

STATEMENT

From: Prof. Dr. Tatyana Netseva-Porcheva
Scientific organization: Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"
Scientific specialty: Marketing

regarding the materials submitted for participation in the competition
for the academic position of "**professor**"
at Plovdiv University "**Paisii Hilendarski**"

by: field of higher education: 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences
professional field: 3.8. Economics
scientific specialty: Marketing

In the competition for "professor" announced in the State Gazette, issue 96 of 11.11.2025, and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Marketing and International Economic Relations at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Valentinova Dimitrova-Staneva from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" is participating as a candidate.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By Order No. RD-22-44/09.01.2026 of the Rector of Plovdiv University, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury in a competition for the academic position of "professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8. Economics (Marketing), announced for the needs of the Department of Marketing and International Economic Relations at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences (FESS).

Only one candidate submitted documents to participate in the announced competition: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Valentinova Dimitrova-Staneva from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

The set of materials for applying for the competition presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova includes the following documents: a standard application form to the rector for admission to the competition; a CV in European format; a higher education diploma with a master's degree; a diploma for the educational and scientific degree of "doctor"; a diploma for the academic position of "associate professor"; a list of scientific works; copies of scientific works; certificate of compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements; declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents; abstracts of the materials under Article 76 of the PRASP (in Bulgarian and a foreign language); self-assessment of contributions; list of citations; separation protocols; certificate of work experience; documents for teaching work; documents for scientific research activity; documents in accordance with the additional requirements of the respective faculty and other documents.

The candidate, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova, has published a total of **35 scientific papers**, 3 monographs (1 – main habilitation thesis), 1 book based on a defended dissertation, 12 studies (8 of which are in Scopus and/or Web of Science), 18 articles and reports (5 of which are in Scopus and/or Web of Science), and 1 textbook. The total number and structure of scientific works are sufficient and appropriate for the academic position of "professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". **The total score for groups A, B, C, D, E, and F is 1084.16 points, with a minimum threshold of 550 points.**

The set of materials for applying in the competition, presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova, certifies that the candidate meets all the National Minimum Requirements for holding the academic position of "professor" in accordance with the Law on the Development of Academic

Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of LDASRB (Art. 1a, para. 1) and the additional requirements of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

2. Brief biographical information about the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova holds a bachelor's degree in Marketing and a master's degree in Corporate Finance, both obtained from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". Since 2013, she has held the academic rank of Doctor in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional direction 3.8. Economics, doctoral program in Economics and Management (Industry) at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". From 2005 to 2009, he held the academic position of assistant, from 2009 to 2011 – senior assistant, from 2011 to 2014 – chief assistant, and from 2014 to the present, he has been an associate professor in PN 3.8. Economics (Marketing), Department of Marketing and International Economic Relations at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova, is Head of the Department of Marketing and International Economic Relations at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the period 2015–2023.

Since 2019, she has been an independent expert at the National Agency for Assessment and Accreditation (NAAA).

In 2003–2004, she worked as a regional representative for Abagar Finance AD, where she provided consulting and brokerage services for securities and compensation payment instruments on the Bulgarian Stock Exchange in Sofia.

She is a member of the Union of Economists and the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

The biographical data of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova present her as a broad-minded personality with extensive teaching experience, enviable leadership skills, an established expert in the field of education, and a high level of general economic culture.

3. General description of the candidate's activities

3.1. Assessment of teaching and pedagogical activities

3.3.1. Teaching aids

The candidate for the academic position of "professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" has published one independent textbook related to the subject of the announced competition – *Dimitrova, T. (2018). Marketing Management. Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". ISBN 978-619-202-333-1, (198 p.).*

The *Marketing Management* textbook has been professionally developed and reflects the theoretical and practical aspects of marketing management. It includes basic concepts and definitions, discussion questions, and sample exam tests, and provides basic knowledge about the essence of the concepts of "marketing," "management," and "marketing management" (MM); the functions, principles, and significance of MM; the stages of marketing planning; the marketing environment; and the nature, types, and stages of marketing audits. The textbook also covers the main analytical tools and techniques that assist the marketing manager. The textbook has been prepared in accordance with all methodological requirements. Most importantly, it is extremely useful. This is the marketing management textbook that has been used for eight years by bachelor's degree students majoring in Marketing and Business Management at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

In addition to the textbook, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova has published a teaching aid – *Dimitrova, T. (2016). Marketing (Theses, Tasks, Case Studies, Tests), UI "P. Hilendarski". ISBN 978-619-202-129-0, (154 p.).* Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova did not participate with the marketing teaching aid in the competition for "professor" because it is a second supplemented edition, but I believe it is important to note it as well, as it shows that the lecturer has fully provided students with teaching literature on the subjects he teaches.

