

**REVIEW**

Ex. № 2210-925/08.08.2022

regarding the competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field, 3.9. Tourism , scientific specialty: "Economics and Management (Tourism)"

**Reviewer:** Prof. Stoyan Marinov, PhD; University of Economics – Varna; Scientific specialty „Economics and Organization of Tourism Department”, field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Tourism)".

This review is prepared on the basis of Order №: 06-83/05.05.2022 from the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna (UE-Varna) for appointing the Scientific Jury regarding the competition for the academic position “Professor” in the professional field 3.9. Tourism, Scientific specialty „Economics and and Management (Tourism)" announced in the State Gazette, no. 27 of 04/05/2022 and Minutes from a meeting of the Scientific Jury, held on 06/13/2022, for electing a chairman and assigning reviewers for the competition.

The review is prepared according to the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for its implementation (RILDASRB) and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at UE-Varna.

**1. Summary of the presented materials**

The only candidate who has submitted documents for the announced competition is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva from the UE-Varna.

The presented by the applicant set of materials and documents are in accordance with the requirements of LDASRB, RILDASRB and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at UE-Varna.

**7. Biographical data of the candidate**

Velina Kazanzhieva studied at the High School with Western Language Teaching “Zachary Stoyanov” - Sliven specializing in French language from 1985 to 1990. She studied at the University of Economics – Varna from 1990 to 1995, obtaining a Master’s degree in the field of Tourism.



In the period 2008-2011, Velina Kazandzhieva was a doctoral student of independent training at the "Economics and Organization of Tourism" department. She defended a dissertation on the topic: "Influence of e-commerce on the intermediary activity of travel agencies in the Republic of Bulgaria" and obtained a doctorate from the National Academy of Sciences in the scientific specialty 05.02.18. "Economics and Management (Tourism)". The candidate has participated in short-term training courses on the following topics: "Requirements of the Consumer Protection Act when offering services"; "Multimedia presentations - MS PowerPoint, Prezi, Adobe Photoshop"; "Improving English language skills at level B 1+"; "ICT in the educational process and working in an e-environment". The candidate is proficient at French, English and Russian.

Velina Kazandzhieva began her professional career in 1996 at UE-Varna as a lecturer in the Department of "Economics and Organization of Tourism", where since 2014 she holds the position of "associate professor" in PF 3.9 Tourism, Scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)".

Since 2013, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva has participated in a total of 8 scientific and applied projects and has led 4 projects for the development of empirical parts of doctoral dissertations.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva actively participates in various working and expert groups - for the preparation of reports for the procedure for PAMC in UE-Varna; for the preparation of a project proposal for the creation of a "Scientific-implementation institute for innovations in tourism"; according to procedures for program accreditation of the professional field "3.9 Tourism" under contracts with NEAA; for amendments and additions to the Ordinance on education and professional qualification for acquiring legal capacity for the profession "Tour guide". She is a member of the Operational Commission for Coordination and Control at UE-Varna

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva has participated in *social activities* related to her membership in the Union of Scientists - Varna, Section "Economic Sciences", Varna Chamber of Tourism and the Union of Bulgarian Tourist Guides.

## **8. Evaluation of the educational and pedagogical activity of the candidate**

The educational and pedagogical activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva is concentrated in UE-Varna, while at the same time she has been a part-time teacher at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv, at the CPE "Knowledge and Business", at the Institute for Electronic Business and Culture - Varna and at the Center for continuing education at UE -Varna.

The candidate has developed study programs and lecture courses in the disciplines "Digitalization in Tourism" and "Electronic Business in Tourism" (for the specialty "Tourism", EQD "Bachelor").

At the EQD "Bachelor", Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva teaches the following courses: "Introduction to Tourism"; "Travel agencies and transport in tourism"; "Tour Guiding"; "E-business in tourism". The total annual classroom occupancy exceeds 400 hours.

At the Educational and Qualification Degree EQD "Master" she teaches the disciplines "Macro-regulation of the tourism business" (until academic year 2015/2016), "Regulation of the international tourism business", "Tour operator, agency and transport activity in tourism" with a total annual classroom occupancy of over 400 hours.

The candidate led lectures in the specialty "International tourism (Russian-taught courses)", educational and qualification degree "Bachelor" in the disciplines: "Introduction to tourism"; "Travel agency and transport in tourism"; "Tour Guiding"; "Service management in tourism"; "E-business in tourism".

The candidate's work with students includes scientific supervision of over 150 diploma theses, supervision of 96 students, part of the "Student Practices" project, organizing and conducting traveling seminars.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva has supervised 6 doctoral students, 3 of whom have successfully defended their thesis.

The candidate has given lectures under the Erasmus program at the University of Latvia in Riga and at the Graduate School of Economics and Management at the University of Strasbourg.

## **9. Evaluation of the obtained scientific and applied scientific work of the candidate**



Associate Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva has attached a list of a total of **45 publications**. The list includes **1 independent monograph, 3 collective monographs, 1 independent and two co-authored studies in English, 15 scientific articles** (8 independent and 7 co-authored, 5 of which in English and 1 in Russian), **17 reports** (12 independent and 5 co-authored, 4 of which in English), **4 co-authored textbooks**.

