

TO

**THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY DETERMINED BY  
RECTOR'S ORDER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - VARNA**  
according to the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "PhD" in  
the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)"

### STATEMENT

For acquiring the educational and scientific degree "PhD" in professional field 3.9. "Tourism", PhD program "Economics and Management (Tourism)" according to the procedure announced by the University of Economics – Varna

#### 1. General information

**The statement has been prepared by:** Associate Professor Dr. Veselina Ivanova Atanasova, University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas, College of Tourism - Burgas.

**In accordance for writing the statement:** Order No. RD-06-19/02.02.2024 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna for the appointment of a Scientific Jury and decision of the Scientific Jury dated 02.12.2024.

**Author of the dissertation:** Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova, full-time student at the Department of "Economics and Organization of Tourism" at the University of Economics - Varna.

**Dissertation topic:** "Possibilities for sustainable development of the hotel industry in a small municipality (following the example of the municipality of Kavarna)".

**Scientific supervisor:** Prof. Dr. Tanya Dubeva

#### 2. General presentation of the dissertation work

The scientific work of doctoral student Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova, submitted for review, is focused on the possibilities for sustainable development of the hotel industry in a specific small municipality. 191 literary and informational sources were used and successfully integrated into the text, including 131 literary sources and 60 Internet sites.

The relevance of the analyzed topic, the subject and the object of the research are successfully and convincingly defined. The main goal of the dissertation, Dr. Dimitrova points out, is "to derive guidelines for the application of the concept of sustainable tourism in the municipality of Kavarna, by developing a plan and formulating measures for the development of sustainable hospitality." To achieve this scientific goal, the author sets and formulates 8 research tasks.

The scientific development successfully verifies and proves the thesis that "the application of the concept of sustainable hotel development in a small municipality seems to overcome the negative effects of tourism development and increase the socio-economic benefits for the host community". The formulated thesis is concretized in three research hypotheses.

The research methods used fully correspond to the research goals and objectives set in the dissertation. Their totality includes: analysis and synthesis, systemic approach, situational analysis, survey. For processing the data collected during the empirical study, an appropriate and justified statistical approach was correctly used.

The presentation clearly expresses the author's position of the doctoral student, originality and thoroughness of the conclusions, with a precise scientific apparatus. The author's approach is

consistent with the requirements of the research methods used. There is a clearly expressed authenticity of the source data, consistency and credibility of the conclusions and recommendations.

The sources of information are in sufficient volume and thematic orientation and correspond to the subject of the research. Doctoral student Michaela Dimitrova reviewed 191 Bulgarian and foreign literary sources.

The dissertation work has the character of a complete, complete, original and significant scientific study on the problems and opportunities for the development of sustainable hospitality within a small area.

As a result of what has been stated so far, we consider that the dissertation work is presented in a form and volume that fully meets the requirements of Art. 27, para. 2 of the PPZRASRB and of Art. 34, para. 2 and para. 3 of the Rules for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at IU - Varna.

### **3. Publications and participation in scientific forums**

Doctoral student Dimitrova presents three scientific publications related to the topic of the dissertation - 1 article and 2 reports. The article and one of the reports have been published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information. The scientific output for the developed doctorate meets the minimum national requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor", according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and para. 3 of ZRASRB and the quantitative requirements under Art. 35, para. 1, items 1-4 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at IU-Varna.

### **4. Assessment of the structure and content of the dissertation**

From a content point of view, the dissertation work has a classic structure for similar type of scientific works: introduction; theoretical chapter; analytical chapter; applied chapter and conclusion. The content is extremely well balanced and logically coherent.

Sustainability, PhD student Dimitrova points out, in the hotel business is increasingly considered not only a tool ensuring long-term financial efficiency, but also a sparing effect for the environment.

Structurally, the content of the dissertation is logically bound, detailed, coherent with relatively well-balanced parts, clear and understandable style.

