



EVALUATION REPORT

for the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor
at the University of Economics – Varna

Candidate: Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov

Prepared by: Prof. Dr. Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva
University of Economics – Varna, Professor in Professional Field 3.9 Tourism,
Scientific Specialty "Economics and Management" (Tourism),
validated in the Register of Academic Staff of NACID,
section "Habilitation Academic Staff with Scientometric Indicators",
Member of the Scientific Jury for the academic position of Associate Professor,
appointed by Order No. RD 06-7/15.01.2026.

Information about the competition. The competition was announced pursuant to Art. 57, para. 2 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Academic Staff Development Act (PPZRASRB) and the Rules for Academic Staff Development at the University of Economics – Varna, promulgated in the State Gazette, issue No. 98/18.11.2025. The position is for Associate Professor in the field of higher education 7. "Healthcare and Sports", professional field 7.6 "Sport", scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)", for the needs of the Department of "Language Training and Sport", Faculty of "Informatics".

This evaluation report has been prepared pursuant to Decision No. 3 of the first meeting of the Scientific Jury held on 22 January 2026.

1. Candidate. The sole applicant in the competition is Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov. The candidate fulfills the minimum national requirements (MNR) established in the Regulations for the Implementation of the Academic Staff Development Act, as well as the additional quantitative criteria for the academic position of Associate Professor at the University of Economics – Varna pursuant to Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Academic Staff Development Act. In two of the indicator groups under the minimum national requirements, the points declared by the candidate significantly exceed the required minimum thresholds. The same applies to the additional quantitative criteria of the University of Economics – Varna (Tables 1 and 2).

2. Background of the Candidate. Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov has held the position of Senior Lecturer in the Department of "Language Training and Sport" at the University of Economics – Varna since 2023. His academic career at the University began in 2004 in the Department of "Physical Education and Sport." His professional development has been consistently connected with the fields of sport and sports tourism. His educational background includes a Bachelor's degree in "Sport" and a Bachelor's degree in "Physical Education" from the National Sports Academy, as well as a Master's degree in "Sports



Pedagogy" from St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo. In 2015, he was awarded the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD) in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (Tourism) at the University of Economics – Varna, following the successful defense of a doctoral dissertation entitled "Enhancing the Competitiveness of the Sports Animation Product in Seaside Hotel Complexes."

Table 1. Minimum National Requirements (MNR) for the Academic Position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 7.6 "Sport" pursuant to the Academic Staff Development Act and Declared Points by Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov

Indicator Groups	Points Required under the Academic Staff Development Act (Art. 26, para. 2 and 3)	Points Declared by Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitrov
Group A	50	50
Group B	–	–
Group C	100	100
Group D	200	871.66
Group E	50	105
Total for the AP of "Associate Professor"	400	1126.66

Table 2. Additional Quantitative Requirements of the University of Economics – Varna and Declared Points by Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov

Indicator Groups	Quantitative requirements of UE – Varna (based on Art. 26, par. 5 of ZRASRB)	Points Declared by Dr. Dimitrov
Scientific papers	30	186.66
Articles and studies	80	95
Total for AP "Associate Professor"	110	281.66

The candidate's academic and professional profile demonstrates consistency and progressive development in his research career, as well as a sustainable integration between his teaching, research, and practice-oriented activities. His educational and professional achievements comply with the requirements of Art. 101 of the Rules for Academic Staff Development at the University of Economics – Varna.

3. Description of Scientific Publications. For participation in the competition for Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov has submitted a total of 41 scientific publications, including: 2 single-authored monographs (one of which constitutes the habilitation thesis) and participation in 1 collective monograph; 11 research articles and 25 conference papers, of which 8 articles and 13 conference papers are single-authored; 1 collective textbook; and 1 co-authored teaching manual (Table 3).



Table 3. Summary of the Scientific Publications Submitted by Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitrov

Type of Publication	Single-Authored	Co-authored	Total
1. Monographs	2	1	3
2. Articles	8	3	11
3. Conference papers	13	12	25
4. Textbooks	-	1	1
5. Teaching manuals	-	1	1
Total:	23	18	41

All submitted publications are directly related to the scientific specialty of the announced competition and are taken into account in the preparation of the present evaluation report. More than half of the publications (56.1%) are single-authored works, which indicates a clearly defined individual scientific contribution and independence in research activity.

The scientific publications have undergone the required peer-review process and comply with the standards of academic ethics. Thematically, they are focused on sport and sports tourism and are relevant to the announced scientific specialty. A high degree of originality and relevance of the presented results is evident, as well as methodological soundness, clarity of structure and content, and the significance of the author's conclusions and findings.