The papers accepted for review have a total volume of **1212** printed pages, structured by type as shown in Table 1.

**Table № 1**

**Type and volume of peer-reviewed publications**

№	Type of publications	Number	Number of pages	Relative share in %
1	Monographs	4	495	40,8
2	Studies in refereed editions	3	57	4,7
3	Articles	15	166	13,7
4	Reports	17	180	14,9
5	Textbooks and teaching handbooks	4	282	23,3
6	Other publications	2	32	2,6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1212</b>	<b>100,0</b>

In structural terms, the participation in monographs prevails in terms of pages with a share of 40.8%, followed by textbooks with a total share of 23.3%.

Of all 45 peer-reviewed publications, 23 (51%) are independent. From a total of 22 collective publications, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva is the first co-author in 11 (50%) and is the second or next co-author in the rest.

Thirteen of the papers were published in a foreign language- 12 in English and 1 in Russian. Three of the publications are indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus databases.

The content of the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva shows that the author mainly works in four thematic areas: *digitization in tourism, specialized sustainable types of tourism, regulation of tourism business and tour guiding*.

In summary, the content of the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva proves that the author has significant contributions in the following areas:

**First, *digitization in tourism*** (publications from the attached list with N: 1.1; 2.1; 5.4; 6.5; 7.6; 8.1; 9.2; 12.5; 13.6; 18.8; 23.1; 25.3; 26.4; 31.9)

The habilitation monographic work of the candidate provides significant applied scientific contributions in this field. (Kazandzhieva, V. 2021. *Concept and opportunities for the development of e-tourism*. Varna: Science and Economics (Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev Library; Book 67). The author offers a complete theoretical systematization of the essence and features of e-tourism. She argumentatively identifies the opportunities for the development of e-tourism in Bulgaria.

In the studies, articles and reports corresponding to the subject of the habilitation thesis, Associate Professor Dr. Kazandzhieva contributes to:

- Tracking the changes in the distribution system of tourism as a result of the use of new information technologies;
- Revealing the current and projecting the future changes in tourism technology at the micro level (tourism enterprise) and macro level (tourism destination) as a result of the implementation of digital applications such as CRS, augmented reality, IoT, big databases and artificial intelligence;
- Investigating the emergence, nature and development of dynamic tourist packaging based on integrated tourist information systems. Deriving the trends of consumer demand for the dynamic tourism package;
- Formulating recommendations for the use of smart technologies for the sustainable development of the tourism destination and management of the tourist flow;
- Researching and evaluating consumer attitudes and perceptions towards automation and robotization of distribution and service in tourism.

**Second, *specialized types of sustainable tourism*** (publications 3.2; 10.3; 14.7; 16.9; 18.11; 19.12; 20.13; 22.15; 29.7; 33.11; 38.16)

In her publications, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva pays special attention to the development of specialized types of sustainable tourism – ecological; nature-friendly; incentive; educational; youthful; "slow"; voluntary; cultural; creative; spa and wellness tourism. The author contributes to:

- Revealing the features and improving the development technology of the specified specialized types of tourism;



- Designing routes and programs for the development of the observed types of tourism in destination Bulgaria;

**Third, *tourism business competitiveness and regulation*** (publications 4.3; 25.13; 36.14; 37.15; 39.17; 43.4)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva researches theoretically and systematizes the tools for regulating the tourism business at national and international level. The author's contribution is the interpretation of the role and importance of legal, social, fiscal, currency, customs, visa and other regimes and regulators in relation to the tourism industry.

Scientific and applied contributions in this field direction are:

- Assessment of the conditions and factors of the meso-environment when updating the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria 2014-2030;

- Study and analysis of the macro environment, and evaluation of the competitiveness of the destination Varna during the implementation of the Tourism Development Program on the territory of the municipality 2014-2020.

**Fourth, *tour guiding*** (publications 27.5; 28.6; 42.3)

The candidate investigates the process of the tour guide activity regarding the role of the tour guide and the creation of quality tourist routes. Her contributions are:

- Specifying the tasks of the tour guide and designing the steps to settle complaints effectively during and after the stay of tourists in tourist destinations and create loyal customers in this way;

- Developing ideas for improving the process of preparation and organization of interpretive tourist routes in the country on the basis of realized specific field studies of tour guiding in Bulgaria.

The content of the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva proves that the theoretical and theoretical-applied researches of the author correspond closely with the problem of tourism in its substantive and technological aspect.

The attached reference lists 161 documented citations of the candidate's publications by Bulgarian authors and foreign authors, 31 of which are in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in Scopus.

## **5. Critical remarks and recommendations to the candidate**

I have known Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva as a student and teacher in the "Tourism" department at UE-Varna for over 27 years. The candidate possesses the indisputable qualities of a conscientious, persistent, strict, correct, thorough and collegial researcher, highly valued by the students and fellow teachers and employees at UE -Varna.

The peer-reviewed scientific works give reason to recommend the author to expand her research activity on digitalization in tourism, to determine its connection with the increase of the economic efficiency and competitiveness of tourism enterprises and destinations.