In the course of the exhibition, including a total of 236 pages, of which: introduction (7 pages); exposition in three chapters (187 pages); conclusion (4 pages); a list of the literature used (18 pages), the main concepts of "sustainable tourism" and "sustainable hospitality" are revealed logically, consistently and thoroughly, the theoretical statements, the analysis are clarified, and specific conclusions and recommendations are made. The dissertation also includes 5 appendices (20 pages). The main text contains 58 tables and 36 figures.

The list of cited scientific literature covers 191 sources, including 44 in Bulgarian and 147 in English. The literary sources correspond to the subject and the object of the research, they are used appropriately in the exposition, they are cited correctly.

In the first chapter, the theoretical foundations of sustainable tourism development are systematized, the author traces the development of the concept of sustainable tourism. From the review and systematization of specialized publications and scientific literature in the field, definitions for the concepts of sustainable development, sustainable tourism, sustainable hospitality and sustainable hotel product have been derived. The relationship between tourism, hospitality and sustainable development is also clarified.

A contributing point already in the first chapter is the author's proposed "model for sustainable development of hospitality in a small municipality."

The second chapter, in a structural and logical aspect, is dedicated to the hospitality industry in Kavarna municipality and its sustainable development.

As a result of the survey carried out by the author, regarding the attitudes of hoteliers towards the application of the concept of sustainable development in Kavarna municipality, we could make the following statements:

- the principles of sustainable development are not applied in the hotel industry;
- a small proportion of the subjects questioned are interested in the study;
- the benefits that are generated from the implementation of the concept are primarily economic in nature, the impact on the environment and the social environment of the host society is insignificant.

Based on them, we could conclude that hoteliers in Kavarna municipality do not know the essence of the concept of sustainable development, respectively the principles and benefits of its application. Regarding its implementation, they show moderate interest.

For the effective application of the concept of sustainability in the hotel industry in Kavarna municipality, it is necessary to make efforts on the part of the municipal administration and the local tourist association.

In the third chapter, doctoral student Dimitrova analyzes the results of the conducted empirical research and proposes measures and actions to the main stakeholders in connection with the sustainable development of the hotel industry in Kavarna municipality.

In the author's opinion, the development vision could be defined as "creating conditions for the development of a high-quality, sustainable and competitive hotel product, whose market positions on the national and international tourist markets are improving."

The strategic objective should be defined as the proposed product being based on the available unique resources and established traditions in the destination, and the priority of the current plan is the preservation and restoration of the available natural resources, including tourism, balanced long-term economic development and improvement the well-being of the local community.

The author provides a reasoned presentation of goals, measures and actions to create a favorable environment for the development of sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna. Their implementation should conserve environmental resources and establish stable economic and social environments in which residential facilities can function. In the opinion of doctoral student Dimitrova, the development vision could be defined as creating conditions for the development of a high-quality, sustainable and competitive hotel product, whose market positions on the national and international tourist markets are improving.

A strategic objective should be defined as the proposed product being based on the available unique resources and established traditions in the destination, and the priority of the current plan is the preservation and restoration of the available natural resources, including tourism, balanced long-term economic development and improvement the well-being of the local community.

In the dissertation, the author presents goals, measures and actions to create a favorable environment for the development of sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna. Their implementation should conserve environmental resources and establish stable economic and social environments in which residential facilities can function.

In conclusion, based on the presented findings, the dissertation work is presented in a form and volume that meets the requirements of Art. 27, para. 2 of the PPZRASRB and of Art. 34, para. 2 and para. 3 of the Rules for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at IU - Varna.

#### **5. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions**

In our opinion, the dissertation contains the following theoretical-methodological and practical-applied contributions:

- theoretical knowledge has been systematized and definitions have been derived for the concepts: sustainable development, sustainable tourism, sustainable hotel industry and sustainable hotel product in the context of the characteristics of a small municipality;
- an original author's model for the development of sustainable hospitality in a small municipality was created and approved;
- an empirical study was conducted on the degree of development of sustainable hospitality in Kavarna municipality;
- as a result of the experimental application of the author's model, strategic plans were developed for the implementation of the principles of the concept of sustainable development in the hotel business in Kavarna municipality;
- a system of indicators for monitoring sustainable hospitality is proposed;

#### **6. Confirmed or unconfirmed plagiarism in the dissertation and the abstract**

I do not find any plagiarism in the presented doctorate and abstract by doctoral student Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova.