The monograph (habilitation thesis) submitted for participation in the competition (Dimitrov, D. (2025). *Sports Tourism – Trends and Development Prospects*. Varna: "Nauka i Ikonomika", Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev Library. ISBN 978-954-21-1209-9) is an independent scholarly work reviewed and discussed at the primary academic unit (Department of "Economics and Organization of Tourism"). It has been peer-reviewed by two habilitated scholars in accordance with the regulatory requirements, published by a specialized academic publisher, assigned an ISBN, and comprises 240 standard pages. The monograph is based on a comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography. The study does not reiterate already established knowledge but addresses current scientific issues at a high academic level, presented in a coherent, logically structured, and consistent manner. It is distinguished by clear structural organization, well-defined research objectives, and a systematically developed theoretical framework. The work analyzes contemporary issues in sports tourism and offers well-argued conclusions and practical recommendations for the development of the sector.

The candidate's remaining publications further complement his research profile and demonstrate consistency in the scientific thematic focus. The submitted scholarly works correspond to the scientific specialty of the announced competition for the academic position of Associate Professor.

4. Identification of Contributions. The scientific and scientific-applied contributions presented by the candidate may be regarded as well-founded. An analysis of the submitted



publications allows for the identification of significant scholarly and applied contributions, demonstrating the systematic and focused research activity of Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitrov. The scientific contributions may be summarized in several principal directions:

- expanding theoretical knowledge regarding the impact of sports activity on students' physical and cognitive performance;
- clarifying the complex set of motivational factors determining participation in physical activity and sport;
- developing and testing methodological tools for assessing physical activity and performance in a university environment;
- enriching the conceptual framework of sports animation as an element of active recreation and tourism;
- developing a methodological approach for assessing the competitiveness of the sports animation product.

The scientific-applied contributions are directed toward:

- analysis and evaluation of the socio-economic and cultural effects of organizing sports events;
- creating an applied framework for the planning and management of sports events;
- formulating a competency profile for effective sports animation activities.

These contributions are directly related to the announced scientific specialty and demonstrate both theoretical depth and practical applicability.

According to the submitted reference report, 10 of the candidate's publications have been cited a total of 16 times, which indicates a degree of academic visibility and scholarly interest in the research issues addressed by Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitrov.

5. Teaching Activity. Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitrov has more than 20 years of teaching experience, including over two decades at the University of Economics – Varna (since 2004 to the present). His teaching activity encompasses a broad range of disciplines in the fields of physical education, sports animation, and tourism, delivered in both full-time and distance learning formats. He has experience in conducting both practical seminars and lecture courses, including instruction in Russian within the specialty "International Tourism," and teaches students across all educational levels.

The candidate has supervised 23 graduate theses and actively combines his teaching responsibilities with organizational and project-related activities. A significant contribution is his leadership of three international projects under the Erasmus+ Sport programme, his role as a mentor in a UEFA programme, and his involvement in the preparation and management of representative university teams. These engagements contribute to strengthening the institutional reputation and enhancing the practical orientation of the educational process.

A substantial institutional contribution is the development of 12 curricula for the discipline "Physical Education" for the specialties "Tourism" and "International Tourism," including distance learning formats and instruction in Russian.



In summary, the candidate's teaching activity is characterized by consistency, thematic alignment with sports tourism, and active integration of research, project, and educational work, fully meeting the requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor.

6. Recommendations to the candidate. In the context of the further academic development of Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitrov, I would like to offer the following recommendations:

- ✓ to expand his publication activity in internationally peer-reviewed and indexed scientific journals in order to enhance the international visibility and recognition of his research results;
- ✓ to continue his active participation in and leadership of national and international projects, where he can further contribute with his accumulated professional experience and expertise.

7. Conclusion. Based on the comprehensive analysis of the submitted documents and scientific publications of Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, it may be concluded that the candidate fully meets the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act, its implementing regulations, and the Rules for Academic Staff Development at the University of Economics – Varna for the academic position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 7.6 "Sport", scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)".

The candidate holds the educational and scientific degree of Doctor (PhD), has occupied the academic position of Chief Assistant for more than two years, presents an original habilitation thesis and significant scientific publications, fulfills and substantially exceeds the minimum national requirements and the additional quantitative criteria of the University of Economics – Varna, and demonstrates substantial theoretical and applied scientific contributions.

All of the above provides sufficient grounds for me to express a **positive evaluation of the candidacy and to recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury award Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov the academic position of Associate Professor** in the field of higher education 7. "Healthcare and Sports", Professional Field 7.6 "Sport" scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)".

14 February 2026

Varna

Signature: .

Prof. Dr. Velina Iv. Kazandzhieva
Member of the Scientific Jury

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679



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ACADEMIC OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Georgina Lukanova
Member of the Scientific Jury

in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor
announced at the University of Economics – Varna

1. General information

Prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Georgina Georgieva Lukanova, Professional Field 3.9 Tourism, Faculty of Management, Department of Economics and Organization of Tourism, University of Economics – Varna, Bulgaria.

Grounds for this opinion: Order No. RD06-7/15.01.2026 issued by the Rector of the University of Economics – Varna.

2. Information about the Competition

The competition has been announced within the higher education field 7. “Public Health and Sport”, professional field 7.6. “Sport”, scientific specialty “Sport (Sport Tourism)”. It has been opened for the needs of the Department of Language Training and Sport, Faculty of Informatics, at the University of Economics – Varna, promulgated in the State Gazette, issue No. 98/18.11.2025, and in accordance with the decision adopted at the first meeting of the Scientific Jury held on 22.01.2026.