## **6. Conclusion**

According to the presented documents and the scientific and teaching achievements, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva meets the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB and Regulations for the development of the academic staff of UE-Varna for holding the position of "professor", namely:

1. She has obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".
2. She has held the academic position of "Associate Professor" at UE-Varna for 8 academic years.
3. A total of 45 publications unrelated to the first habilitation, including habilitation work in the form of an independent monograph, were presented and accepted for evaluation.
4. She has 12 publications in international editions in a foreign language.
5. 161 citations of the candidate's works by other authors in Bulgaria and abroad are documented.



6. She gives lectures on academic disciplines in the EQD "Bachelor" and EQD "Master", which are directly related to the field of the competition.

7. She has published textbooks and teaching aids on the main subjects she teaches.

8. She has participated in 8 scientific and applied projects.

9. She is a member of 3 non-governmental organizations. Exceeds more than twice the minimum national requirements under Art. 2.b, para. 2 and 3, respectively the requirements under Art. 2.b, para. 5 of LDASRB. The candidate declares a total of 1267,4 points with a required minimum of 580 points, completing the requirements of all groups (group A - achieved 80 points from the required 80 points; group B - achieved 100 points from the required 100 points; group G - achieved 437,4 points from the required 200 points, group D - achieved 380 points from the required 100 points, group E - achieved 270 points from the required 100 points).

10. Fulfills all indicators of the quantitative requirements for occupying the academic position of "Professor" at UE - Varna on the basis of Art. 2b, para. 5 of LDASRB and according to Art. 77, item 5 of Regulations for the development of the academic staff of UE-Varna (in force from 01.07.2021), declaring 1062.4 points from the required 275 points.

11. There is no legally proven plagiarism in the scientific works.

The achievements of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva in the scientific-applied and educational-pedagogical activity are reasons to give without any reservation a positive assessment and to recommend her for acquiring the academic position "Professor" at UE-Varna in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.9 Tourism, scientific major: "Economics and Management (Tourism)"

08.08. 2022.

Varna

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

Reviewer: .

Prof. S. Marinox, PhD



ИКОНОМИЧЕСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ ВАРНА
Вх. № <u>ПД 20-942/11.08.2022</u>

## REVIEW

**for acquiring the academic position "PROFESSOR" according to a contest announced by the University of Economics – Varna**

**1. Reviewer:** Prof. Tanya Dabeva, PhD, department of Economics and organization of tourism, University of Economics - Varna, scientific area 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)";

**Reason for writing the review:** Order No. ПД 06-83/05.05.2022 of the Rector of the University of Economics – Varna and decision of the meeting of the Scientific Jury from 05.05.2022;

**2. Information about the contest:** The contest has been announced for the needs of the Department "Economics and Organization of Tourism", Faculty "Management" at the University of Economics - Varna, respectively scientific area 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional direction 3.9. Tourism; scientific specialty "Economics and management (Tourism)". The contest was announced, in accordance with the requirements, in the "State Gazette", issue 27/05.04.2022.

**3. Candidate:** The only candidate for the contest announced for the needs of the Department of "Economics and Organization" is assoc. prof. Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva, PhD, a member of the department "Economics and Organization of Tourism";

### **4. Personal characteristics of the candidate**

Assoc. prof. V. Kazandzhieva, completed her secondary education at Zahariy Stoyanov High School of Western Languages - Sliven, with French. She obtained a master's degree in Tourism in 1995 from Varna University of Economics. In the period between 2008 and 2011, she was a

PhD student in independent training at the Department of Economics and Organization of Tourism, and in 2012 she received the degree "Doctor" in a scientific specialty 05.02.18 "Economics and management" (Tourism). The topic of her dissertation is : "Influence of e-commerce on mediation activities of travel agencies in the Republic of Bulgaria" (Diploma No. 004/ 30.01.2012).

Assoc. prof. Kazandzhieva's professional activity takes place entirely at Varna University of Economics, where she joined as an assistant in February 1996. She successively moved through the positions of assistant and chief assistant, and in 2014 she was awarded AD "associate professor" under PN 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)" - certificate No. ДЮ33/26.05.2014.

Assoc. prof. V. Kazandzhieva is an established teacher with extensive professional experience - 26 years, whose activities, knowledge and skills are highly valued by colleagues, PhD students and students. She conducts lectures and seminars in regular, distance and online forms of education in the bachelor programs of Tourism and International Economic Relations. The courses include "Introduction to Tourism"; "Travel agencies and transport in tourism"; "Tour guide"; "E-business in tourism"; "Academic Studies" (from academic year 2020/2021), as well as the disciplines "Introduction to Tourism"; "Travel agencies and transport in tourism"; "Excursions", " Management of services in tourism"; "E-business in Tourism" in the bachelor program International Tourism ( studies are held in Russian). She also teaches "Regulation of International Tourism Business"; "Macro-regulation of the tourism business" (up to academic year 2015/2016); "Tour operator, agency and transport activities in tourism" (from the academic year 2021/2022) in the master program International Tourism Business. She also supervises the discipline "Economics of Tourism" at the doctoral program of the Department of Economy and organization of tourism. Assoc.prof. Kazandzhieva enriches her professional experience with other teaching activities. She is a part-time teacher with a lecture course called " Regulation of the International Tourism Business" for master's students at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv, Department of "Tourism". She is also a part-time teacher with lectures and seminars at the Professional Education center "Knowledge and Business" at the Institute for Electronic Business and Culture – Varna. She supervises the disciplines "Introduction to Tourism", "Transport, Tour Operator and Travel Agency Activities" and "Management of tour operator

activity". She also participated in two teaching mobilities within the Erasmus program-in 2011 at the Higher School of Economics and Management, Strasbourg and in 2013 - at the University of Latvia, Riga.

