

R E V I E W

by Prof. Mariyana Bozhinova, Ph.D

D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov

Economics and Management of Tourism Department

Scientific specialty Economics and Management

on the competition for the academic position “Associate Professor”, professional field 3.8 Economics, Economics of Tourism, announced by the Economic Research Institute

1. COMPETITION INFORMATION

The competition was announced in SG no. 44 of 19.05.2023, according to the decision of the Supreme Council of the Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Academy of Sciences (Protocol 7/12.07.2023) for the needs of the "Regional and Sectoral Economy" section at the Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Sciences of the Academy of Sciences. He is in the professional field 3.8 Economics in Tourism Economics.

I am a member of the scientific jury for the competition in accordance with Order No. 367/18.07.2023 of the Director of the Institute of Science and Technology at the BAS.

2. BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANDIDATE IN THE COMPETITION

The only candidate in the competition is Dr. Silvena Dencheva Yordanova. She completed her secondary education at the Science and Mathematics High School - Varna and, in parallel, at the First Language High School - Varna with a profile of "English Language". She has a bachelor's degree in Marketing and Management, obtained at the University of Economics-Varna in 1999, as well as a master's degree in Business Administration from the same university in 2000. Her doctoral degree in the scientific specialty 05.02.20 Social Management was also obtained at IU- Varna in 2004

The candidate has many years of teaching experience (from 2006 until now) at VUM-Varna, and the subjects he teaches at the bachelor's and master's degrees are in the field of management. Participates in the development of EU projects.

Dr. Silvena Yordanova is the deputy editor of the European Journal of Tourism Research (2008-2011) and the editor of the Yearbook of the Varna Graduate School of

Management (since 2015), also the organizer and coordinator of 8 international scientific conferences (as of 2016).

He is a member of the Bulgarian Marketing Association and the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

3. FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OCCUPYING THE ACADEMIC POSITION

Dr. Silvena Yordanova meets the required conditions in art. 81 of the Regulations of the Institute of Higher Education at BAS, as well as the minimum national requirements and the additional requirements of the Institute of Higher Education at BAS:

1. Has an acquired educational and scientific degree "doctor".
2. Has more than 3 years of experience as a "principal assistant" or 5 years of experience as a teacher, including part-time in a higher school.
3. There is a published habilitation work - an independent monograph, reviewed by two habilitation persons, on the topic *"Perspectives and opportunities for digitization in tourism"*, with a volume of 130 pages, ISBN 978-954-371-747-7, which does not repeat the presented from it those for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "doctor".
4. She has also presented other original research works and publications - *a total of 20* (2 studies, 13 articles and reports, parts of 3 collective monographs and 2 textbooks and teaching aids), which also include the obligatory *2 publications in refereed and indexed editions in Scopus or WoS*: Yordanova, S. (2023). How to apply digitization in tourism and hospitality? Sp. Economic Studies, BAS, 25 pages; Yordanova, S., Dineva, S. (2022). Emotion regulation in the workplace from the perspective of employees and leaders. Advancing Interpersonal Emotion Regulation and Social Regulation, Donta S. Harper-Editor. Chapter 6. IGI Global. ISBN13:9781668424780|ISBN10: Scopus indexed, p.113-149 (36 p.).
5. Meets the relevant minimum national requirements, the requirements in Art. 81 of the Rules of the III at the BAS and the additional requirements of the III at the BAS. The scientometrics report presented shows that it forms a total of 522.5 points, against the required 450.

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

The candidate for the competition has *14 citations*, 1 of which is in a scientific publication, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information, and 5 publications are cited multiple times in monographs and collective volumes.

The opinion of the Commission on the preliminary assessment is *positive* regarding the fulfillment of the requirements.

4. EVALUATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITY

Dr. Silvena Yordanova teaches at the Higher School of Management - Varna, where she has been working since 2006.

The educational activity of the candidate is related to the development of study courses and documentation in Bulgarian and English languages for studies in bachelor's and master's degrees, organization of Doctoral seminars in 2019-2022, as well as scientific guidance and tutoring.

Dr. Silvena Yordanova has lectured at several foreign universities, such as: Buskerud University (Norway) in 2015, Tampere University of Applied Science (Finland) in 2016, Tajik State University of Commerce - Khujand (Tajikistan) in 2019, Cardiff Metropolitan University (United Kingdom) in 2019 and at Rennes School of Business, Rennes (France) in 2022.

From the presented documents, the activity of the candidate in the academic work is evident through his participation in the development of 1 independent textbook and 1 independent study aid in the field of business administration.

In summary, the educational and teaching activity of Dr. Silvena Yordanova can be evaluated positively.

5. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENTED SCIENTIFIC WORKS/PUBLICATIONS

In the competition for "associate professor", the candidate submitted *19 scientific works* (without the textbooks), including 1 independent monograph - habilitation thesis and 3 contributions to monographs published in collective volumes with scientific editing, 2 studies in refereed and indexed editions in Scopus/WoS, 13 articles and reports in non-refereed editions with scientific editing. The developments of Dr. Silvena Yordanova have not been proven plagiarism according to the law.