3.3.2. Lecture courses

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova teaches two lecture courses – "Marketing" and "Marketing Management" in programs designed for students in bachelor's and/or master's degree programs in three faculties of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski": Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences (FESS), Faculty of Philology (FP), and Faculty of Chemistry (FC). The candidate for participation in the competition has established herself as a leading lecturer in marketing in all three faculties of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova has independently developed curricula for three disciplines: Marketing Management, Marketing Research, and Brand Management. The first two programs are for bachelor's degree curricula, and the third is for a master's degree curriculum.

3.3.3. Working with students and doctoral candidates

As head of the Marketing and International Economic Relations Department, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova has always worked on behalf of students and to establish the authority of both specialties taught by the department – Marketing and International Economic Relations.

Proof of her work with students and her involvement in research and educational projects in the field of higher education is her role as an academic mentor and functional expert for FESS on the "Student Internships" project at the Ministry of Education and Science (2013–2023) and the project "From Higher Education to Employment" (2025–2029), as well as her participation in project FP25-FISN-012 "StuEDU: Integrated Approach and Intelligent System for Assessing Key Skills and Student Profiles," funded by the Scientific Research Fund at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (2025–2026).

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova systematically builds on her competencies for the benefit of students by participating in various training courses: working with the StrikePlagiarism program, improving digital skills, digital psychology, trademarks and industrial designs, basic and internal ISO 9001/2015 auditors, artificial intelligence in education, etc.

The candidate for the academic position of "professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" was the scientific supervisor of three doctoral students – one successfully defended and two expelled with the right to defend.

The textbook on marketing management published by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova, the lecture courses she has developed and teaches at various faculties of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", her involvement in educational and research projects in the field of higher education, her participation in various training courses, as well as the presence of a successfully defended doctoral student, give grounds for a high assessment of the teaching and pedagogical activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova.

4. Assessment of the candidate's scientific and applied scientific activity

Several thematic areas can be distinguished in the scientific output of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova:

- sustainable consumer behavior (Publications: 1, 9, 13, 24);
- marketing in the field of higher education (Publications: 2, 3, 11, 16, 19, 20, 22, 28, 32, 33, 34);
- educational branding (Publications: 6, 10, 25);
- applied aspects of marketing management in various sectors of the economy (Publications: 5, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 23, 26, 29, 30, 31, 35).

The habilitation thesis with which Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova participates in the competition is: *Dimitrova, T. (2025). Sustainable consumer behavior: From global evidence to local insights among Generation Z in Bulgaria. Plovdiv University Press. ISBN 978-619-281-106-8, (209 p.).*

The main results in the habilitation thesis and the related scientific and applied scientific contributions can be summarized as follows:

- *A bibliometric analysis of scientific publications in the field of sustainable consumer behavior has been prepared in two globally recognized scientific databases – Scopus and Web of Science for the period from 1999 to 2024.* In the field of sustainable consumer behavior, leading journals, leading authors, leading countries, key thematic areas, and their development over time have been identified. Gaps and unexplored aspects have been identified.

- *A systematic review of the scientific literature on sustainable consumer behavior among Generation Z has been conducted in three world-renowned databases – Scopus, Web of Science Core Collection, and ProQuest.* Key thematic areas in the field of study have been identified. The main factors most commonly associated with both sustainable consumer intentions and actual behavior among Generation Z have been identified. Barriers to the intention and/or manifestation of sustainable consumer behavior have been identified. Guidelines for future research have been outlined.

- *A conceptual model and toolkit have been developed to study the factors influencing Generation Z's purchasing behavior regarding sustainable clothing in Bulgaria.* The model includes multiple latent variables and hypothetical relationships between them. It combines the key factors that are assumed to influence the intention to purchase sustainable clothing and the associated behavioral outcome. It analyzes not only the strength of the interrelationships between the factors, but also their relative influence on the intention and actual behavior of purchasing sustainable clothing. In this way, the conceptual framework integrates the relationships between different constructs and their predictors, mediators, and moderators, offering a comprehensive approach to analyzing the phenomenon under study.

- *The results of the study are of particular practical value to managers of companies involved in the production and distribution of sustainable fashion among Generation Z in Bulgaria.* The results reveal a new type of sustainable consumer behavior and identify the factors influencing this consumer behavior.

The habilitation thesis of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova represents a large-scale study of a significant and topical issue. The author's contributions enrich existing knowledge in the field of study and assist companies in understanding the sustainable consumer behavior of Generation Z in Bulgaria.

In addition to her main habilitation thesis, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova participates in the competition for "professor" as co-author of two more monographs:

- Stanev, V., Dimitrova, T., Dimitrova, G., Stoychev, L., Bratkov, M., & Petkov, V. (2021). *Marketing Communications and Building Competitive Advantages by Higher Education Institutions.* Plovdiv University Press. ISBN 978-619-7663-03-7, (author's contribution 125 pp.).

- Stanev, V., Dimitrova, T., Kovacheva, S., Genova, Ya., Dimitrova, G., Boykova, F., Levterova, D., Vladikov, A., Stoychev, L., & Vasileva-Prokopova, M. (2020). *Strategy for building the public image of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski."* Koala Press. ISBN 978-619-7536-29-4, (author's contribution 102 pp.).