Assoc. prof. V. Kazandzhieva actively and responsibly works with students and PhD students. She is the supervisor of over 150 bachelor and master theses; she is an academic mentor to 96 students for the project "Student Practices"; she is the research supervisor of 6 PhD students. 3 of them have already successfully defended their "doctoral" degree.

Along with her teaching activities, Associate Professor Kazandzhieva carries out in-depth scientific research in the field of tourism, as evidenced by her publications. She is involved in eight research projects. She is project manager of one and team member in three university projects and expert in four national ones. She is the supervisor of four projects dedicated to the development of empirical parts of doctoral theses.

Assoc. prof. Kazandzhieva strives to continuously improve her professional qualification by participating in various trainings and courses. She is a member of the Union of Scientists - Varna, as well as of the Varna tourism chamber. She speaks French, English and Russian. As a responsible employee, she is a member of a number of committees related to the management process at University of Economics –Varna and the Faculty of Management.

The presented short personal characteristics of the candidate prove that all the formal requirements are met and that he has the right to participate in the contest.

## **5. Quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the presented scientific works**

The presented scientific publications in general and the ones chosen for the contest testify to the scientific interests of Assoc. prof. V. Kazandzhieva. Her studies are mainly focused on the field of tourism economy and management, tour operator and tourist agency activity, tourist transport, tour guiding, tourism regulation, sustainable tourism, specialized types of tourism, e-business in tourism, influence of modern technologies on the development of tourism, etc.

The scientific works of the contest are diverse, both in terms of type and in terms of subject. In summary, their structure is as follows:

## SUMMARY TABLE OF THE PRESENTED SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

№	Type of scientific publication	Individual		Co-author		Total	
		Number	Pages	Number	Pages	Number	Pages
1.	Monographs	1	271	3	224	4	495
2.	Studies	1	30	2	27	3	57
3.	Scientific articles	8	116	7	50	15	166
4.	Scientific papers	12	149	5	31	17	180
5.	Textbooks	-	-	4	282	4	282
6.	Other publications	1	15	1	17	2	32
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1212</b>

As can be seen from the table, Associate Professor V. Kazandzhieva participated in the contest for the position of "Professor" with 45 publications. They have 1212 pages, and we accept all of them for review. The monographs and studies (1 independent and 2 co-authored in English) are 7 in number, with a total volume of 552 pages (this represents about 46% of the total volume of all the publications). This is a certificate of the serious and in-depth nature of the candidate's research. Of the presented articles, 2 are in Russian (co-authored), 6 are in English, of which 4 are independent and 2 are co-authored. Respectively, of the scientific reports, 4 are in English, of which 1 is independent. A significant number of publications are in refereed editions - 35 out of 45 (403 pages). The included studies are indexed in SCOPUS and WS, which is proof of a high degree of representativeness of the candidate's scientific works. A large part of the other publications are also indexed in serious databases, published by established institutions (for example, 6 of the articles are included in the Journals of the Union of Scientists) and publishing houses. The scientific reports are presented during recognized forums with international participants.

Among the cited scientific works, the monographic habilitation work of the candidate - "E-tourism: concept and opportunities for development in Bulgaria" deserves special attention and it is highly valued, because:

- it was published in the established university publishing house "Prof. Ts. Kalyandzhiev", it was reviewed by two competent reviewers and the content is not a duplicate of any publication presented for acquisition for the academic position "associate professor";
- it represents an independent, in-depth, sufficient in volume /271 p./, fundamental scientific research with a certain scientific contribution and without a corresponding analogue in the national specialized literature. Different aspects of the emergence and development of a new type of tourism, resulting from the application of modern technologies, are competently presented and analyzed;
- it was discussed and a decision to be published was made by the departmental council of the Department of Economy and organization of tourism, before the announcement of the contest for the needs of the primary unit. This is certified by Protocol 10/29.06.2020;

The three monographs, with the participation of the candidate (in co-authorship), are also dedicated to important topics in tourism. They are mainly related to tourism management (Strategy for the development of nature-friendly tourism in the Natural Park "Strandja"; Competitiveness Program of the Municipality of Varna) and the implementation of innovative technologies in the Bulgarian hotel industry. This publication has no analogue in Bulgarian research. Aspects of the candidate's monographic work are analyzed more thoroughly in three studies. A significant scientific contribution is the independent study of Associate Professor Kazandzhieva, dedicated to the digital transformations of tourism in our country. It is published by the specialized publishing house of the BAS.

The Scientific articles and reports treat a variety of topics related to modern types of tourism with an emphasis on sustainable, ecological, "slow", cultural, etc.; travel agencies and their products; innovation processes in various tourist activities, etc.

The works for the announced contest are available, peer-reviewed and published, as already indicated, in prestigious publishing houses. In terms of number and structure they fully

correspond to the requirements under Art. 77, items 3, 4, 5 and 6 in connection with Art. 86 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna. As an important characteristic, the presented scientific works are a solid argument for the acquisition of the academic position "professor" according to PN 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)".