3. Candidate in the Competition

The sole applicant in the present competition is Senior Lecturer Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, a member of the academic staff of the Department of Language Training and Sport at the University of Economics – Varna.

The candidate meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in the higher education field 7. “Public Health and Sport”, in accordance with Art. 2b, paras. 2 and 3 of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria (ASDARB).

The candidate also meets the additional quantitative requirements of the University of Economics – Varna pursuant to Art. 2b, para. 5 of the same Act.

Furthermore, the candidate complies with the requirements set out in Art. 101 of

the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

4. Information about the Candidate (Personal Profile)

The candidate obtained the doctoral degree in 2015 at the University of Economics – Varna. He completed a Bachelor's degree in Sport at the National Sports Academy in 1998 and was awarded a Master's degree in Sport Pedagogy by St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo in 2007. During the period 2012–2015, he was enrolled in the doctoral programme Economics and Management (Tourism) at the Department of Tourism Economics and Organization at the University of Economics – Varna. At present, Dr Dimitar Dimitrov holds the position of Senior Lecturer in the Department of Language Training and Sport at the University of Economics – Varna. As a researcher and lecturer, he has developed research interests in sport and tourism, with particular emphasis on sport tourism, sport animation, physical education, animation in tourism, and specialized types of tourism.

5. Description of the Scholarly Publications

For participation in the competition, Dr Dimitrov has submitted 41 publications with a total volume of 801,49 pages, regarding whose quantitative and qualitative characteristics the following findings may be formulated:

➤ In quantitative terms, the distribution of the publications is as follows: two single-authored monographs (462 pages); contribution to one collective monograph (16 pages); eight single-authored scholarly articles with a total volume of 82 pages and three co-authored articles with a personal contribution of 8.5 pages; twenty-five conference papers, of which thirteen are single-authored (105 pages) and twelve co-authored (45,99 pages); as well as participation in one textbook and one teaching manual with a total volume of 82 pages.

➤ According to the submitted Statement of Compliance with the Minimum National Requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in the higher education field 7. "Public Health and Sport", pursuant to Art. 2b, paras. 2 and 3 of the ASDARB, Senior Lecturer Dimitar Dimitrov has accumulated a total of 881,66 points in Groups B and G, compared to a minimum requirement of 260 points.

➤ From a structural perspective, monographs, articles, and conference papers predominate (86% by page count), which may be regarded as an indicator of the maturity of the candidate's scholarly research.

➤ The submitted publications include both single-authored works and co-authored studies, indicating the capacity for independent research as well as effective academic collaboration.

➤ In terms of subject matter, the scholarly output predominantly addresses contemporary issues in management of sport tourism, sport animation in tourism, the competitiveness of the sport animation product, as well as physical education and sport – topics that correspond to the fields and specialty of the competition.

On the basis of the above considerations, the candidate's scholarly works may be

regarded as sufficient in scope and relevance to the present competition.

6. Identification of the Candidate's Research Contributions

Scientific Contributions

The main research and applied contributions of the candidate may be summarized in the following areas:

- ✓ theoretical and applied studies on the characteristics of the sport animation product as an element of the integrated tourism product;
- ✓ theoretical and applied research on contemporary forms of tourism, including sport tourism, ecotourism, and rural tourism;
- ✓ studies related to the socio-economic role of sport and sporting events in society;
- ✓ research in the field of physical education within the higher education system and student sport activity.

Citations

Dr Dimitrov has submitted a report documenting 15 identified citations, amounting to 105 points under the minimum national requirements, thereby exceeding the required minimum of 50 points.

The candidate's research profile aligns with the field and specialty of the competition.

7. Participation in Research Projects and Academic Forums

According to the submitted documentation, Dr Dimitrov has participated in three international projects and one university project. All international projects are sport-oriented and concern training and the acquisition of skills and practical experience in various sport activities. The university project addresses tourism management at the municipal level.

The candidate has submitted twenty-five conference papers, demonstrating sustained and active participation in academic events.

Additional professional achievements relevant to the competition should be noted. During the period 2015–2018, Dr Dimitrov was a member of the Refereeing Committee of the Regional Council of the Bulgarian Football Union – Varna and participated as an organizer and coordinator of various sport tournaments.

8. Teaching Activity

Dr Dimitar Dimitrov has 17 years of teaching experience – five years in school education and twelve years at the University of Economics – Varna. The submitted workload report for the past two years indicates teaching in Physical Education and seminars in Animation in Tourism and Social Psychology in Tourism. He has also taught Contemporary Forms of Tourism, Tourism Resources, and Tour Guiding, and currently delivers lectures and seminars in Specialized Types of Tourism.

The candidate's participation in the development of twelve Physical Education curricula, as well as in the preparation of one textbook and one study guide, should be positively assessed.

Dr Dimitar Dimitrov has been actively engaged in student-related activities, including organisation of sport and sport-tourism events together with the Student Council, academic mentorship within the Student Internships project, and supervision of 23 final-year students.