#### **7. Critical notes and recommendations**

In regard to the dissertation work - main presentation, author's thesis and the argumentation of the conclusions, we have no critical remarks and recommendations.

#### **8. Questions for the PhD student**

We have no questions for the PhD student, in view of the comprehensive and multifaceted research in the PhD.


#### **9. Conclusion**

The proposed doctoral dissertation by Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova on the topic "Possibilities for sustainable development of the hospitality industry in a small municipality (following the example of the municipality of Kavarna)" significantly enriches science and practice regarding the development of sustainable hospitality in a small municipality.

The presented scientific work is a complete independent research that meets the necessary requirements for similar kind of developments in terms of structure, significance and completeness. With its development, concrete scientific and scientific-applied results have been achieved, and there are clear points of contribution.

**In conclusion, on the basis of the opinion presented by me with absolute conviction, I give my positive assessment of the presented doctorate and recommend to the Scientific Jury to award doctoral student Michaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional direction 3.9. "Tourism", scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)".**

19.03.2024  
Burgas

The statement has been prepared by:  
Associate Professor PhD  Veselina Atanasova

## STATEMENT

for dissertation of **Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova**,

PhD student at the Economics and Organization of Tourism Department

at the University of Economics – Varna

on the topic: *"Opportunities for sustainable development of hospitality in a small municipality (following the example of Kavarna Municipality)"*

Scientific field: 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences

Professional field 3.9. Tourism

Scientific speciality: Economics and Management (Tourism)

Scientific supervisor: prof. Dr. Tanya Dabeva

Prepared the statement: Assoc. Dr. Genka Ivanova Rafailova

Department of Foreign Languages and Communication in Tourism

College of Tourism – Varna at the University of Economics – Varna

This opinion was developed on the basis of a decision of a scientific jury dated 12.02.2024, appointed by Order No RD-06-19/02.02.2024 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna.

### **I. Brief presentation of the doctoral student**

The author of the dissertation Mihaela Dimitrova was born on 25.01.1991. She graduated in 2010 from the Secondary School "Stefan Karadzha" in Kavarna with a natural and mathematical profile, intensive study of mathematics, physics, and geography. In the period 2010 – 2014 she studied in the specialty "Tourism" at the University of Economics - Varna. In 2015 she received a Master's degree at the same university "International Tourism Business".

The rich professional experience of PhD student Dimitrova has contributed to the realization of an in-depth study of a pronounced scientific and applied nature. The responsibilities performed in the process of her purposeful professional development have contributed to the very good linking of the theoretical aspects of the dissertation with the defined guidelines for sustainable development of the hotel industry in the municipality of Kavarna.

## **II. General evaluation of the dissertation**

For her participation in the public defence procedure PhD student Mihaela Dimitrova has presented the following work:

- dissertation in a total volume of 247 standard pages;
- self-report in a volume of 44 standard pages;
- 3 scientific publications related to the topic of the dissertation, of which 1 article and 2 reports from scientific conferences. The article was published in 2022 in the specialized referenced scientific journal "Bulletin" of the Union of Scientists – Varna, series "Economic Sciences", vol. 11, issue 1 (pp. 193-201). One paper was presented at the International Conference "Sustainable Tourism and Environmental Protection" in Edirne, Turkey, and the other at the conference "Regional Economy and Sustainable Development", organized by the Research Institute at the University of Economics - Varna.

The presented scientific works sufficiently reflect essential parts of the content of the dissertation, thus giving it the necessary level of publicity.

PhD student Dimitrova presents a dissertation dedicated to a very important topic for the national and regional economy related to the sustainable development of hospitality in response to the negative environmental consequences of the uncontrolled expansion of the superstructure in tourist places. The elaborations is distinguished by high scientific-methodological and practical and applied importance. Its choice is very well motivated and justified by the contemporary diverse effects and impacts of the hotel business, as well as by the effects of the seasonal factor on the exploitation of the superstructure and employment in the sector.