#### **6. Quantitative and qualitative assessment of the candidate's educational and teaching accomplishments**

Assoc. Professor Kazandzhieva leads lectures and seminars on academic disciplines, mainly for students majoring in Tourism in regular, distance and electronic forms of education. For the period 2014-2022, she gives lectures and seminars in the bachelor program. The courses include : "Introduction to Tourism"; "Travel agencies and transport in tourism"; "Tour guide"; "E-business in tourism"; "Academic studies" (from academic year 2020/2021); She also has courses such as "Introduction to Tourism"; "Travel agencies and transport in tourism"; "Excursions". "Service management in tourism"; "Electronic Business in Tourism" taught in Russian; Assoc. prof. Kazandzhieva teaches "Macro-regulation of the international tourism business" and "Tour operator, agency and transport activities in tourism" (from academic year 2021/2022) in front of students enrolled in the master program International Business Tourism.

In addition to the University of Economics - Varna, Assoc. Professor Kazandzhieva leads lectures and seminars as a part-time teacher in two other institutions, information about which is presented in section 4 of this review. Teaching motilities under the Erasmus program are also indicated.

Regarding the hours and the annual workload of the applicant, relevant references are presented. They show that the candidate exceeds the mandatory hours. At the same time, it is clear that there are enough teaching hours justifying the realization of the contest.

The teaching activity of Associate Professor V. Kazandzhieva is rich and varied. She prepares and continuously improves the curricula of her subjects. She applies innovative, modern teaching methods, relies heavily on interactive elements and case studies. This increases the interest and attention of the student audience. She actively works with students as supervisor and reviewer of bachelor and master theses. Assoc. prof. Kazandzhieva is one of the organizers of

the "review of student scientific activity", specialty "Tourism"; she is also an academic mentor for the project "Student Practices".

Assoc. prof. V. Kazandzhieva participates in the development of current textbooks and workbooks in connection with her teaching activity. For the contest, she presented participation in 2 textbooks and 2 workbooks (personal participation- 282 pages). They are published by the university publishing house "Science and Economics". The textbooks are written at a high scientific level and are popular and in demand even in other educational institutions in the field of tourism.

The aforementioned information confirms that Assoc. prof. V. Kazandzhievais a as a long-standing and respected teacher not only at the University of Economics- Varna, but also in a number of other related institutions. The attached documents and the findings prove compliance of the teaching and learning activity and the time of occupation of AP "associate professor" with the requirements of Art. 77, item 2 in connection with Art. 86 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna.

## **7. Identification of the contributions of the research activity**

Assoc.prof. V. Kazandzhieva is a proven researcher with contributions to national tourism of a theoretical and applied nature in the areas of her scientific interests. We accept the scientific and scientific-applied contributions highlighted by the candidate in her scientific works. We can systemize them briefly in the following way:

### **1. Scientific contributions - enrichment and further development of theory regarding:**

- definition of e-tourism and its concepts and specifics; characterization of online consumption and the digital consumer in tourism; presentation of e-destinations; impact of digital transformations, including artificial intelligence, on the tourism and hospitality systems, etc. (publ. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, etc.);
- definition of concepts and trends of the dynamic tour package (publ. 1, 5, 21);
- presentation of different aspects of the management of the tourist destination (publ. 2,3,4,5);

- analyzing some types and forms of tourist trips, within the framework of ecological and sustainable tourism; incentive, educational and youth tourism; "slow" and volunteer tourism; cultural and creative tourism, etc. (publ. 9,10,11,16,18,19,20, 22, etc.)
- further developing the toolkit for regulation of the international tourist business (publ. 43).

## 2. Scientifically applied contributions:

- enrichment of the empirical information in relation to e-tourism, its conceptual framework, structure and trends in international and national level (publ. 1);
- study the conditions and prerequisites for promoting the digitization of tourism in Bulgaria (publ. 1,5);
- study of tour guiding in Bulgaria, preparation and organization of interpretive tourist routes (publ. 42).

Associate Professor Kazandzhieva not only further develops and enriches the scientific and applied aspects of research in the indicated areas, but also manages to gain the interest of a wider audience. A proof for this is the 160 citations of her publications, 31 of which are in SCOPUS. This shows a high citation index.

All presented works of Associate Professor Kazandzhieva have a rich and accurate professional vocabulary, which is stylistically and linguistically sound.

## 8. Remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks. Since "professor" is academic position and not a scientific degree, I recommend assoc. prof. Kazandzhieva, to work even more actively and responsibly to strengthen the image of the department of Tourism.

## 9. Conclusion

I know assoc. prof. V. Kazandzhieva as a student and colleague. I have worked with her for 26 years. Along with the mentioned characteristics and achievements, I would like to emphasize that she is well respected by colleagues and students because she is responsible, hardworking and erudite.



Based on the evaluations made in this review of the achievements, publications and activities of the only candidate for the announced contest - Assoc. prof. Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva, I believe that they not only correspond to, but also significantly exceed the requirements for holding the academic position "professor" , laid down in the ЗПАЧРБ, its Regulations, as well as in the Rules for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying scientific positions at the University of Economics – Varna. The attached verified reference shows that the applicant significantly exceeded the Minimal National Requirements for the academic position "Professor".

