



UNIVERSITY OF NATIONAL AND WORLD
ECONOMY



REVIEW

for acquiring the academic position of “Associate Professor”, at the D. A. Tsenov
Academy of Economics – Svishtov

Reviewer: Prof. D.Sc. Tanya Petrova Parusheva

University of National and World Economy – Sofia, Department of “Economics of Tourism”

Field of Higher Education 3. “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”

Professional field 3.8. “Economics”, Scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Tourism)”

Registered in the Academic Staff Register of the Republic of Bulgaria at the National Center for Information and Documentation (NACID)

1. Presentation of the candidate

The only participant in the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the field of higher education 3. “Social, economic and legal sciences”, professional field 3.8. “Economics”, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Tourism)”, announced for the needs of the Department of Tourism Economics and Management at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov, is **Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Krasimirova Todorova, PhD** – lecturer in the same department. The competition was published in the State Gazette, issue 113/23.12.2025.

2. Grounds for writing the review

The writing of the review is based on the decision of the Faculty of Industry and Commerce, Protocol No. 6/18.02.2026 and Order No. 140/19.02.2026 of the Rector of the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov on determining the composition of the Scientific Jury, and the decision of the first meeting of the Scientific Jury, held on 02.03.2026.

3. Personal characteristics of the candidate

Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Krasimirova Todorova, PhD was born on 04.01.1985. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Finance (2008) and a Master's degree in Banking Management (2009) at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov. She continued her studies at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov and received qualifications in Organization and Management of a Commercial Enterprise (2020) and Teacher of Economics (2024). She defended her dissertation on the topic: “Management of Trade Credit by Enterprises in the Furniture Sector” and acquired **the educational and scientific degree of “doctor”** in the scientific specialty on 05.02.18. “Economics and Management (Trade)”, **Diploma** No. 2016005/04.07.2016.

The professional development of Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD began as an assistant in the Department of Tourism Economics and Management at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov in 2016 (03.10.2016). She successively holds the academic position of “Head Assist. Prof.” in the Department of Tourism Economics and Management (from 19.09.2019 to the present) and a part-time lecturer at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (2018 - 2020). Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD is the scientific secretary of the Department of Tourism Economics and Management (since 2016).

Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD has completed **additional training**, including at **foreign universities** within the framework of mobility's implemented at 5 foreign universities under the Erasmus+ program (Report on activities related to the additional indicators under Art. 124, para. 2, set out in the Regulations for the implementation of the Law at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov and Official Note from the Director of the Centre for International Affairs). Since 2016, she has been a licensed trainer at the Employment Agency, since 2022 she has been an evaluator at the Scientific Research Fund, and since 2023 she has been a consultant at Amavi Travel Ltd.

Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD is a member of **authoritative creative and professional organizations** in the relevant scientific field – a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Svishtov office (Official note from the Chairman of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria – Svishtov office). She is fluent in English and Russian.

The candidate in the competition for “Associate Professor” has secured full **academic employment** (Reference from the Senior Inspector for academic employment).

Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Krasimirova Todorova, PhD has presented a set of all materials on **paper and electronic form**. The submitted documents and evidence to meet the

requirements for participation in the competition are in **accordance** with the Regulations for application the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov under Art. 118, para. 1 and para. 2.

The presented personal characteristics of the candidate in the competition show that the requirements of Art. 116, para. 2, item 3 and item 3.1. of the Academy's Regulations for holding the academic position of “Associate Professor”, as well as Art. 24, para. 1 of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria in connection with Art. 53, para. 1 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Act, have been met.

4. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation based on teaching criteria and complain with requirements

The candidate in the competition for “Associate Professor” has been teaching since her appointment to the position of “**assistant**” on **03.10.2016** at the Department of Tourism Economics and Management. Since 19.09.2019, she has been appointed to the position of Head Assistant in the same department, where she continues to work. As of 23.01.2026, the candidate in the competition has 9 years, 3 months and 20 days of **work experience at the Academy** (Certificate from the Rector for internship in the specialty).

Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD is the holder of **lecture courses in the Bachelor’s Degree Program**, specialty “Economics of Tourism” (full-time, part-time and distance learning) on “Innovations in Tourism” and in a team on “Economics of Tourism”, “Strategies in Tourism”, “Tourist Destinations”, etc., and in **the Master’s Degree Program** in a team on “Distribution and Logistics Management”, "Competitiveness of the Tourism Business" in the Master’s Degree Program “Economics and Management of Tourism”, (full-time, part-time and distance learning), (Report on developed and taught lecture courses).

As we indicated in § 3 of the review, the analysis of the presented detailed reports on the study load shows that for the period academic year 2020/2021 – academic year 2024/2025, Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD has completed **1985.53 hours of classroom work**. The candidate in the competition has a planned teaching workload for the 2025/2026 academic year of 497.41 hours of classroom work, with a standard of 400 hours (Report from the Senior Inspector for Academic Work).

The candidate in the competition for “Associate Professor” has made a serious contribution to **the educational documentation** of the specialty. She develops new curricula, creates and updates established lecture courses. She is the author of 1 curriculum in the discipline “Innovations in Tourism” in the Bachelor’s Degree – full-time, part-time and

distance learning form, and co-author of 4 curricula in “Fundamentals of Tourism”, “Restaurant Management and Catering”, etc. in the Bachelor's Degree – full-time, part-time and distance learning form. She is a co-author of 7 curricula in the Master's Degree Program – full-time, part-time and distance learning (Report on developed and taught lecture courses).

For the needs of the educational process, Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD has **published 2 independent textbooks** – “Innovations in Tourism” Academic Publishing House “Tsenov”, Svishtov, 2024, 148 p., 2024, ISBN: 978-954-23-2465-2, ISBN: 978-954-23-2480-5 and has **co-authored 6 academic textbooks** (“Fundamentals of Tourism”, “Restaurant Management and Catering”, “Tourism Management”, etc.) (List of academic textbooks submitted for review).

The candidate in the competition for “Associate Professor” has developed and delivered lecture courses in a foreign language, in connection with a **teaching mobility** under the “**Erasmus+**” program (see table 1).

Table 1.

Lecturer mobility carried out by Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD

No.	University	Period
1.	International Balkan University, Skopje, North Macedonia	25 – 29.11.2019
2.	University of the Peloponnese, Kalamata, Greece	02 – 06.10.2023

Sources: Report on activities related to the additional indicators under Art. 124, para. 2, set out in the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the Academy and Official Note from the Director of the Centre for International Affairs

The **quantitative and qualitative evaluation** of the criteria and indicators for **academic work** shows that Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD has extensive teaching experience. She has the skills to work in a dynamic multicultural environment. She enjoys authority and deserved respect. She has a high degree of preparation for the academic position of “Associate Professor”.

In **summary**, the analysis carried out leads to **the conclusion** that the candidate in the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” at the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD **complies** with the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Academy under Art. 116, para. 2, item 5. She has also fulfilled **the additional indicators** for the academic position of “Associate Professor” at the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov under Art. 124, related to academic activity.

5. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation based on research criteria and complain with requirements

For participation in the competition for “Associate Professor” Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD has submitted **28 scientific publications** for review in specialized scientific journals (see Table 2). In accordance with Art. 116, para. 3 of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the Academy, the publications do not repeat those for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “doctor” (List of publications submitted under the competition for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “doctor”).

Table 2.

Scientific publications of Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD submitted for review

Group of indicators	Indicator	Number of points	Number of publications	Number of points Head Assist. Prof. L. Todorova, PhD
B – 100 points	3. Habilitation thesis – monograph	100	1	100
Г – 298.17 points	5. Published book based on a defended dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"	75	1	75
	6. Articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information	30/n	12	107.50
	7. Articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes	10/n	9	59.17
	9. Studies published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes	15/n	2	7.50
	10. Published chapter of a collective monograph	20/n	4	49.00

Source: Summary reference under Art. 26 (1) of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for the implementation of the minimum national requirements

The analysis of the data in Table 2 shows that the candidate in the competition meets the minimum national requirements, having achieved **100 points** in the group of indicators **B** and **298.17 points** in the group of indicators **Г**, with a required score of 200 points.

The candidate’s scientific works have been published in established scientific publications, a significant part of which are in journals and collections, referenced and **indexed in world-renowned databases** (Web of Science, Scopus, etc.), which ensures high

scientific visibility and international recognition of the research. In addition, the publications have also been presented in peer-reviewed national scientific publications, university collections and academic publishing houses, as well as in materials from national and international scientific forums in the country and abroad.