Both monographs are related to marketing aspects of higher education institutions in Bulgaria.

Proof of the scientific and applied scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova is her participation in a total of 7 scientific research projects (6 internal to Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" and 1 national project). She is the leader of one of the projects and the coordinator of another.

For the period 2020–2025, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova has prepared five reviews of monographs, 11 reviews of scientific articles (five of which are in publications indexed and referenced in Scopus), and six reviews of scientific reports.

The candidate for the academic position of 'professor' has previous and current memberships in the editorial boards of a total of 5 national and international scientific publications, as follows:

- 2017–2021 in the journals *Balkan Scientific Review*, *Scientific Vector of the Balkans*, and *Balkan Humanities Research*;
- 2020–2022, 2022–2023, 2024–2027 in *Higher Education Research*;

- 2025–2028 in the International Journal of Business and Economics Research.

The scientific output with which Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova participates in the competition, her participation in seven scientific and applied projects, her selection as a reviewer of 5 monographs and other scientific works, as well as her membership in the editorial boards of a total of five national and international scientific publications, present Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova as a long-standing researcher, an established scientist, and a highly valued specialist with extensive experience in the field of marketing management.

5. Scientific and applied scientific contributions

The scientific and applied scientific contributions that can be derived from the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova, PhD, can be systematized as follows:

I. Scientific contributions

1) Synthesis and expansion of scientific knowledge on sustainable consumer behavior.

The leading theoretical frameworks, main determinants and barriers, dominant thematic areas, and behavioral outcomes in the scientific literature on sustainable consumption and consumer behavior have been established. (Publications: 1, 9, 13, 24)

2) Enrichment of marketing theory in the higher education sector. The role of the marketing concept, marketing communications, the quality of the educational product, the public image and competitiveness of higher education institutions, as well as the main approaches, tools and indicators for their management and evaluation in the context of increased competition and market orientation of the higher education system. (Publications: 2, 3, 11, 16, 19, 20, 22, 28, 32, 33, 34)

3) Further development of scientific knowledge on educational branding. It has been established that brand image, brand associations, perceived quality, satisfaction, and engagement function as key factors in shaping loyalty and word-of-mouth communication in the educational sphere (Publications: 6, 10, 25)

II. Scientific and applied contributions

1) A methodology for researching Generation Z's purchasing behavior regarding sustainable clothing has been developed and tested. The methodology includes modeling and assessing the direct and indirect effects of key environmental, social, and personal factors on purchase intention and actual sustainable consumer behavior. (Publication 1)

2) Development, empirical testing, and validation of psychometric models for measuring consumer behavior in the Bulgarian context. Complex causal relationships between latent constructs, including direct, indirect, and moderating effects, are analyzed, taking into account the specific characteristics of Bulgarian research participants. (Publications: 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 17)

3) Expansion of the scientific and applied aspects of marketing management. Analytical and hybrid management tools (SWOT-AHP-TOWS, SPACE analysis) have been developed, integrated, and tested. Key management opportunities and challenges in various sectors (healthcare, finance, telecommunications, wine industry) have been identified, supporting strategic decision-making and the development of sustainable competitive advantages. (Publications: 5, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 23, 26, 29, 30, 31, 35)

The Scopus database entry for the candidate for the academic position of "professor" shows a Hirsch index of $h=3$ and includes nine scientific publications published since 2017. Six of them have a total of 55 citations. The participant's record in the Web of Science database shows a Hirsch index of $h=3$ and includes nine scientific publications from 2019 to date. Four of them do not duplicate publications reported in Scopus.

The reference for Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova in the world-renowned scientific information databases Scopus and Web of Science and her citations testify to the significance of the

above-mentioned scientific and applied scientific contributions to the theory and practice of marketing management.

6. Critical comments and recommendations

I have no critical comments on the scientific publications submitted by the candidate for the academic position of "professor" and the scientific and applied scientific contributions contained therein. My recommendation is that in the future, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova should focus her scientific interests on the application of artificial intelligence in the marketing management of companies.

7. Personal impressions

I know Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova as a long-time marketing lecturer and colleague. I am impressed by her enthusiasm and dedication to teaching the curriculum. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova is highly respected and admired by both students and colleagues at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" and the National Agency for Assessment and Accreditation. My personal impression is that she is a modest person with a sense of justice, a consistent and determined researcher who skillfully combines teaching, research, and administrative activities.

Conclusion

The documents and materials presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of LDASRB, and the relevant Regulations of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski." In terms of quantity and quality, the publications of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova contain scientific and applied scientific contributions that make them extremely useful for marketing theory and practice. All this gives me reason to give a positive assessment and to confidently propose to the members of the esteemed Scientific Jury to vote for the election of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Valentinova Dimitrova-Staneva to the academic position of "professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" in the professional field of 3.8. Economics (Marketing).

14 February 2026

Plovdiv

Prepared by:

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(Prof. Dr. Tatyana Netseva-Porcheva)