In my assessment, the teaching activity of Senior Lecturer Dr Dimitar Dimitrov corresponds, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, to the field and specialty of the announced competition.

9. Plagiarism

No evidence of plagiarism, inaccurate data, or improper citation practices has been identified in the candidate's research output.

10. Questions and Critical Remarks

The submitted materials do not raise any substantial critical remarks. The following recommendation is proposed with regard to the candidate's future research activity: to focus future publications on peer-reviewed journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, and to further strengthen research collaboration with colleagues from the University of Economics – Varna and other higher education institutions in Bulgaria and abroad.

11. Conclusion

In view of the presented scholarly output, teaching activity, and professional experience, Senior Lecturer Dr Dimitar Dimitrov may be considered to meet the statutory requirements and the internal criteria of the University of Economics – Varna for appointment to the academic position of Associate Professor in the higher education field 7. "Public Health and Sport", professional field 7.6. "Sport (Sport Tourism)". I therefore recommend that the Scientific Jury elect Senior Lecturer Dr Dimitar Dimitrov to the academic position of Associate Professor.

19 February 2026

Respectfully submitted,

(assoc. prof. Georgina Lukanova, PhD)

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679



ИКОНОМИЧЕСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ ВАРНА

UNIVERSITY OF NATIONAL AND WORLD ECONOMY

Вх. № Д20-225/10.02.2026

OPINION

1. General information

This opinion has been prepared by Assoc. Prof. Ivan Stoilov Stoilov, PhD, Department of Physical Education and Sport at the University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Sofia, Professional Field 7.6 Sport, in connection with a competition for occupying the academic position of “Associate Professor” in Higher Education Area 7 “Health Care and Sport”, Professional Field 7.6 Sport, Scientific Specialty “Sport (Sports Tourism)”.

I am a member of the scientific jury for the competition in accordance with Order No. RD-06-7/15.01.2026 of the Rector of the University of Economics – Varna.

2. Information about the competition

The competition has been announced for the needs of the Department of Language Education and Sport at the University of Economics – Varna, in accordance with a decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Informatics (Minutes No. 27/14.01.2026). The competition was published in the State Gazette, issue No. 98/18.11.2025.

3. Brief information about the candidate in the competition

Only one candidate has been admitted to the announced competition – Senior Lecturer Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, PhD, University of Economics – Varna.

Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov has held the academic position of Senior Lecturer at the University of Economics – Varna since 2015 to the present, within the Department of

Language Education and Sport. He holds the scientific degree “Doctor”, awarded in Scientific Specialty 05.02.18 “Economics and Management” (Tourism), Diploma No. 60 of 29.06.2015. The topic of his doctoral dissertation is “Enhancing the Competitiveness of the Sports Animation Product in Seaside Hotel Complexes.”

The candidate’s professional biography is characterized by consistent academic development and long-term teaching experience. After a period of work as a physical education teacher at Dobri Chintulov Primary School in Varna, Dimitar Dimitrov has successively held the positions of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Senior Lecturer-Doctor since 2004. His teaching activity has been carried out within the Departments of Physical Education and Sport and Language Education and Sport, covering a wide range of disciplines related to physical education, sports and tourism animation, sports tourism, and specialized forms of tourism.

The candidate’s scientific interests are focused on sport and sports tourism, sports animation, physical education, animation in tourism, specialized types of tourism, and tourism resources. These interests are reflected in active and sustainable research activity through publications, participation in scientific forums, and the development of applied research projects.

The candidate has a significant scientific output, including monographs, scientific articles, conference papers, and educational publications published in the period 2004–2025, some of which are indexed in national and international scientific databases. He has also participated as a project leader or researcher in university and international research projects related to the development of tourism, sport, and education.

4. Fulfillment of the requirements for holding the academic position

After reviewing the submitted documentation and the attached **Declaration-Statement for fulfillment of the minimum national requirements**, it can be reasonably concluded that the candidate fully meets the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor in Higher Education Area 7 “Health Care and Sport”, Professional Field 7.6 Sport, in accordance with Art. 2b, paras. 2 and 3 of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Under **Indicator Group “A”**, the candidate holds a successfully defended doctoral degree, and the required publications related to the dissertation are available, fulfilling the minimum required number of points. Under **Indicator Group “B”**, an independent habilitation work – a monograph published in 2025 – has been submitted, meeting all regulatory requirements and providing the necessary points for this group. Under **Indicator Group “G”**, the candidate significantly exceeds the minimum required number of points, presenting rich and diverse scientific output, including monographs, a book based on the doctoral dissertation, scientific articles, and conference papers published in peer-reviewed scientific journals and collective volumes. Under **Indicator Group “D”**, citations in monographs, collective volumes, and scientific journals are presented and correctly reported in accordance with the legal requirements and the additional guidelines of the National Centre for Information and Documentation (NACID).

At the same time, the candidate fulfills the additional quantitative requirements of the University of Economics – Varna under Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Act, as well as the requirements of Art. 101 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna. In summary, the candidate fully meets all legal and institutional requirements for participation in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor.