The dissertation is presented in a classical structure of three main parts, which are very well balanced and correspond to the research tasks correctly formulated in the introduction. The content of the dissertation is logically bound and consistent, which determines the successful realization of the scientific goal set in the development. The structure of the text corresponds to the defined methodological framework for analysis and evaluation, and the applied research toolkit to explore

the possibilities for harmonious development of the hotel business. In this way, the thesis formulated by the author is proved that "the application of the concept of sustainable development of hospitality in a small municipality contributes to overcoming the negative consequences of tourism and generating socio-economic benefits for the host community." The presented paper unequivocally shows a very good command of the specific terminological apparatus and scientific style in the subject area under consideration.

A large number of specialized information sources in Bulgarian and English were used for the preparation of the dissertation. With the significant share of foreign scientific literature used, PhD student Dimitrova draws attention to the study of current, internationally recognized and leading publications related to the topic of the development. Information sources are cited precisely and correctly, according to the requirements.

### **III. Evaluation of the scientific and practical results and contributions of the dissertation**

In the dissertation presented the following significant *scientific and applied scientific contributions*:

*First*, the theoretical aspects of the sustainable development of the hotel industry have been enriched, expanded and supplemented, in particular in a small municipality by exploring the diverse interactions between sustainable development, tourism and hotel activity;

*secondly*, an author's conceptual model has been constructed, which has been tested through its own quantitative and qualitative studies in the municipality of Kavarna as a tourist place for sustainable hotel activity;

*thirdly*, a corresponding methodological toolkit has been adapted which has been applied to an in-depth study of the aspects of sustainable hotel management in a small locality;

*Fourth*, the advantages and disadvantages of applying the principles of harmonious development of the hotel business are analysed;

*fifth*, strategic plans have been developed for the implementation of the principles of the concept of sustainable development in the hotel activity in the municipality of Kavarna;

*Sixth*, a system of indicators for monitoring sustainable hospitality has been constructed.

These scientific and applied scientific and applied research contributions to the dissertation of PhD student Dimitrova are the result of independent, purposeful and in-depth research activities. The development is a comprehensive, fully completed study on a topical topic aimed at defining an

integral plan of universal measures and actions for sustainable development of the hotel industry, applicable to the construction and improvement of the superstructure in the small municipalities of Bulgaria.

#### **IV. Notes and recommendations**

The dissertation of PhD student Dimitrova does not reveal any significant theoretical, logical, methodological and stylistic errors. Unavoidable inaccuracies, technical omissions, detailed descriptions, etc. are allowed for such scientific research. similar, which do not diminish the merits specified in the opinion and the significant, author's scientific and applied scientific and applied research contributions contained in the development.

#### **V. Conclusion**

The dissertation presented for review on the topic: *"Opportunities for sustainable development of hospitality in a small municipality (following the example of Kavarna Municipality)"*, by **Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova**, contains the necessary theoretical and applied scientific results. They have an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the regulatory framework. The dissertation shows that the doctoral student has in-depth theoretical knowledge and research skills in professional field 3.9. Tourism, demonstrates qualities and abilities for independent scientific research. As a result of these arguments, I recommend with conviction to the members of the scientific jury to be awarded **the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)". Professional field 3.9. Tourism to PhD student Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova.**

Varna

Scientific Jury Member:

March 21, 2024

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Genka Rafailova)



TO  
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY  
DETERMINED BY Rector's ORDER  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - VARNA  
according to the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "doctor"  
in the scientific specialty "Economics and management (tourism)"

## STATEMENT

Regarding dissertation thesis for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional field 3.9. "Tourism", doctoral program "Economics and Management (Tourism)" according to the announced procedure from the University of Economics - Varna

### 2. General information

**Author of the statement:** Ass. Prof. Elena Ilieva, PhD, University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas, College of Tourism - Burgas.

