

OPINION

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lyubka Hristova Koleva-Valkova
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regarding the materials presented for participation in a competition
for the academic position „Associate Profesor“
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 Profesor, 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

By order No. PD-22-39/09.01.2026 of the rector of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at 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.

The set of materials, presented by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimir Todorov in electronic format, is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. A total of 29 scientific publications, 3 study guides, 1 patent certificate, 1 patent application, a list of participation in projects and research forums, certificates and documents in accordance with the requirements of the faculty are attached. Nineteen scientific papers that are outside the dissertation, 3 study guides and 7 research and educational projects are accepted for review in connection with this competition. Four scientific papers on the dissertation and 6 scientific papers used to acquire the academic position of chief assistant are not reviewed. All peer-reviewed scientific papers have been published in English in refereed journals and indexed in Scopus and WOS and clearly outline the professional profile of the candidate.

Krasimir Todorov completed his higher education at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv as follows: Bachelor's degree in 2011, specialty "Ecology and Environmental Protection",

Master's degree in 2013, specialty "Medicinal and Essential Plants" and Doctor's degree in 2018, in the PhD Program "Botany". His career development began in 2013 at the same university in the Department of Botany and Biology Teaching Methodology as an assistant, and in 2018 he won a competition for chief assistant in the Department of Botany and Biological Education. Since 2025, the candidate has held the position of chief assistant at the Medical University of Plovdiv in the Department of Bioorganic Chemistry, with main responsibilities of conducting exercises in "Pharmaceutical Botany". Krasimir Todorov's professional development also includes working as a laboratory assistant in the period 2017 - 2018 in the Department of Botany and Biology Teaching Methodology, contributing to his enrichment as a specialist botanist.

2. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

Evaluation of the educational and pedagogical activity

Chief Assistant Professor Krasimir Todorov has over 12 years of teaching experience, seven of which are as a chief assistant. He conducts laboratory exercises and field practices in "Botany", "Hydrobiology", "Pharmacognosy" and "Anatomy and Morphology of Plants" for bachelors from various specialties at PU. In addition, the candidate has been lecturing to bachelors in "Botany" and "Anatomy and Morphology of Plants" for the last three years, and in "Ecology and Environmental Protection" for two years. The candidate's teaching activities also include classes (lectures and exercises in "Botany" and exercises in "Essential Oil Plants, Hydrobiology and Marine Biology" and "Pharmacognosy") with master's students from PU "Paisiy Hilendarski", as well as classes (lectures and exercises in "Hydrobiology") with bachelors from the branch in the city of Kardzhali. The presented references shows that the annual workload of the Ch. Assist. Prof. Krasimir Todorov, is significant, averaging over 500-600 teaching hours.

To participate in the competition for Associate Professor, Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Todorov has presented 3 study guides: on "Botany (Pharmaceutical Botany)", ISBN 978-619-281-065-8, in which he is the first author; on "Anatomy and Morphology of Plants (Pharmaceutical Botany Part I)", ISBN 978-619-281-066-5 and on "Plant Systematics (Pharmaceutical Botany Part II)", ISBN 978-619-281-064-1.

The teaching and pedagogical activities of Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Todorov also include individual work with graduates, and to date he has participated in the supervision of six successfully defended graduates. The candidate has extensive administrative experience - he participates in committees for the preparation of the CSC, for attestation, for conducting the student competition "Journey in Biology", in the bursar's committee for conducting the state exam, is a member of the faculty council and editor of the journal *Ecologia balkanica*.

Evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied activity

To participate in the competition for “Associate Professor” in “Botany”, Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Todorov presents 19 scientific publications divided into two groups of indicators as follows:

Indicator B4: Four publications in journals with Q1 with a total IF of 18.058 are presented, accompanied by an extended habilitation report, giving 100 points. The publications are interdisciplinary and related to the study of the phytochemical profile, metabolomic characterization and biological activity of plant species from the *Lamiaceae* family. Specifically, two taxonomic lines with high bioresource value and limited distribution were studied, namely the genera *Micromeria* and *Marrubium*. Due to the complex nature of the research, the publications have large author teams and are published in the renowned journals *Heliyon*, *Plants* and *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*.

Indicator G7: In this group 15 publications with a total IF of 15.677 are presented, of which three are in Q1, two in Q2, one in Q3, nine in Q4 and one publication is without a quartile, giving 218 points. The publications clearly outline the professional profile of the candidate and are related to the study of the distribution, morphology, phytochemical composition and biological activity of medicinal and endemic plants mainly from *Asteraceae*, *Lamiaceae* and *Rosaceae*.

Part of the scientific achievements have been skillfully used in an applied direction. The candidate has submitted documents for a patent for one utility model and one patent application, providing 40 points for indicators G9 and G10. For indicator D11, 46 citations have been submitted, all in journals referenced and indexed in Scopus and WOS, giving 98 points. In connection with the minimum national scientometric requirements for occupying an academic position of "Associate Professor", 400 points from indicators A to G are required. The candidate, Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov, exceeds these requirements and participates with 500 points.

Proof of the active scientific activity of Ch. Asst. Prof. Dr. Todorov is his participation in seven national projects, two of which are educational (one completed and one ongoing), and five are research (two ongoing at the moment).

3. Main critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks about the pedagogical or scientific activities of Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov. All indicators and criteria for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" have been met.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and evaluation of the educational, pedagogical and scientific activities, I believe that Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimir Todorov meets all the requirements of the Regulation for Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (RDASRB) and the

Regulation for application of the RDASRB, as well as the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The candidate has presented the required number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of the PhD degree, as well as for obtaining the academic position of Chief Assistant. The scientific works of the candidate contain significant number of scientific and applied scientific contributions that have received international recognition, as evidenced by the large number of citations and the patented utility model. The scientific and teaching qualification of the Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Todorov is undoubted and fully meets the requirements at the national and local level for obtaining the academic position of "Associate Professor".

After reviewing the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition and in view of 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 to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Biology for the **election of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimir Tikhomirov Todorov to the academic position of "Associate Professor"** at the Paisiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv in the field of higher education 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.3. Biological Sciences (Botany).

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Prepared the opinion:

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