5. Brief characterization of the submitted scientific works/publications

For participation in the competition for Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, PhD, has submitted a total of 41 scientific works, including: one independent monograph – habilitation work; one independent monograph; one collective monograph; two textbooks and teaching aids; eleven scientific articles; and twenty-five conference papers. The total volume of the scientific works amounts to 801.49 pages.

The scientific works submitted by the candidate are characterized by substantial volume, clearly structured content, and thematic consistency. They cover a broad time period and demonstrate sustainable development of his scientific interests in the fields of sport, sports tourism, sports animation, physical education, and tourism resources.

From a quantitative perspective, the scientific output includes monographs, a book

based on a doctoral dissertation, scientific articles, conference papers, textbooks, and teaching aids, with a significant portion of the works being single-authored and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals and collective volumes. The total number and volume of publications significantly exceed the minimum requirements for the competition for Associate Professor. From a qualitative perspective, the works are characterized by clearly defined objectives, appropriate use of scientific methodology, adequate research tools, and well-argued conclusions. The studies combine theoretical analysis with practical orientation and contribute to the enrichment of scientific knowledge in the relevant professional field. In terms of language and style, the scientific works comply with the requirements of Art. 112, para. 2 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

In summary, the candidate's scientific works are distinguished by high quality, thematic consistency, and academic integrity and fully meet the requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor.

6. Synthesized evaluation of the main scientific and applied contributions of the candidate

The actual scientific contributions of Senior Lecturer Dimitar Dimitrov, PhD, may be synthesized in the following areas:

1. In the field of physical education and sport in higher education, contributions with pronounced empirical and applied character have been achieved. Scientifically substantiated relationships between physical activity, health status, and cognitive performance of students have been identified, and methodologies for assessment, monitoring, and optimization of university physical education programs have been developed and tested. These results have both theoretical value and direct practical applicability in the academic environment.
2. In studies addressing sport as a social phenomenon, the candidate contributes to the expansion of scientific knowledge through socio-economic, institutional, and regulatory analyses. The role of sport as a factor for social development, cultural identity, and public policy has been substantiated, including through analysis of

sports events and international sports practices.

3. A significant contribution is made in the development of the issue of the sports animation product in tourism. Original models and methodologies for assessing the competitiveness of sports animation activities have been created, including quantitative tools (integral coefficient) applicable in the management and strategic planning of tourist complexes.
4. In the field of sports tourism and specialized types of tourism, conceptual models, definitions, and classifications have been formulated, enriching the theoretical framework of the discipline. Approaches for integrating sports events as tourism products, reducing seasonality, and achieving sustainable development of tourist destinations have been developed.
5. Dimitar Dimitrov has made a significant applied contribution in the field of education in sports animation and sports tourism, participating in the development and updating of textbooks and teaching aids, as well as in the creation of methodological guidelines, models, and algorithms supporting the quality of teaching and practical training of students.

The citation of the candidate's scientific works demonstrates their recognition and scientific significance. Citations in monographs, collective volumes, and peer-reviewed scientific journals are presented and reported in accordance with regulatory requirements.

7. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

The candidate has actively participated in research and applied research projects thematically related to the announced competition in Professional Field 7.6 Sport, with results realized through scientific publications, analyses, and practical developments. He regularly participates in national and international scientific forums, including with conference papers and publications in peer-reviewed journals, as well as in organizational,

consultancy, and expert activities. Overall, his participation is characterized by sustainability, thematic relevance, and practical applicability, contributing to his recognition within the research community.

8. Teaching activity

The candidate has long-standing teaching experience in higher education at the University of Economics – Varna, actively participating in the education of undergraduate students in both full-time and distance learning formats. His teaching activity includes lectures and practical classes in disciplines related to physical education, sport, sports animation, and sports tourism. The total classroom workload for the reviewed period amounts to 1,291 hours, indicating a high level of teaching engagement, participation in the education of a significant number of students, and a sustainable contribution to the undergraduate educational process.

9. Plagiarism

No signals of plagiarism have been received, and no plagiarism has been established.

10. Main critical remarks, questions, and recommendations

The submitted scientific works are characterized by thematic consistency, solid argumentation, and practical orientation. It is recommended that in the future the scientific activity of Dimitar Dimitrov be further oriented toward publications indexed in the international databases Scopus and Web of Science.

11. Conclusion

The topics of the publications fully correspond to the subject of the announced competition. The candidate's scientific and teaching activities, as well as the presented scientometric data, fully satisfy the requirements of the Act on the Development of the

Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

No signals of plagiarism have been received, and none has been established.

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the candidate's scientific and teaching activity, as well as my personal impressions, I confidently propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to award Senior Lecturer Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, PhD, the academic title "Associate Professor" in Higher Education Area 7 "Health Care and Sport", Professional Field 7.6 Sport, Scientific Specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)".