**Reason for writing the review:** Order No. RD-06-19/02.02.2024 of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna for the appointment of a Scientific Jury and decision of the Scientific Jury on 02.12.2024.

**Author of the dissertation:** Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova, full-time doctoral student in the Department of "Economics and Organization of Tourism" at the University of Economics - Varna.

**Topic of the dissertation:** "Opportunities for sustainable development of the hotel industry in a small municipality (the example of Kavarna municipality)".

**Research supervisor:** Prof. Tanya Dabeva, PhD

### 2. General presentation of the dissertation

The dissertation work of PhD student Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova is an in-depth independent study, which examines the extremely current topic for the sustainable development of the hotel industry in the context of sustainable tourism development trends. Sustainability in the hospitality business is increasingly considered not only as a tool for long-term financial efficiency and environmental responsibility, but also as a source of positive reputation and a prerequisite for long-term corporate culture transformation. Research papers in the field of sustainable hospitality, respectively sustainable tourism, are mainly focused on clarifying the nature of the process and the adopted terminology. In particular, in Bulgaria there is also a Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development (2014-2030), which partly concerns the topic of sustainable hotel development. Additionally, a number of large municipalities in the country have developed regional strategies for the sustainable development of tourism, as is the case of the municipality of Varna and the municipality of Burgas. Smaller municipalities in Bulgaria, especially those with a livelihood in tourism and hospitality, comply with the mentioned documents, which do not fully comply with the specificities of small territorial units. The stated arguments prove the **significance and relevance of the presented research**, as they are well outlined both in the chosen subject and object of the research and in the main goal of the study. Based on this, eight specific research tasks have been identified, which were also correctly implemented in the scientific paper.

In the introduction of the dissertation, the **research thesis** is excellently formulated and is successfully proven in the study based on **three main hypotheses**. The research methods and scientific tools used by the author are in accordance with the subject and object of the study. Appropriate statistical approaches were correctly used to process the data

collected during the empirical study. The author's critical stance in the dissertation is impressive, which results in clear and reliable theoretical statements, results of the empirical study and proposals for improving the sustainable development in the municipality of Kavarna.

The number of **sources of information** is impressive and corresponds to the topic of the study. Doctoral student Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova has conducted a review of diverse Bulgarian and foreign literature, with the latter significantly predominating (over 75% of the presented list). Predominantly, these are publications in the field of sustainable tourism development; sustainable hospitality; corporate social and environmental responsibility in the hospitality industry. The limitations of the study mentioned by the author are relevant and acceptable.

As a result of the presented so far, I believe that the presented dissertation **fully meets** the requirements of Art. 27, para. 2 of the Regulation for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

### **3. Publications and participation in scientific forums**

PhD student Dimitrova presents three scientific publications directly related to the topic of the dissertation work – 1 article and scientific 2 reports, with which she achieves 70 points. The article and one of the reports are published in scientific journals, refereed and indexed in world-known databases of scientific information, which testifies to the valuable contribution of the author to the promotion of Bulgarian science internationally. The scientific production presented by the PhD student meets the minimum national requirements for awarding doctoral degree according to Art. 3 of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the quantitative requirements under Art. 1-4 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics – Varna.

### **4. Assessment of the structure and content of the dissertation**

In relation to the **structure of the dissertation** of Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova, it has a total volume of 246 pages, of which: introduction (7 pages); exposition in three chapters (187 pages); conclusion (4 pages); used literature (20 pages). The main text contains 22 tables and 32 figures for visualizing the presented information. There are also 5 Appendices with a total length of 20 pages. The structure of the PhD is well balanced in terms of length.

The used **scientific literature** numbers 191 sources, of which 44 in Cyrillic and 147 in Latin. Literary sources correspond to the subject and object of the study. They are used appropriately and are cited correctly in the exposition. Their volume is impressive in relation to the volume of the doctorate.

Regarding the **content**, the dissertation follows the classical model: introduction; theoretical chapter; analytical chapter; applied chapter and conclusion. The content is extremely well balanced and logically coherent.