The **monograph** of the same name “**Tour operatorship based on innovations: new approaches and perspectives in modern tourism management**”, published by the **Academic Publishing House Tsenov, Svishtov, Bulgaria, p. 232. ISSN 1310–2737, ISBN 978-954-23-2635-9, DOI:<https://doi.org/10.58861/tae.ewc.2026.01>**. The work was discussed in the specialized primary unit – Department of Tourism Economics and Management and directed for printing in the “Stopanski Svyat” library. The monograph examines a significant scientific and applied science problem related to the transformation of tour operator activity in the conditions of digitalization, dynamic market changes and increasing requirements for sustainability. A model for assessing and increasing the effectiveness of innovations in tour operator enterprises has been developed and tested, emphasizing the role of modern technological solutions – artificial intelligence, big data and digital platforms - in improving the competitiveness and personalization of tourist services.

The research is based on a complex methodological approach (survey, interviews and quantitative analysis), which guarantees the reliability of the results and allows to substantiate the importance of targeted innovation management for increasing the efficiency, quality of service and market positioning of tour operators.

The work is developed at a high scientific level and represents a significant contribution to the theory and practice of tourism management, with clear applicability in the tourism business.

The candidate’s research activity can be systematized in **three main thematic directions**:

1. “Innovation, digitalization and sustainable development in tourism”;
2. “Competitiveness and management of tourism enterprises”;
3. “Development and positioning of tourist destinations and products”.

The most significant scientific and scientific-applied results in *the first direction* are related to researching the role of technological innovations (including artificial intelligence, digital platforms and big data) for the sustainable development of tourism organizations. Models for measuring innovation activity and assessing the effectiveness of innovations in tourism enterprises have been developed and tested, proving their importance for optimizing business processes, increasing efficiency and creating personalized tourism services.

In *the second direction*, results have been achieved related to the analysis of factors for the development and positioning of tourist destinations, including the role of event and cultural tourism. The importance of festivals as a tool for sustainable regional development and building a positive image of destinations has been substantiated, as well as the application of gamification and digital solutions to increase tourist attractiveness.

The scientific and applied results in *the third direction* cover research on the competitiveness of tourism enterprises in a dynamic environment, including the impact of crises (e.g. COVID-19), the role of innovations for adaptation and sustainability, as well as the importance of innovation networks and management approaches. It is proven that the implementation of innovations and digital solutions leads to improved economic results, sustainability and market positioning of tourism enterprises.

The candidate in the competition for “Associate Professor” has not proven, in accordance with the statutory procedure, **plagiarism** in scientific works. A **declaration of originality** has been submitted, stating that all sources have been used in good faith and that copyright requirements have been met (Declaration of Originality).

The qualities of Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD as a researcher are also confirmed by her active participation in **scientific research projects** of a national and international nature. For the period 2017 - 2026, she has participated in a total of 16 projects, including under the “Erasmus+” program and other international initiatives, as well as in institutional and national scientific projects. In 7 of them she is a member of the scientific team, and in 2 – an expert. All projects have been successfully implemented and have led to specific scientific results (Official note from the Director of the CMD, Certificate No. 220/21.01.2026 from the Director of the INI).

The quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the criteria and indicators for **research activity** shows that the works presented by Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD in the indicated thematic areas are distinguished by **a high scientific level**. The evaluation of the quality of the works from a linguistic point **of view is positive**. **The style** is concise and precise. The text is written in understandable **scientific language**.

In **summary**, the analysis carried out leads to the conclusion that the candidate in the competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” at the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov – Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD **complies** with the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at the Academy under Art. 116, para. 2, item 1, item 2 and item 4. She has also **fulfilled the**

additional indicators for the academic position of “Associate Professor” at the Academy of Economics, Svishtov under Art. 124, para. 2, item 2c, related to scientific research activity.