26 January 2026, Sofia

Signature:

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

/Assoc. Prof. Ivan Stoilov Stoilov, PhD/

OPINION STATEMENT

By: Assoc.Prof. *Ralitsa Tsekova Arsova*, UNWE – Sofia, 7.6. Sport
Regarding: Competition for Associate Professor in the professional field 7.6. Sport, scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)" at the University of Economics – Varna

1. Information about the competition

The competition was announced for the needs of the Department of Language Training and Sports at the University of Economics - Varna, published in the State Gazette No. 98 of 18.11.2025.

I participate in the scientific jury of the competition according to Order No. ПД 06-7/15.01.2026 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna.

2. Brief information about the participants in the competition

One candidate participated in the competition – Senior Lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, Department of Language Training and Sport, at the University of Economics - Varna.

Senior Lecturer Dimitar Dimitrov graduated from the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski" in 1998, with a Bachelor's degree in sports and physical education. In 2007, he obtained a Master's degree in "Sports Pedagogy" from the Veliko Tarnovo University.

After defending his dissertation work "Increasing the Competitiveness of the Sports Animation Product in Seaside Hotel Complexes", in 2007 he acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (Tourism) at the University of Economics - Varna.

In the same year, he was appointed a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Physical Education and Sports, and from 2023 has been working in the Department of Language Training and Sports at the University of Economics - Varna.

Throughout his professional career, Dimitar Dimitrov has progressed through all stages of academic and professional development, establishing himself as a sports specialist — a professional football player, a physical education teacher, and currently a leading lecturer at the University of Economics – Varna.

The activities of Senior Lecturer Dimitar Dimitrov include teaching, educational and methodological work, scientific and research activities, sports and pedagogical activities, coaching and organizational work in the field of physical education and sports - sports animation, modern types of tourism, tourist resources, social psychology in tourism, etc.

He organizes and prepares competitors for the representative teams in football, mini football and beach football of the University of Economics - Varna.

Senior Lecturer Dimitar Dimitrov works actively with students. He is the supervisor of 23 diploma theses. He has organized, together with the Student Council, a number of discussions and seminars with famous Bulgarian athletes.

He is the leader of significant international educational projects, international sports tournaments, sports and tourism events, outings, etc. Dimitar Dimitrov was a member of the Referees' Commission of the BFU Zonal Council in the period 2015-2018.

He participated in various national and international educational projects.

3. Fulfillment of the requirements for holding the academic position

3.1. Fulfillment of quantitative requirements

Senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov has submitted a reference documentation certifying the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position *Associate Professor* at the University of Economics - Varna in the professional field 7.6. Sport, scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)". The documentation submitted for the competition fully complies with the national requirements. The total number of points, calculated on the basis of the Card for fulfillment of the minimum national requirements amounts to **1156.66 points**.

4. Evaluation of the teaching and training activities

Dimitar Dimitrov is a well-established, highly qualified and respected lecturer in university circles within many years of experience. His teaching, training and coaching activities are primarily focused on the field of physical education and sports - sports animation, modern types of tourism, tourist resources, social psychology in tourism, football, mini football, beach football, etc.

He works actively with students, organizing and conducting discussions and seminars with prominent Bulgarian athletes, with the topics of the meetings being current and related to sports, education, motivation, etc. He supervised 23 graduate students and has developed 12 curricula for the discipline *Physical Education*.

5. Participation in scientific projects and forums

The number of scientific projects and forums in which Dimitar Dimitrov has participated and led is significant. They are related to science, sports, education, student, youth and sports activities.

Senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov has also led international projects funded by the European Union in the field of sports and tourism.

6. Brief description of the presented scientific works/publications

For the purposes of the competition, senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov has submitted a total of 41 scientific works, including 2 monographs, a textbook, a study guide, 11 scientific articles, 4 of which are published in English, as well as 25 scientific papers, 3 of which are in English. Independent authorship is declared for 21 publications.

All 41 research works submitted for review represent the outcome of the candidate's scientific, teaching, coaching, and competitive experience. They may be classified into the following main thematic areas:

1. Research related to physical education and sports in the higher education system – addressing issues of physical development, performance, motivation, and challenges in the educational process. Theoretical and applied knowledge concerning the mechanisms influencing sports performance in an international context has been expanded. The scientific understanding of the interrelationships between sport, culture, economics, and public policy has been further enriched.

2. Research in sports tourism, specialized forms of tourism, and tourism resources – providing a foundation for strategic planning in sports tourism. The studies support marketing segmentation and the development of specialized tourism products. Their

practical application is oriented toward social and cultural integration policies and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Strategies for destination development through sports activities and integration with the local economy are proposed, along with strategic guidelines for public and private organizations regarding investment and the development of sports infrastructure.

3. Research in sports animation and animation in tourism – achieving significant results in enriching the content of textbooks and teaching materials through the application of diverse approaches to presenting theoretical concepts, with the aim of improving student comprehension. Part of the educational materials included in the textbook and teaching aids on *Sports Animation* constitute the author's personal contribution. The theoretical foundations of sports animation have been updated, and a comprehensive conceptual framework for the organization of sports, recreational, and sports-entertainment activities in tourism has been developed, taking into account contemporary trends, infrastructural changes, and the emergence of new sports.

