

OPINION

by Philip Petrov Petrov, Associate Professor, PhD
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for the materials submitted for participation in a competition
for the academic position of "**Associate Professor**"
in Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"

in: field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences;

professional field *1.3. Pedagogy of education in... (Methods of education in informatics and information technologies)* .

In the competition for the position "Associate Professor", announced in the Bulgarian Government Magazine issue 98 from 19.11.2024 and published on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Computer Technologies at the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics, Elena Hristova Todorova from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" participated as the only candidate.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order PД22-444 from 18.02.2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" (PU), I was appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at PU in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of education in... (Methods of education in informatics and information technologies) at the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics (FMI). Only one candidate has submitted documents to participate in the announced competition: Elena Hristova Todorova, Chief Assistant Professor at PU. The documents have been reviewed and the candidate has been admitted to the competition by a commission formed in accordance with the order of the Rector of PU. I have received all the necessary documents. They were formatted and arranged properly.

The candidate presents 45 scientific works related to the open competition. They include 2 monographs (one related to a prior PhD thesis), 1 chapter of a collective monograph, 25 scientific publications, 8 textbooks for school education and 9 other books for the school education. A total of

5 of the publications are indexed in popular world class scientific databases, and the rest are in non-refereed journals. The reference for covering the minimum scientometric indicators is made correctly and includes:

- 50 points from the criteria in Group A, out of 50 required;
- 100 points according to the criteria from Group B with 100 required;
- 225 points according to the criteria from Group D with 200 required;
- 510 points according to the criteria from Group D with 50 required;
- 73 points on the criteria from Group E with 0 required.

This clearly shows that the candidate exceeds the minimum scientometric indicators of the Academic Staff Development Act. The additional requirements of the PU Implementation Regulations and the PU Academic Staff Development Regulations have also been clearly met.

Elena Todorova was born on 25.06.1982. She graduated from high school in the town of Karlovo, after which she continued her higher education with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Informatics and a master's degree in Software Technologies, both at the Plovdiv University. In 2014, she became a doctor in Methodology of Teaching in Informatics and Information at the Plovdiv University. In terms of her work career, she initially worked as a teacher at the "Peio Kracholov Yavorov" Secondary School in the city of Plovdiv and in parallel as a part-time assistant at the Plovdiv University. Since 2012, she has devoted her career entirely to academia, initially as an assistant, and since 2014 as a chief assistant at the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics at the Plovdiv University. She speaks English and Russian at a good working level. She has participated in the teams of numerous scientific projects, seminars and committees.

I do not know the candidate personally and have not had any joint work with her.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

The candidate has nearly 20 years of teaching experience in education, most of which is at the Plovdiv University. She specializes in the field of informatics and information technologies, having led or supervised a number of undergraduate and graduate courses, including:

- Introduction to information technologies;
- Information and communication technologies in education and work in a digital environment;

- School course in informatics;
- School course in information technology;
- Integrated practicum in informatics and information technology;
- Integration of activities;
- Information technologies in mathematics;
- Accounting and bookkeeping information systems;
- E-commerce;
- etc.

I have no personal observation of the scientific and methodological level of teaching, but I can judge it from the opinion of her colleagues. They generally accept her positively and I have not heard any serious criticism. I also see her as a supervisor of significant number of graduates, which is evidence that the students like her. This makes me accept that Elena Todorova is a skillful teacher who deserves to be given the opportunity for career growth.

Regarding her scientific output, it is striking that, with the exception of the two monographs, Elena Todorova always works in a team on her scientific works. This shows that she is a good team player and works well with her colleagues. Almost all scientific works are in Bulgarian language, which I consider normal given the nature of the scientific field.

The main focuses of scientific, applied scientific and applied works are in several directions:

- Development of didactic systems of tasks for training students;
- Developing reflective skills in teacher training and in the education of students;
- Methodology of teaching informatics and IT;
- Technologies for teaching informatics and IT;
- Textbooks for school education.

I am convinced that the author has made an undeniable contribution to the submitted publications. No distribution protocols have been submitted for the joint works, therefore I accept the participation of the authors as equal.

Among the citations, 11 are in journals indexed in world-class scientific databases, and the remaining 46 are in monographs, collective volumes with scientific review, or in non-refereed publications.

I do not have any information that there has ever been any plagiarism detected.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no significant comments about the candidate works.

I recommend that Elena Todorova should expand her contacts outside of the University of Plovdiv and seek joint collaboration with scientists from other universities, including from abroad. From

the co-authorships in her current scientific works and from the list of citations, a certain "encapsulation" of her work stands out. Expanding her contacts would provide a broader horizon and an opportunity to draw on foreign experience by including more different perspectives in her works.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials submitted by Dr. Elena Hristova Todorova meet all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff of the "Paisii Hilendarski" University, as well as the additional requirements of the Ministry of Education and Science for holding the academic position of "associate professor". After reviewing the materials submitted in the competition, analyzing the results of the candidate, her scientific contribution, the originality of the presented works and the reliability of the presented scientific data, I find it reasonable to give my **positive assessment** and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Scientific Council of the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics for the election of Elena Hristova Todorova to the academic position of "associate professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences; professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in ... (Methods of education in informatics and information technologies).

12.03.2025

Signature:

Filip Petrov Petrov, Assoc. Prof, PhD