**In conclusion, I firmly express a positive opinion regarding the awarding of the academic position of "professor" to Assoc. prof. Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva and I appeal to the other members of the jury to support this decision. I also recommend to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Management to vote positively for the appointment of Assoc. prof. Velina Kazandzhieva to the academic position of "Professor" in professional field 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism).**

28.07.2022

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

/Prof. Tanya Dabeva, PhD /



**ВНШЕ УЧИЛИЩЕ ПО АГРОБИЗНЕС И РАЗВИТИЕ НА РЕГИОНИТЕ**

**ИКОНОМИЧЕСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ ВАРНА**

Вх. №

2220-946/12.08.2022

## **REVIEW**

**by Prof. Zlatka Gosheva Grigorova, PhD;**

**in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences,  
professional direction 3.9. tourism,**

**scientific specialty "Regional Development and Tourism"**

**Higher School of Agribusiness and Regional Development - Plovdiv,**

**Department of Economics and Management,**

**Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism"**

***Regarding:*** Competition of the University of Economics - Varna for the academic position of "professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional direction 3.9. Tourism; scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)".

### **General information:**

This review was prepared on the basis of Art. 4 and in connection with Art. 29 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (DASRB), the Regulations for the Application of DASRB (RADASRB) and art. 83 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna, as well as on the basis of the decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Management (Protocol No. 33 of 26.04.2022), based on the Order of the Rector of Varna University No. RD-14-141 of

13.10.2021 and Order No. RD 06-83/05.05.2022. of the vice-rector of the University of Varna for the appointment of a Scientific Jury for the competition for the academic position of "professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional direction 3.9. Tourism; scientific specialty: "Economics and management (Tourism)", announced in the State Gazette, no. 27/05/04/2022 and Minutes of the meeting of the Scientific Jury for the election of the chairman and the determination of reviewers for the competition from 13.06.2022.

### **Contest details:**

The competition for the occupation of the academic position "professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional direction 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)" was announced in the State Gazette, no. 27/05.04.2022 on page 184 of the University of Economics - Varna for the needs of the Faculty of Management, Department of Economics and Organization of Tourism.

The only candidate is Assoc. Dr. Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva, who has been on a basic employment contract at Varna University since 1996 and is a member of the department.

In accordance with the requirements of DASRB and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna, the candidate - Associate Professor Velina Kazandzhieva PhD, fully complies with the university's internal rules for admission to the competition, namely:

- owns the ONS "Doctor";
- held the academic position of "associate professor" for eight years;
- has published a monographic work in the professional direction of the competition, in a specialized scientific publication, which is not repeated with those for acquiring the ONS "doctor" and for occupying the academic position

"associate professor" - Kazandzhieva, V. *“Concept and opportunities for the development of e-tourism”*;

- meets the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of "professor", the internal requirements of Varna University of Applied Sciences and is entered in the Register of academic staff at the NACID;

- plagiarism in scientific works has not been proven according to the law.

For information during the review, the materials provided for the competition were used: the author's reference of the candidate for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements, the reference for scientific works and original scientific contributions, declaration of originality and other attached documents.

**Personal characteristic of the candidate:**

Associate Professor Dr Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva was born in the city of Sliven. She completed his secondary education at the "Zahari Stoyanov" High School teaching Western languages in his hometown. She obtained a master's degree at the University of Economics - Varna in 1995, majoring in "Tourism" with Diploma series VD-95 №0020476.

Since 1996, she has been successively: assistant, senior assistant and chief assistant in the Department of "Economics and Organization of Tourism" at the Faculty of Management of IU - Varna.

In the period 2008 - 2011, she was a doctoral student of independent preparation at the department and obtained the ONS "doctor" in scientific specialty on 05.02.18. "Economics and Management" (Tourism) with a defended dissertation on the topic: *"Influence of e-commerce on the intermediary activity of travel agencies in the Republic of Bulgaria"*, with Diploma No. 004 dated 30.01.2012.

From May 2014 to the present moment, she is an associate professor in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional

direction 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty 05.02.18. "Economics and Management" (Tourism), Certificate No. D033 / 26.05.2014.

The work experience of Assoc. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva is concentrated at the University of Economics - Varna and fully subordinated to the active teaching and scientific activity, which is an excellent reference for professional maturity.

Assoc. Prof. Kazandzhieva's scientific interests are concentrated in the field of economics and tourism management; tour operator and travel agency activity; tourist transport; tour guide; sustainable tourism; specialized types of tourism; e-business in tourism; digital transformations in tourism and the influence of modern technologies on its development.

Associate Professor Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva has been a member of the Union of Scientists, Varna branch since 2017 in the "Economic Sciences" section, and since 2009 she has been a member of the Varna Tourist Chamber and an honorary member of the Union of Tour Guides in Bulgaria.

Participates in the composition of a number of organizational and scientific committees of international and national scientific-practical conferences, of working groups for the preparation of reports on the procedure for SANC at the university, of the operational commission for coordination and control, of expert groups on procedures for program accreditation of professional direction 3.9. "Tourism" to NAOA.

She is a participant in the working group for amendments and additions to the Ordinance on education and professional qualification for the acquisition of legal capacity for the profession "Tour Guide".