4. The sports animation product as an element of the tourist offer – guidelines are presented for the development of personalized animation products that enhance the competitiveness of tourist destinations. A foundation is established for the strategic management of activities oriented toward the needs of different categories of tourists. A comprehensive methodology for assessing the competitiveness of the sports animation product has been developed.

The monographic works "*Sports Tourism – Trends and Development Prospects*" and "*Tourism Profiling of the Municipality of Dalgopol*" are particularly noteworthy, as they present in-depth research with a strong theoretical, methodological, and applied focus, as well as a high level of practical applicability of the results.

7. Synthesized assessment of the candidate's main scientific and applied scientific contributions

The scientific works submitted for review present the main results of candidate's individual and co-authored research, which enrich scientific knowledge in the Bulgarian scientific and applied literature in the field of sports, sports tourism, sports animation, physical education, animation in tourism, specialized types of tourism, tourist resources, etc. The data obtained from the conducted research have been correctly subjected to statistical processing, and the analyses, conclusions, and recommendations presented are thorough, well-founded, and methodologically sound.

I accept the scientific contributions claimed by senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov as substantial and correctly formulated based on the research conducted and presented in scientific publications.

8. Plagiarism.

No plagiarism, incorrect data or improper citation of scientific sources has been identified.

9. Main critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks or recommendations.

10. Conclusion

The scientific output of senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, submitted for participation in the competition fully complies with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria in the Republic of Bulgaria, and the Regulations for its implementation concerning the acquisition of academic degrees and the holding academic positions.

The recognized contributions, together with the candidate's overall teaching, coaching and research activities define him as a highly qualified and recognized teacher and researcher in the thematic field of the competition for the academic position of *Associate Professor*.

Based on the information presented in the opinion, I give my positive vote for senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov to be appointed to the academic position of *Associate Professor* in the professional field 7.6. Sport, scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)" at the University of Economics - Varna.

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

10.02.2026
Sofia

Reviewer:

/Assoc.Prof. Ralitsa Arsova, Dr. /

O N T I O N

**ON THE COMPETITION FOR THE ACADEMIC POSITION "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR",
ANNOUNCED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS-VARNA**

1. General information

Prepared by the opinion: Prof. Dr. Bratoy Koprinarov, Burgas State University "Prof. Dr. Assoc. Prof. Zlatarov" - Burgas.

Grounds for preparing the opinion: Order of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna, No. RD06-7/15.01.2026 and Decision of the Academic Council meeting of 22.01.2026.

2. Data on the competition

The competition was announced in the State Gazette, issue 98/18.11.2025, for the needs of the University of Economics - Varna, professional field 7.6. "Sport", scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)"

3. Candidate for the competition

The only candidate for the competition is senior lecturer "doctor", Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, lecturer in the department "Language Education and Sport". Dr. Dimitrov graduated from the National Sports Academy - Sofia, OKS "Bachelor" / specialty "Sport" and OKS "Master" in the specialty "Sports Pedagogy" at Veliko Tarnovo University "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" - Faculty of Pedagogy. In 2015, the candidate acquired the ONS "doctor" in the scientific specialty 05.02.18. "Economics and Management" (tourism), (diploma No. 60 of 29.06.2015). Topic of the dissertation: "Increasing the competitiveness of the sports animation product in seaside hotel complexes."

The candidate for the competition has been a lecturer since 2004 at the Varna University of Economics, senior lecturer - 2007 and "doctor" since 2015.

4. Description of scientific works

In the competition for associate professor, senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov has presented 41 scientific publications, including 2 independent monographs (462 pages), co-author in 1 monograph (16 pages), 11 articles (3 independent, 8 co-author with a total volume of 90 pages), 25 scientific reports (13 independent; 12 co-author with a total volume of 151 pages) and co-authorship in 2 textbooks (82 pages). The total volume of scientific publications amounts to 801.5 pages.

The scientific interests of Dr. D. Dimitrov, which have found expression in his scientific production, are mainly focused on four areas: sports in the higher education system; sports and sports events as a social phenomenon; sports animation product as an element of the tourist offer; sports tourism as an element of specialized types of tourism.

All scientific publications submitted for review were published after the defense of a dissertation for obtaining the ONS "doctor".

The presented systematized characteristic and assessment of the scientific activity of Dr. Dimitrov gives me grounds for the conclusion that it meets the requirements of Art. 24 of the ZRASRB and Art. 71 of the Rules for the conditions and procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at the University of Varna.