In the **first chapter**, based on scientific research and statistical data the author critically analyses the concept of sustainability in tourism. Logically, institutional regulation framework for sustainable tourism is presented with clearly stated terms and definitions. Considering the object of the study, an overview of sustainable tourism in Bulgaria is also presented and discussed. The PhD student makes a reasonable conclusion that sustainable tourism development has a close relation to the ecological, economic and social environment. The theoretical analysis logically continues with the topic of sustainability in the hospitality industry. Emphasizing the importance of hospitality in social and economic terms, the importance of sustainability in hospitality practice is postulated. Relying on the three main spheres of action in sustainability, the author presents eight main directions in sustainable hospitality. Logically, the author complies and proposes a suitable conceptual model for sustainable hospitality development in a small municipality.

In the **second chapter** the author makes an in-depth analysis of the tourism industry in the municipality of Kavarna. Based on the developed methodology of the study, a number of socio-economic, tourism and hospitality indicators are assessed. Two empirical surveys among hoteliers and tourists in the municipality of Kavarna are also presented and analyzed. Special attention is given to their perception about sustainable hospitality. The main conclusions are that the sustainable hospitality concept is not well-known among hoteliers, but the tourists show a strong interest in purchasing accommodation in sustainable hotel establishments.

The **third chapter** presents discussion of the results from the empirical study and suggestions to the main stakeholders in terms of a sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna. Based on the ETIS system a comparative analysis is made by the PhD student with a conclusion about a significant stagnation in the sustainable development of tourism, respectively hospitality, in the municipality. The author elaborates a strategic plan at three main levels - municipal, tourist board and a hotel establishment in terms of a sustainable hotel industry development.

The professional approach in the author's recommendations is impressive – they are based on best practices in developed tourist destinations; voluntary certification systems for sustainable hospitality; examples from internationally recognized brands. The PhD student presents a complete strategy document with proposed indicators for monitoring.

The **introduction and conclusion** of the PhD thesis effectively fulfill their role. The author uses appropriate scientific and professional terminology from the field of tourism and hospitality.

The **abstract** is in volume of 44 pages fully meets the requirements for this type of scientific papers and correctly reflects the main results of the dissertation work.

In conclusion, the dissertation is presented in a form and volume that meets the requirements of Art. 34, paragraph 2 and 3 of the Rules for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at the University of Economic - Varna.

#### **5. Evaluation of scientific and scientifically applied contributions**

I fully accept the scientific and scientifically applied contributions highlighted by the PhD student within the presented conclusion of the dissertation work. These are theoretical (enrichment of theoretical statements in the theory of hospitality); methodological (conceptual model for sustainable development of the hospitality industry at regional level) and applied (approbation of the hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna and guidelines for improving its sustainability) contributions. I would like to especially emphasize the unique nature of the conceptual model.

#### **6. Confirmed or unconfirmed plagiarism in the dissertation or the abstract**

I find no plagiarism in the doctoral thesis and the abstract presented by the PhD student.

#### **7. Remarks and recommendations**

I have no critical remarks and recommendations regarding the dissertation work.

#### **8. Questions to the PhD student**

I have no questions for the PhD student, in view of the comprehensive and logically stated research in the PhD thesis.

#### **9. Conclusion**

The presented PhD is an original and in-depth scientific study that has a distinct contribution to the theory of tourism, respectively hospitality, and a definite applied character for tourism and the hotel industry at the three main levels. The research model and

methodology are applicable, especially given the fact that they are in line with the current relevant National Strategy in the Republic of Bulgaria. The author successfully combines her theoretical knowledge with her professional interests, demonstrating competence, a prominent author's position and strategic business thinking.

In conclusion, on the basis of the opinion presented by me, I give my **highly positive assessment of the presented doctorate and recommend the honorable Scientific Jury to award the PhD student Mihaela Nikolaeva Dimitrova the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional field 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Tourism)".**

15.03.2024,  
Burgas

The statement has been prepared by:

/Associate Professor PhD Elena Ilieva/

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