Member of a working group for the preparation of a project proposal for the creation of a "Scientific and Implementation Institute for Innovations in Tourism" as a unit of the IU - Varna.

She speaks French, English and Russian.

**Quantitative and substantive characteristics of the presented scientific works:**

The candidate, Assoc. Ph.D. Velina Kazandzhieva, according to the requirements of Art. 77, items 3, 4, 5 and 6 in connection with Art. 86 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University participated in the competition with the following materials:

- **monographs** – 4 items, of which 1 item independent from p. 271 and 3 pcs. collective monographs, where she is the author of 4 chapters, with a total of 224 pages;

- **studies** - 3 nos., of which 1 author's and 2 co-authors with a total of 57 personal contributions;

- **articles** - 15 articles, of which 8 are the author, and 7 are co-authors with a total of 166 pages of personal involvement;

- **reports** - 17 nos., with a total of 180 pages, of which 12 nos. and 5 pcs. co-authored;

- **textbooks and study aids** - 4 pcs. with a total of 282 pages of personal participation in co-authorship;

- other publications (popular scientific articles) - 2 pcs. with a total of 32 villages, of which one is independent.

The 45 scientific works submitted for review in the amount of 1212 pages have the following structure by relative share in %:

- by type: monographs – 9%; studies – 7%; articles – 33%; reports – 38%; textbooks – 9% and others – 4%;

- according to the language in which they are written: 33% of the output is in English (2 of them are in Scopus and Web of Science); 9% are in Russian and the remaining 58% in Bulgarian (part of the National Reference List).

The publications submitted for review characterize the candidate as a deep researcher of a number of leading issues in tourism with clearly expressed scientific interests in areas such as: digitalization of the tourism industry and e-

tourism, tourist markets, destinations and routes, tour guide services, specialized types of tourism, sustainable and nature-friendly tourism etc.

The scientific, research and scientific-applied activity of Associate Professor Kazandzhieva is directed in four thematic areas:

- ***digital transformations in tourism and influence of new technologies in tourism activities*** (publications with numbers: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 31);

- ***specialized types and forms of tourism*** (ecological, educational, youth, cultural, etc.) in accordance with the principles of sustainability (publications with numbers: 3, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 29, 33, 34, 37, 38);

- ***tour guide activity and the organization of thematic tourist routes*** (publications with numbers: 3, 4, 19, 27, 28, 34, 37, 40, 42);

- ***competitiveness of tourism and mechanisms for regulating the tourism business*** (publications with numbers: 4, 35, 39, 43).

Among the publications submitted for review, the candidate's monograph deserves a high rating: Kazandzhieva, V. 2021. ***Concept and opportunities for the development of e-tourism***. Varna: Science and Economics (Prof. Tsani Kalyandzhiev Library; Book 67), ISBN - 978-954-21-1062-0.

The work is subject to discussion in the specialized primary unit - Department "Economics and Organization of Tourism" (Transcript-excerpt from Protocol No. 10/29.06.2020) and reviewed by Prof. Dr. Tanya Dabeva and Prof. Dr. Plamen Iliev.

The monograph examines digitization as an actual factor for increasing competitiveness in the tourism industry. The essence and features of e-tourism and the possibilities for its development in Bulgaria have been studied. In accordance with the set goal and research tasks, the author makes a theoretical analysis and defines modern conceptual foundations, essential characteristics and features of e-tourism, as part of the complex digital transformation of society.

The work is structured in four main parts: in the first, the studies and analysis of the information-technological foundations of e-tourism are presented; the second defines e-tourism - defines the scope, traces its evolutionary development and transformations through the individual stages; the third examines consumption, destinations and the dynamic package in e-tourism, as part of the economic dimensions of the increasingly digitized tourism industry; and the fourth part indicates the guidelines for the development of e-tourism, through the profile of the modern online tourist, stakeholders, technological innovations, investments in software for personalization and improving the service and competitiveness of the e-tourism sector in Bulgaria.

The number and content of publications are an impressive indicator of the candidate's creative achievements - they demonstrate growth in scientific terms (after the habilitation), as well as accumulated significant research experience.

In terms of content, the evaluation of the publications includes: relevance of the selected research topics and related problems, innovativeness, attractive methodological tools, correctness in indicating the sources, and its participation in collective scientific works (monographs, studies, articles, reports) and skills for teamwork.

The candidate, Prof. Kazandzhieva, provided data for a total of 160 citations, such as:

- 3 of the contest publications in her SCOPUS profile have 31 citations and h-index: 3;
- two of the publications on the competition in Web of Science have 20 citations, h-index: 2;
- 8 of the publications are in CEEOL and Google Scholar, h-index: 6; i10-index: 4.

The number of citations is an indication of the author's popularity among scientific circles at home and abroad.



All publications on the competition for "Professor" are visible in Prof. Kazandzhieva's profiles in scientific networks. In a structural ratio, more than 90% of the citations are from foreign authors. Citations present the candidate as a recognizable scientist and researcher in scientific circles, both nationally and internationally.