5. Identification of contributions

The scientific achievements of a contribution nature are concentrated mainly in the monographic works "Sports tourism - trends and prospects for development". Varna: "Science and Economics", Library "Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev". ISBN 978-954-21-1209-9 2025, and "Increasing the competitiveness of the sports animation product in the seaside hotel complexes: a monographic study. Varna: "FIL" OOD. (222 pages) ISBN 978-954-9741-65-0, but are also present in the scientific articles and reports presented by Dr. Dimitrov. In the scientific works we can highlight the following significant contributions of a scientific and practically applied nature:

- Based on empirical data, a positive relationship has been scientifically proven between regular physical activity, physical ability, health status and cognitive functions of students;
- A systematization of the factors motivating students towards physical activity and sports has been made, identifying social, psychological, material and institutional determinants influencing the motivation for participation.
- Systems for assessing and monitoring student physical activity have been developed, which allow tracking the level of participation and progress in sports activities. Exemplary models for assessing the success rate in physical education have been derived, guaranteeing objectivity, transparency and stimulating regular participation in sports activities.
- Approaches have been developed to increase motivation and form sustainable habits for independent sports activities among students.
- A conceptual and applied basis for planning and organizing sports events at the local, national and European levels has been developed. Guidelines for integrating sports events as a factor for economic, cultural and social development have been formulated, in accordance with the strategic priorities of modern public policies.
- The theoretical role of sports animation in active recreation and in the development of SPA and wellness tourism has been clarified. The understanding of the motivation and consumer behavior of tourists when consuming animation products has been expanded.
- A conceptual framework for integrating animation activities into individualized tourist services has been defined - a key strategic tool for increasing satisfaction. Practical models for integrating sports animation into SPA and wellness programs have been proposed.

- A comprehensive methodology for assessing the competitiveness of the sports animation product has been created. Critical areas for analysis have been determined: human resources, material base, diversity of forms and management. An author's model for quantitative measurement has been developed using an integral coefficient, combining a mathematical and managerial approach, which is applicable as a self-assessment tool in hotel complexes.

- The origin and evolution of sports tourism have been historically clarified. A systematic review of definitions has been conducted and an author's definition has been proposed. Key characteristics and factors of sports tourism are identified.

- Sports tourism and the concept of the sports tourist are defined. The mutual influence between sports and tourism is analyzed, as well as the forms of sports tourism. The main factors, motivations and social effects of sports tourism are identified.

- The role of sports events as tourist products is theoretically expanded. The motivations and experiences of spectators are studied. Sport is analyzed as a cultural tourist attraction and a bearer of local identity.

- The theoretical basis of sports animation is updated, and a comprehensive conceptual framework for the organization of sports, recreational and sports-entertainment activities in tourism is presented, taking into account modern trends, changes in infrastructure and the emergence of new sports.

From the presented reference of Dr. Dimitrov, 16 citations of 10 scientific publications are prominent, which can be assessed positively from the point of view of the significance of the research and the popularity of the candidate for associate professor.

6. Participation in scientific projects and scientific forums

Senior lecturer Dr. D. Dimitrov has participated in a university project on the topic "Tourism profiling of the municipality of Dalgopol" financed with a subsidy from the state budget, Contract NIR PNI 23/2018.

The candidate meets the minimum national requirements and the minimum requirements of the University of Varna for occupying the academic position of "associate professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 7.6. "Sports", scientific specialty "Sports (Sports tourism)". According to Art. 26 of the ZRASRB, Dr. Dimitrov forms the following performance by group of indicators: in group "B" he collects 100 points, in group "G" - 871 points (with a required minimum of 200 points), in group "E" - 105 points (with a required minimum of 50 points).

In general, the scientific production is sufficient in volume and is suitable in structure and quality for occupying the academic position of "associate professor" in the scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)"

7. Teaching work

Senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov annually has the required teaching workload of over 600 teaching hours, which is evident from the reference attached to the documents. Dr. Dimitrov leads seminars and lectures in the following academic disciplines: "Physical Education and Sports", "Physical Education and Sports Animation", "Modern Types of Tourism", "Tourist Resources", "Excursion Leadership", "Specialized Types of Tourism" and "Physical Education and Sports". "Social Psychology, etc. Co-author of 2 textbooks. Until the announcement of the competition, the candidate was the scientific supervisor of 23 diploma theses.

Senior lecturer Dr. Dimitrov actively works with students as an academic mentor in practical training under the national project of the Ministry of Education and Science "Student Practices" phase I and phase II. He actively participates in the organization of sports and tourism events at the University of Varna.

In summary, the candidate's teaching and teaching activities are in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Varna.

8. Plagiarism

In the documents and scientific publications provided by senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Dimitrov, I have not noticed any texts that would establish incorrectly used scientific works or plagiarism.

9. Critical remarks

I have no specific remarks regarding the scientific research and teaching activities of Dr. Dimitrov. I recommend that his future publication activity be directed to publications and forums in the country and abroad registered in Scopus and WoS.

10. Conclusion

The analysis of the qualification, research and teaching activities of senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov, his professional development and scientific achievements in the scientific specialty "Sport (Sports tourism)" give me reason to give a positive assessment of the overall activity of the candidate. Art. 24 of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 53 of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the University of Varna for holding the academic position of "associate professor" have been fulfilled.

Based on the above, I propose to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury for the competition to elect senior lecturer Dr. Dimitar Stoilov Dimitrov to the academic position of "associate professor" in the professional field 7.6. "Sport", scientific specialty "Sport (Sports Tourism)".

Burgas
06.02.2026

Prepared the opinion:
(Prof. Dr. Brato

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