

Standpoint

By Prof. Dr. Julia Dobрева - Vice rector, VUZF

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition
to hold the academic position of '**associate professor**'
of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF)

By professional direction **3.7 Administration and management (Management and innovation in tourism)**

In the competition for associate professor, announced in the State Gazette, no. 52 of 07/05/2022 and on the website of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, Dr. Radostina Dimitrova from VUZF participated as a candidate.

1. General presentation of the applicant and the procedure

By order No. 369 of 10.11.2022. of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of **associate professor at VUZF University** in the professional direction **3.7 Administration and Management (Management and Innovations in Tourism)**.

For participation in the announced competition, documents were received from only one candidate:

Dr. Radostina Dimitrova - scientific secretary and assistant at VUZF

The set of paper/electronic materials presented by Dr. Raodistna Dimitrova fully complies with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of VUZF and includes all the necessary documents.

After a thorough review of the documentation provided, I confirm that it is in full compliance with the requirements of the RSARB and the Regulations for its implementation. From the presented report on the implementation of the national minimum requirements (scientometrics), there is the feasibility of the criteria.

The candidate, Dr. Radostina Dimitrova, has submitted 2 monographs (one of which is a habilitation thesis on the topic of the competition), 1 book based on a dissertation for the acquisition of the PhD degree, as well as 5 articles in peer-reviewed publications - a total of 225 points from section D (of the minimum required 200).

A citation report is also presented, from which 8 citations are confirmed, 4 of which are in books or 60 items out of the required min. 50.

Documents (in the form of official notes) for participation in research projects, as well as a report on academic workload, are also presented.

2. General characteristics of the activity of the applicant

As can be seen from the presented documents, Dr. Dimitrova leads lectures and exercises in 6 disciplines at VUZF, of which 4 are in English: Marketing Management, International Marketing, Marketing Research, Business Innovations, Innovations and Entrepreneurship in Business, Brand Management. She also actively participated in a number of scientific and research tasks at the Laboratory for Scientific and Applied Research (LNPI) of VUZF.

Regarding the research work of Dr. Radost Dimitrova, I can highlight the following:

1. The habilitation thesis "**Crisis management in tourism in the conditions of Covid-19** is a very interesting analysis of a current issue - how enterprises can cope in the conditions of crises, characteristic of the 21st century. The monograph is focused on the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, but similar crises could also be caused by other problems with a global impact - climate changes, refugee waves, military conflicts, crises of food and access to energy resources, etc. The model studied by Dr. Dimitrova is universal and its applicability could find a very wide-spectrum implementation. The monograph examines how the emergence and development of the international health crisis Covid-19 affects the tourism industry. The occurrence of international crises generally worsens the economic situation and makes it increasingly difficult to make decisions about ways to get out of them. This includes useful emergency management practices as well as strategies designed to mitigate negative economic impacts. The main contribution of the author is the empirical study, in which Dr. Dimitrova proposes the author's model for crisis management, which can be applied in the activities of tourist organisations. Empirical research adds high value to the work and enables the author to offer specific recommendations aimed at managers of tourism organisations.

2. The monograph "**Management of innovations in the tourism industry in the perspective of the 21st century**" is focused on a current issue - the applicability of innovations for the development of tourism in the conditions of the 21st century. The dynamics of development of modern economies in the conditions of a constantly changing environment provide an opportunity for a thorough and analytical study of the contribution of innovative products to overcome a number of challenges

facing the tourism business. Last but not least, its role in overcoming a number of social problems caused by regional and global conflicts, pandemics, climate changes, etc. is particularly significant. The author of the monograph, Dr. Radostina Dimitrova, has successfully found the way to track innovations in the tourism industry, as well as the possibilities for their effective management.

The first chapter contains a theoretical overview of innovations and innovative business ideas in the tourism industry. The second chapter has a practical-applied nature and examines the management of innovations in three sub-sectors of tourism - hospitality, tour operator and travel agency activity and tourist destinations.

The author highlights that innovations should be considered in the context of the main political, economic, socio-cultural, technological and environmental changes, pointing out that they are all prerequisites for the development of innovations and improvements in the industry. The object of the research is innovations in tourism, and the subject of the research are the possibilities for their effective management in the conditions of a dynamically developing tourism industry in the 21st century.

3. Research contributions stand out in the following main directions:

- examining the theoretical basis and determining the nature, characteristics and sources of innovations in tourism;
- research of innovative business ideas and leading trends in the Turkish industry in the perspective of the XXI century;
- analysis and assessment of opportunities for effective innovation management in various key tourism sub-sectors;
- development of a universally applicable model for managing innovation in tourism organizations.
- development of a universally applicable model for crisis management (on the example of the tourism industry)

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical notes. I recommend the author to continue her studies in the field of innovation and crisis management in other sectors of the economy, focusing on their economic, social and environmental significance.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by **Dr. Radostina Dimitrova** meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of VUZF.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the PhD degree. The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions. The theoretical developments have practical applicability, and some of them are directly oriented to the academic work.

The scientific and teaching qualifications of **Dr. Radostina Dimitrova** are unquestionable. The results achieved by her in the educational and research activities are fully in line with the VUZF Regulations for the application of ZRASRB.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Academic council for the election of **Dr. Radostina Dimitrova** to the academic position of '**associate professor**' at VUZF in professional direction **3.7 Administration and management (Management and innovations in tourism)**

14.11.2022

Referee:

Prof. Dr. Julia Dobreva