The main monographic work "*Perspectives and opportunities for digitalization in tourism*", which is presented as a habilitation work, aims to present, on the one hand, the phenomenon of digitalization, and on the other - to examine its impact on business, in particular, hospitality and tourism. The subject of research is digitization, and the object is organizations in the field of tourism and hospitality from the point of view of their degree of digitization. The topic is undeniably relevant, especially after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The monograph is structured in three parts, in which the set research tasks are fulfilled, namely: the concept of digitization is clarified and its forms are presented; the peculiarities of digitalization in the context of tourism and hospitality are considered and reported; a comprehensive model for digitization of organizations in the field of tourism

and hospitality has been developed; a methodology for digitalization of tourism is proposed. A positive finding is the presentation of successful examples from practice in the tourism and hotel industry regarding the digitization of their activities.

As a result of the theoretical and empirical research, basic conclusions have been formulated that reveal the impact of digitalization on business in the field of tourism and hospitality, which fulfills the purpose of the monographic research.

Based on the mentioned publications and mainly on the published habilitation work, the following main directions in the research activity of Dr. Silvena Yordanova can be deduced:

1. Digitization in tourism;
2. Hospitality;
3. Management of education.

In summary, it can be claimed that the scientific production in quantitative and qualitative terms is in accordance with the minimum national requirements in area 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of ZRASRB and meets the conditions for occupying the academic position "docent", according to Art. 24, paragraph 1 of the ZRASRB, art. 53, para. 1 of the PPZRASRB and of the Additional requirements of the III at the BAS.

6. SYNTHESIZED EVALUATION OF THE MAIN SCIENTIFIC AND SCIENTIFIC-APPLIED CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CANDIDATE

The presented scientific production contains scientific and scientific-applied contributions. The scientific contributions claimed by the candidate in his scientific works are presented in the Statement of Scientific Contributions, but, in my opinion, they are quite numerous and unsystematized in nature. I do not include the contributions presented by Dr. Silvena Yordanova in the field of education, as they do not correspond to the scientific field of the announced competition. In this regard, in my opinion, *the scientific and scientific-applied contributions* of the candidate can be systematized as follows:

First, the existing knowledge about digitization and especially its features in the field of tourism and hospitality are supplemented, through an author's definition and concept, which I refer to as *theoretical/scientific contributions*.

Second, a conceptual model for digitalization of the organization in the field of tourism was developed and an author's methodology was prepared for this, as well as a methodology for dealing with toxic leadership. The model has been tested, as a result of which the main conclusions and proposals have been made. These contributions have a *theoretical-methodological* nature.

Thirdly, an analysis of social media as a possible form of manifestation of digitalization in tourism was carried out, substantiated proposals for the application of artificial intelligence in the field of tourism and hospitality were presented, and good practices for applying digitalization in the field of hospitality and tourism were analyzed. I define these contributions as *scientific and applied*.

The scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the candidate in the scientific field of the announced competition can be found primarily in the habilitation monograph on the topic "Perspectives and opportunities for digitization in tourism", in the independent study "How to apply digitization in tourism and hospitality?", published in the journal Economic Research, as well as in 4 other shorter scientific publications.

It can be concluded that Dr. Silvena Yordanova has in-depth theoretical knowledge in the field of digitalization and human resource management in hospitality and tourism. In her research, she demonstrates thoroughness, innovation and analytical thinking, and these include scientific and applied science contributions.

In summary, the scientific contributions of the candidate are related to the enrichment of existing knowledge, the application of scientific achievements in practice in the field of tourism and its improvement.

7. MAIN CRITICISMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I believe that the documents submitted by the candidate for the competition should be better described, systematized and arranged, in order to facilitate the review. A recapitulation of scientific publications is missing.

In terms of content, I recommend Dr. Silvena Yordanova to focus on research and publications in the field of tourism economics and management. Analyzing the list of publications, it is evident that only part of the publications (7 items) correspond exactly to the scientific field of the competition. In this context, it is important that the habilitation work and one of the studies – in the renowned and indexed in Scopus journal Economic Studies, are relevant to the scientific field of the competition.

Another main recommendation for her is to increase her publication activity in refereed and indexed editions in Scopus or WoS, as well as in more reputable Bulgarian scientific journals, since there are few of them in the presented list. This will also stimulate the author's citation rate.

My comments and recommendations do not change my overall positive assessment of the applicant's scientific output.

8. CONCLUSION

Dr. Silvena Yordanova participated in the competition for the academic position of "associate professor" with a sufficient volume of scientific works, incl. and an independent monograph in the scientific field of the announced competition. In addition, she has many years of experience in scientific and teaching activities. She fulfills the minimum national requirements and the requirements for occupying the requested academic position, laid down in the Regulations at the Economic Research Institute. She is a good scientist, with potential for development. Given the above, I propose to the members of the Scientific Jury that **Dr. Silvena Dencheva Yordanova be given** the academic position of "**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**" in professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty "Economics of Tourism", for which I will vote "**YES**".

22.09.2023 г.

Reviewer:

/Prof. Mariyana Bozhinova, Ph.D/