of Geography at the National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

- has an education and scientific **PhD's Degree** since **2010**;
- occupies the academic position of "**chief assistant**" from 06.07.2011 to 01.09.2016;
- the minimum requirements for occupying the academic position of the associate professor are fulfilled (present reference);

**Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova meets the mandatory requirements of ZRASRB for occupying the academic position "associate professor".**

#### **5. Summary of presented scientific papers**

A list of publications for the acquisition of a Doctorate degree not submitted for an opinion. In the "Associate professor" competition, **Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova** has presented **42** publications (including 3 independent monographs, co-author in 1 monograph, 1 textbook, 9 papers, 24 papers in conferences, 5 articles in professional magazines) that do not repeat presented for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "PhD". Five articles in professional journals were dropped from drafting the opinion.

**The thematic** direction of the candidate's publications is in the sphere of geography of tourism, tourism revenue management and innovations in tourism. The subject area is up-to-date and significant in the context of the tourism development policy and, in this respect, the papers presented by the candidate for participation in the contest for the associate professor are at the scientific level.

#### **6. Synthetic evaluation of the main scientific and applied scientific contributions**

The main contribution of **Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova** are mainly in the scientific field Tourism Geography in which competition for associate professor has been announced. In particular, the scientific contributions are as follows:

- for the first time in the scientific literature an assessment of the tourist potential of the historical-geographic area Burel was made in the monographic work of the candidate;
- analysis of tourist destinations and new types of tourism are with the application character /6,7,15,20,23/;
- the interaction between the tourist flows and the territory is investigated /9,21/;
- a new approach is proposed to explore the sustainability of tourist destinations /10/;
- the essence and specifics of the process approach in tourism management systems are stated /10,11/;
- models for measuring cross-cultural influences in determining the determinants of cultural sustainability of tourist destinations are analyzed /16/.

Based on the work of foreign scientists in the field of Revenue Management in Tourism, the applicant's contributions are:

- formulated stages of hotel revenue management /36/;
- risk analysis of revenue management in tourism /24/;
- analysis using mathematical tools of hotels, functional spaces, restaurants, golf, and spa industry efficiency /2,8,14,32, 33, 38/.

**Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova shows the necessary scientific knowledge, which is an argument in support of her candidacy for the academic position as associate professor.**

### **7. Key critical remarks, recommendations and questions to the applicant**

The production of **Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova**, presented for opinion, does not give rise to serious critical remarks. The accumulated knowledge, the theoretical and empirical information she has successfully used in the development of monographs, textbooks, articles and reports. I would recommend the candidate to deepen her research activities in the field of tourism innovation, scientifically grounded in further developing the other thematic areas in which she works and increased her publications in international journals.

I would like to receive comment about meaning of product, technology, information and organizational-management innovation in tourism in Bulgaria and will there be, according to the candidate, a priority for some of them in the next few years.

I would like candidate to comment the meaning of product, technological, information and organizational-management innovation in Bulgarian tourism and will there be a priority for some of them in the next few years.

### **8. Conclusion**

On the basis of the examination of the submitted documents and materials no violations of the competition procedure. The following conclusions can be drawn for the candidate:

8.1. **Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova** is the only candidate in the competition.

8.2. The candidate has conducted a scientific guidance of seven graduates.

8.3. The presented scientific output, which includes monographs (three independent and one in co-authorship), a textbook, articles and reports published in the country and abroad, is sufficient in volume.

8.4. In the presented information about the competition are cited 26 citations of 14 scientific papers of the candidate, which show her publication and citation activity.

The general assessment is that **Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova** meets the **mandatory requirements** of the ZRASRB and the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the Regulations of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Regulations for the implementation of the law in NIGGG.

Finally, I declare my positive vote for **Desislava Georgieva Varadzhakova** to be elected and take the academic position "associate professor" in the professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences, scientific specialty "Economic and Social Geography" (Tourism Geography).

Sofia

07.04. 2019 г.

Opinion is prepared by:

(Prof. PhD Galina Rashkova)