*In conclusion, the scientific production presented for review by Assoc. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva for the occupation of the academic position of "professor" is sufficient in quantity, at a high scientific level, and enables the use of the results of the conducted research among the academic community and the tourism industry.*

**Quantitative and qualitative evaluation of teaching and learning work:**

Associate Professor Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva is among the well-established professors of IU Varna and enjoys a high academic authority. She has participated in the development of a number of bachelor's and master's programs.

For the period after 2014, Assoc. Professor Kazandzhieva leads lectures and exercises in the "Bachelor" full-time, part-time, distance and electronic form of education in the following disciplines in the **Bachelor's degree**: "Introduction to Tourism"; "Travel agencies and transport in tourism"; "Tour guide"; "E-business in tourism"; "Academic studies" (from the academic year 2020/2021).

In the **master's degree**, she leads lectures and exercises in: "Regulation of the international tourist business"; "Macro-regulation of the tourism business" (until the academic year 2015/2016); "Tour operator, agency and transport activity in tourism".

Associate Professor Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva is part of the teaching team of the **doctoral program** "Economics and Management" (Tourism) with the discipline "Economics of Tourism".

After 2014 until today, Associate Professor Kazandzhieva is the scientific supervisor of 6 doctoral students and actively works with the student community on scientific projects.

We should note that for her lecture courses, Assoc. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva has co-authored a number of textbooks, teaching aids and aids. Actively participates in seminars, webinars, round tables, discussions on the issues of regional development and tourism, both internally and at the national level.

***In accordance with the requirements under Art. 77, item 2 in connection with Art. 86 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff, Assoc. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva, meets the mandatory conditions for occupying the academic position of "professor" at the IU - Varna related to educational activities.***

**Identification of research contributions:**

The candidate, Assoc. Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva, has clearly expressed scientific interests in a number of areas in which, after 2014, we can outline the following scientific and scientific-applied contributions:

***First*** - a complex study of the ***transformations in the tourism system as a result of the digitalization of the tourism industry*** (e-tourism; restructuring of the tourism paradigm; adaptability and flexibility to technological changes and the behavior of market entities in tourism in real and virtual environments; smart projections in electronic tourism system; the integrated tourist information systems; the advantages and disadvantages of the dynamic tourist package; promoting the digitization of tourism in Bulgaria, strategic opportunities for e-tourism and the profile of the online tourist.

***Second*** - systematization, analysis and the challenges facing different types and ***forms of tourist travel today*** (ecological and nature-based tourism;

"incentive" travel programs; educational and youth tourism; the concepts of "slow" and volunteer tourism; cultural and creative tourism; SPA and wellness tourism holidays).

**Third** - theoretical justification and analysis of *tour guiding in Bulgaria - preparation and organization of interpretive tourist routes* (the participation of the tour guide in the management of complaints and taking specific actions for their effective settlement during and after the stay in the tourist destinations).

**Fourth** - theoretical and scientific-applied justification of the *instruments for regulating the international tourist business* (legal and social regulators; tax and other fiscal regulators; currency, customs, visa and other regimes; influence mechanisms).

**Fifth** - practical-applied *research on projects* (related to smart technologies for sustainable development of the tourist destination and management of the tourist flow; evaluation of the attitudes and perceptions of customers towards service automation and innovative technologies in specific tourist activities; updating of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria 2014 - 2030; evaluation of the competitiveness of the destination Varna in the development of the Program for the development of tourism in the territory of the municipality of Varna 2014-2020, etc.)

Assoc. Professor Kazandzhieva takes an active part in the work of a number of scientific projects at the international, national and domestic level - 12 documents are indicated in the documents submitted for the competition. She is the head of 4 of - internal research projects for doctoral students.

In conclusion, we can summarize that the candidate's research and publication activities correspond closely with the contemporary economic problems in tourism that have occurred as a result of digitalization. The range of scientific publications shows that the candidate works with ease in a wide range of thematic areas.

The scientific output of Associate Professor Dr. Kazandzhieva fully meets the national standards and internal requirements of the University of Economics - Varna for the quantity and quality of scientific and publication activity, for relevance and scientific applicability. The candidate's research is distinguished by an interesting topic, a good style and a pronounced interdisciplinarity in the study of tourism systems, in the interaction between the factors and elements of the systems, as well as in the analysis of global and regional processes in tourism - e-tourism.

The candidate for the position of "Professor", Associate Professor Dr. Velina Kazandzhieva, fully meets the minimum national requirements for indicators in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; professional direction 3.9. Tourism; for the scientific specialty "Economics and Management" (Tourism), as well as the additional requirements of IU - Varna.

**Critical notes:**

I have no critical notes.

**Conclusion:**

Taking into account the compliance with all the requirements of the competition procedure and based on the analysis of the documents, references, evidentiary material for scientific production, citations, contributions, participation in projects and other such in scientometrics presented by the candidate, Assoc. Dr. Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva indicators and according to the requirements of Art. 2b of DASRB, RADASRB and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna I find that the candidate significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements, I give my *positive assessment* and recommend to the scientific jury:

**Docent Doctor Velina Ivancheva Kazandzhieva to be elected**

**in academic position "professor"**  
**in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences;**  
**professional direction 3.9. Tourism;**  
**scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)"**  
**according to the competition announced by the University of**  
**Economics - Varna.**

09.08.2022

city of Plovdiv

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

/prof. Zlatka Grigorova/