

O P I N I O N

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regarding the materials presented for participation in a competition
for the academic position "**Associate Professor**"
at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

in the field of higher education 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics
professional field 4.3. *Biological sciences (Botany)*

In the competition for an Associate Professor, announced in the State Gazette (Bulgaria), no. 96 of 11.11.2025 and on the website of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv for the needs of the Department of Botany and biological education at the Faculty of Biology, as a candidate participates Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimir Tihomirov Todorov from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

According to order No. RD-22-39 / 09.01.2026 of the Rector of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the PU in the field of higher education 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional field 4.3. Biological Sciences (Botany), announced for the needs of the Department of Botany and biological education at the Faculty of Biology.

One candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition - **Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Tihomirov Todorov** from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. The materials for the competition, submitted by Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov, are in accordance with the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the career development of the academic staff of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, and include all necessary documents: Application form to the rector for admission to participate in the competition; CV in European format; Diploma of higher education with acquired educational and qualification degree "Master" with appendix (original and copy); Diploma of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (original and copy); List of scientific works, copies of publications and list of citations; Certificate of compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements; Annotations of the materials under Art. 65. of the Regulation of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv with an extended certificate of habilitation; Self-

assessment of the contribution; Declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents; Certificate of work experience; Documents for academic work; Documents for scientific research work; Documents corresponding to the additional requirements of the Faculty of Biology and other documents (list of scientific works used for the position of Chief Assistant Professor).

To participate in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", the candidate, Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov, has applied with a total of 19 scientific papers, 1 certificate of registration of a utility model and 1 patent application, which were not used to acquire the PhD degree and the academic position "Chief Assistant Professor". Of the 19 scientific papers presented by the candidate, 18 are cited in Wos and Scopus, as 7 of them are with Q1, one with Q2, one with Q3 and 9 with Q4. Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov is a co-author of 3 textbooks, a participant in 7 scientific projects at the national level and he is a scientific supervisor of 6 students successfully defended diploma theses. 19 scientific papers that are outside the dissertation project have been accepted for review and have been taken into account in the final assessment: 1 certificate of registration of a utility model and 1 patent application, 3 teaching aids and the candidate's participation in 7 scientific projects.

Brief biographical data of the candidate

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimir Todorov graduated in 2011 with a Bachelor's degree at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv in Ecology and Environmental Protection (professional qualification Ecologist), and in 2013 completed his Master's degree in Medicinal and Essential Plants (professional qualification Botanist in Medicinal and Essential Plants). In 2018, he obtained a PhD Degree in the field of higher education 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.3. Biological sciences (Botany). From 2013 to 2017, he was appointed as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Botany and Methods of Teaching Biology at the Faculty of Biology, and from 2018 to the present, he has been a Chief Assistant Professor in the Department. As of September 2025, Chief Assistant Professor Krasimir Todorov holds the academic position of Chief Assistant Professor in the Department of Bioorganic Chemistry of the Faculty of Pharmacy at the Medical University of Plovdiv, where he conducts laboratory and field exercises in Pharmaceutical Botany.

The academic position held also determines the commitment of Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Todorov to teaching and research work with a strong thematic profile in the field of Botany (Plant Anatomy and Morphology, Plant Ecology, Phytochemical and Biological Studies, Biosystematic Studies, Medicinal and Essential Plants).

I have known Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Todorov personally since his student years and I believe that he is an excellent teacher, a thorough researcher, a colleague who knows how to work in a team, responsible, ethical and correct.

2. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

Evaluation of the educational and pedagogical activity

Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov is an excellent teacher with extensive professional experience, gained over 12 years of teaching experience. It is well known that in any higher educational institution, the pedagogical activity is the main one. Over the past three years, he has given more than 480 teaching hours per year on average at the bachelor's level and 60 hours at the master's level, including lectures and exercises in the disciplines Botany, Hydrobiology, Hydrobiology and Marine Biology, Pharmacognosy, Plant Anatomy and Morphology, Plant Ecology, Essential Oil Plants. He also gives Field Practice in Plant Anatomy and Morphology and Field Practice in Botany. Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Todorov teaches bachelor's students in the specialties "Ecology and Environmental Protection", "Microbiology and Virology", "Molecular Biology", "Biology and English" and "Pharmaceutical Biotechnologies" in full-time and part-time forms of study. He gives lectures and exercises in the master's programs "Medicinal and Essential Plants", "Biodiversity, Ecology and Conservation", "Ecology, Environmental Management and Control" and "Reproductive Biology". Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Todorov gives lectures and exercises in Hydrobiology in the Bachelor's Degree Program "Biology and Management of Natural Resources" at the "Lyuben Karavelov" Branch Kardzhali of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

He is the scientific supervisor of 6 graduates who successfully defended their theses with a grade of "Excellent", and has published 3 teaching aids intended for laboratory exercises in the disciplines he teaches. The teaching aids are tailored to the students' curriculum and the number of teaching hours, but can also be used by students in various biological fields and related specialties from other higher education institutions, which allows for greater independence during laboratory exercises.

Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Todorov is a member of the team on 7 research projects at the national level. Both the pedagogical and scientific activities of the candidate are related and aimed at the training of young researchers.

Given the above, I believe that the candidate for the academic position of "Associate Professor" - Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov, has extensive teaching experience and a high degree of preparation for holding the academic position under the competition.

Evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied activity

For participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Botany", Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov presents a total of 19 scientific publications, which have not been used in the procedures for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (PhD) and for occupying the academic position "Chief Assistant Professor". They are classified into the following groups:

- Scientific publications based on which a dissertation was defended – 4 pcs. (Indicator A)
- Scientific publications outside the dissertation – 19 pcs. (Indicator B and G), of which:

- Publications, **Indicator B4**. Habilitation thesis - scientific publications in publications that are refereed and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information (Web of Science and Scopus) - 4 articles, carrying 100 points.

- Publications, **Indicator G7**. Scientific publications in journals that are referenced and indexed in databases with scientific information on Web of Science and Scopus, outside the habilitation thesis - 14 articles, carrying 218 points.

- Publications referenced in other databases, outside of Web of Science and Scopus – 1 article (Indicator G7, article No. 1).

The scientific publications with which the candidate participates in the competition for "Associate Professor" are distributed as follows:

- Publications with impact factor – 9 articles (total impact factor 33.74)

- Publications with quartile (Q) – 18 articles (7 issues with Q1, 1 issue with Q2, 1 issue with Q3 and 9 with Q4.)

- Publications in peer-reviewed and refereed scientific journals – 1 article (Indicator G7, article No.1)

All scientific publications presented are in English. The personal participation of Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov in the mentioned 19 articles is illustrated by the fact that in one he is the first (lead) author, in two he is the second author, and in the remaining sixteen he is the third and subsequent author.

The main scientific interests and research areas in which Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov works are in the field of botany with an emphasis on medicinal and endemic species of the Bulgarian flora, and the candidate's scientific activity is focused on floristic, anatomical-morphological, phytochemical and molecular-genetic studies. I accept all contributions formulated by the candidate in the self-assessment of contributions and the extended habilitation report submitted for the competition. The experimental studies on which the publications presented in the competition are based, demonstrate a consistently developing research line based on a complex

biological evaluation of the tested plants: phytochemistry, metabolomics, antioxidant, antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory activity, as well as potential for pharmaceutical application.

The practical application of the obtained results is evident from what the applicant presented in **Indicator G9**. Invention, patent or utility model, for which a protection document has been issued in accordance with the due procedure. and **Indicator G10**. Published application for a patent or utility model (Patch for healing skin wounds and method for its preparation. Patent application No. 113914/12.06.2024). The patch for healing skin wounds finds application in medicine. It has been established that the patches, including methanol extract of *Marrubium peregrinum*, with a concentration of 4 to 8 mg/cm², show very good wound healing effect, proven by histological studies of preparations from the wound surface of rats, after their euthanasia. The study of inflammatory (TNF- α and IL-6) and anti-inflammatory (IL-10) cytokines in the tissue homogenate, as well as the level of hydroxyproline, showed increased cell proliferation and collagen synthesis compared to control samples that did not contain *Marrubium peregrinum* extract.

From the scientific publications presented, it is evident that Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov is an established researcher with a clearly defined profile in the field of botany, phytochemistry and ecology. Proof of the high scientific value of his works is the number of citations (46) according to **Indicator D**, which gives him 92 points.

Chief Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov fulfills the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", in the field of higher education 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional field 4.3. Biological sciences, according to Art. 2b of the the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the additional requirements according to the Regulations for the career development of the academic staff of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. For certain groups of indicators (for example, G and D), he has more points than required.

It is not to be overlooked that Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Todorov actively participates in the life of the Faculty of Biology (participation in the Committee for the preparation of the Academic Council, participation in the Committee for the attestation of the academic staff at the Faculty of Biology, participation in the treasurer's Committee for conducting state exams in the bachelor's program at the Faculty of Biology, participation in the Committee for the organization and conduct of the student competition "Journey in Biology", participation in the organization of international forums, member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Biology at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv).

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks about the candidate's pedagogical and scientific activities, especially regarding the scientific publications, which have nevertheless been peer-reviewed before publication. I believe that Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov is a highly erudite, ethical lecturer and scientist with international recognition.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Tihomirov Todorov meet all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADSRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ADSRB and the relevant Regulations of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the PhD degree and holding the academic position "Chief Assistant Professor". The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition, with a representative part of them being published in journals and in scientific collections published by international academic publishing houses. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, with some of them being directly aimed at academic work. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov are indisputable.

The results achieved by Ch. Ass. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov in academic and research activities fully meet the minimum national requirements and the additional requirements of the Faculty of Biology.

After reviewing the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition, and given their significance and the scientific, applied and scientific-applied contributions contained therein, I find it reasonable to give my **positive assessment** and to confidently recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report and proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Biology for the election of **Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimir Tihomirov Todorov** to the academic position of "**Associate Professor**" at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv in the field of higher education 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.3. Biological Sciences (Botany).

18.02. 2026 г.

Prepared by:

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