6. Consistency of research contributions with those declared by the candidate

The following significant scientific and scientific-applied contributions are clearly highlights **scientific and scientific-applied contributions**, which can be summarized as follows:

first – the theoretical and practical-applied aspects of innovations, digitalization and sustainable management in tourism have been further developed and systematized. A conceptual framework for a new generation of tour operators has been built, based on the integration of technological solutions, the personalization of services and the sustainable development of tourism organizations.

second – an original model for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of innovations in tour operator activities has been developed and empirically tested, which covers organizational, market and consumer indicators and has direct applicability in management practice.

third – scientific knowledge has been enriched regarding the role of technological innovations (including artificial intelligence, digital platforms and gamification) in increasing the quality of the tourist experience, consumer engagement and the competitiveness of tourism organizations and destinations.

fourth – the relationship between innovation, sustainable development and competitiveness of the tourism sector has been thoroughly studied, including in the context of external crises (e.g. COVID-19) and European policies, and recommendations for adaptation and development of the tourism business have been formulated.

fifth – the scientific understanding of the importance of innovation networks, social capital and interaction between stakeholders for the development of tourism organizations has been expanded, and the role of the balance between structure and flexibility in stimulating innovative behavior and organizational adaptability has been substantiated.

In **summary, the conclusion** must be made that the scientific and applied scientific contributions of Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD can be described as profound and original. Some of them are innovative in nature, which is a serious argument in support of her candidacy for habilitation.

7. Academic visibility characteristic of the candidate

The scientific and applied scientific results obtained from the research of Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD are reflected and arouse interest in the academic community. The candidate has presented evidence of **citation** of her scientific works, as **12 citations** in publications by other authors, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases have been reported. The total number of citation points amounts to 180, according to the submitted reference for citations and reviews (Reference for the candidate's citations and reviews).

In **summary**, we can **conclude** that the proven citations and reviewed scientific works are indicative of the candidate's scientific visibility. They contribute to the dissemination and popularization of the results of the conducted research both in the academic community and among the institutional and professional environment.

8. Critical notes and recommendations

I would like to make the following recommendations aimed at the future development of the scientific research activities of Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD:

1). It is advisable to continue and deepen her research in the field of innovation, digitalization and sustainable development in tourism, by expanding the topic to the management of tourist destinations and tourist ecosystems, with an emphasis on integrated management models and policies.

2). It is advisable to strengthen her participation in international scientific forums and research networks, as well as to direct her efforts to developing and participating in international scientific projects related to innovation, digital transformation and sustainable development of tourism, which will contribute to further increasing the international visibility of her scientific results.

9. Summary conclusion and opinion

The candidate in the competition for "Associate Professor" – Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Krasimirova Todorova, PhD meets **the Minimum National Requirements** in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences" in accordance with Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and Annex to Art. 1a, para. 1 of the Regulations for the implementation of the Law (see Table 3).

Table 3.

Fulfillment of the Minimum National Requirements (MNR)
by Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD in accordance with Art. 2b, para. 2
and 3 of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria

Group of indicators	Content	Indicator	Number of points MNR "Associate Professor"	Number of points Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD
A	Indicator 1	1. Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree of "doctor"	50	50
B	Indicator 3	3. Habilitation work - monograph	100	100
Г	Sum of indicators from 4 to 10	5. Published book based on a defended dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" 6. Articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information. 7. Articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes 9. Studies published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes 10. Published chapter of a collective monograph	200	298.17
Д	Sum of indicators from 11 to 13	11. Citations or reviews in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes	50	180

Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Todorova, PhD also meets **the additional requirements** for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", defined by the Academy in the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff, according to Art. 116, para. 2, items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 including 5.3. and 5.4., and Art. 116, para. 3. She has fulfilled **the additional indicators** for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov in accordance with Art. 124, para. 2, items 1a

and 1c, related to educational activities and Art. 124, para. 2, items 2a, 2b and 2c, related to scientific research activities. She possesses undisputed merits as a teacher and researcher, with proven contributions in the scientific specialty of the competition.

I clearly and unequivocally declare my **positive assessment “in favour”** the only participant in the competition for "Associate Professor". With full conviction, I vote for **Head Assist. Prof. Lyubomira Krasimirova Todorova, PhD to be elected and occupy the academic position of "Associate Professor"** in the field of higher education 3. “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”, professional field 3.8. “Economics”, scientific specialty “Economics and Management (Tourism)” in the Department of Tourism Economics and Management, at the Faculty of Industry and Commerce at the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov.

Sofia,
25.03.2026

Reviewer:

(Prof. D. Sc. Tanya Parusheva)