

## OPINION

by **Prof. Iren Yordanova Peltekova, PhD**,  
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**About:** competition for the occupation of an academic position "**associate professor**" in "Methodology of teaching physical education (sports animation)" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in . . . for the needs of the "Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy" department at the Faculty of Pedagogy, announced by Trakia University, Stara Zagora. The competition was announced Official Gazette, № 38 of 28.04.2023 r.

**Reason for presenting the opinion:** I participate in the composition of a scientific jury according to Order № RD 2348 of 29.06.2023 of the Rector of the University of Trakia (Stara Zagora) on the basis of Art. 4, para. 5, item 5 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB/ZRASRB), art. 5, para. (14) and (15) from Regulations for the development of the scientific staff at the Trakia University and a report from the Dean of the PF.

To participate in the announced competition, the only candidate submitted documents:  
**Assistant Donka Dincheva Zheleva-Terzieva, PhD**

### 1. Application data

The documents submitted for the competition by Assistant Donka Dincheva Zheleva-Terzieva meet all the criteria in terms of the procedure for holding the current competition. The documents are carefully described and systematized, which greatly facilitates the evaluation of the presented materials.

The candidate assistant Donka Dincheva Zheleva-Terzieva, PhD, participates with scientific production and materials with additional requirements from the Ministry of Education, which bring her a total of 690 points, with which she covers and exceeds the minimum national requirements of 400 points.

In the quantitative aspect, in the competition for associate professor, assistant Donka Zheleva-Terzieva participated with scientific works, including 2 monographs, one of which was a defended dissertation, 23 articles and reports published in Bulgarian and international publications and 14 developed educational programs. The list of publications submitted for review testifies to a very good publication activity, mainly in the field of physical education teaching pedagogy, animation and prevention for a healthy lifestyle through sports activities.

### 2. Data on the candidate

Donka Dincheva Zheleva-Terzieva has been a teacher on an employment contract at the Faculty of Pedagogy at the Trakia University, Stara Zagora since May 2015 and holds the academic position of "assistant" in Theory and methodology of physical education and sports (including physical therapy)

Her professional path from 1996 to 2015 passed through the field of FES teacher, senior FES teacher and senior sports training teacher.

The sports biography shows that she was a player in handball and football, and in the 1991/1992 season she became the champion of the Republic of Bulgaria in football. Donka Zheleva-Terzieva is an established and recognizable football referee at the national and international level. After ending her career as a judge in 2014, she began to perform the functions of a judge observer and delegate in the united southern group (EUG) and the Third League. Donka Zheleva-Terzieva is a mentor under the "Mentors and Talents" program of the BFS for the development of women's football refereeing - level 2 from 2017 to 2021 and the "Mentors and Talents" program of the BFS for the development of football refereeing - level 1 from 2021 to date.

Zheleva-Terzieva's public commitments are related to "SC Wide hearth", Stara Zagora - an association working in the field of sports and sports animation, of which she is the Chairman. Since 2016, she has been the Vice-Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Directors of the BFS (Stara Zagora), and since 2017, the coordinator of the "Grassroots" program for the development of school (girls') football for the Stara Zagora region.

All the listed facts about Donka Zheleva-Terzieva in themselves speak of her ability to combine many activities at a high professional level, to train young people and to successfully communicate with a diverse audience. She emerges as an educated, active, communicative and enthusiastic person, which will certainly help her to excel in her teaching activities as an associate professor.

### **3. Teaching, project and scientific activity**

The teaching workload of Assistant Donka Zheleva-Terzieva covers a wide range of academic disciplines. As an assistant with a doctorate in education, she leads exercises and lectures - a total of 19 courses. As. Dr. Donka Zheleva-Terzieva has developed 14 study programs, of which nine are in disciplines for the study plans of students from EQD "Bachelor" and EQD "Master", and the rest are for training at the Postgraduate for the acquisition of an additional professional qualification "Initial teacher" and "Children's teacher".

The candidate's project activity consists of participation in six scientific projects of Trakia University, all related to education.

As. Dr. Zheleva-Terzieva actively participates in scientific conferences at the national and international level, where she presents her research and contacts and exchanges experience with colleagues from other universities. She has presented in the package of documents certificates for 10 participations in scientific conferences.

I definitely think that the teaching activity of assistant professor Dr. Zheleva-Terzieva is distinguished by diversity, while at the same time she keeps within the scope of her competences. Participation in project activities and scientific conferences demonstrates the candidate's creativity, research and presentation abilities and professionalism. The citation report provided demonstrates that her research is known in the scientific community and used by her colleagues.

### **4. Synthesized evaluation of the scientific works submitted for the competition**

The habilitation work with which she participated in the competition is entitled "***The role of the cognitive sphere in the teaching of physical education***". The work has a volume of 144 pages and was reviewed by two reviewers: Prof. Dr. Zhaneta Stoykova, Ph.D. and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kornelia Naydenova. In it, the author considers knowledge as a cognitive basis for training in physical education and sports and a prerequisite for implementing an effective educational process in the field of physical culture, and self-assessment as a manifestation of reflective behavior leading to self-actualization. The theoretical and practical experience of the author is expressed through a precise, comprehensive and systematic analysis of both the theoretical side of the issue - knowledge as a basis for competence-oriented education, and the practical focus of training in physical education and sports (FES). Donka Zheleva-Terzieva has invested her research efforts in a little-discussed field of sports pedagogy, namely the importance of the theoretical potential of the personality as a basis for the formation of skills and habits, attitudes and attitudes in the field of physical education and sports. The reading of the theoretical part of the monographic work gives grounds for evaluating the author's excellent level of analytical preparation. The systematicity of the presentation leaves the impression of skills for combining knowledge from pedagogy and psychology and their correct presentation. Several semantic emphases can be distinguished in the monograph. First of all, an analytical-interpretive overview of the connection and dependence between the theories of cognitive development and learning and FFS activities is made. The author presents in detail the theories of various authors regarding sensation, perception, attention, memory, thinking and speech as the basis for the cognitive processes and states forming the cognitive sphere of the personality, which in turn influence human emotions and behavior. Another semantic and conceptual emphasis is arguably placed on the consideration of motor action as a mental act with a physical direction. The precisely formulated methodological components – object, subject, goal, tasks and hypotheses of the empirical research presented in the monograph are mutually dependent. They imply a practical-applied approach that has been successfully implemented. The selected methods for conducting the empirical research and processing the obtained data are reliable and appropriately selected. The contingent of researched persons and the stages for the realization of the research are correctly presented and are in sync with the scientific search for answers to the problems posed. The author knows how to summarize and interpret empirical facts. He is able to go beyond numerical data and reach the depth and essence of the studied phenomena. The precise text shows the excellent pedagogical competence and statistical literacy of Assistant Donka Zheleva-Terzieva. The author was able to outline the complex picture of the physical education and sports training process in the Bulgarian school, draw useful conclusions, outline the problems and offer a realistic option for dealing with them. With her habilitation thesis, she boldly and widely opens the doors to future discussions related to the need to create a textbook on the subject "Physical Education and Sport" and the planning and conducting of specialized presentation lecture classes with a theoretical orientation of the training in integral consideration of the cognitive base of the educational process. Here I take the liberty of expressing my unequivocal support for this challenging initiative. The tabular and graphical presentation of the results correspond to the text of the analysis, which is appropriate for better understanding by the reader.

The habilitation monograph is a work that is distinguished by a significant contribution character, and the theoretical contributions, in my opinion, are concentrated in the first chapter, and the practical-applied ones in the third chapter. The work is readable, written in an understandable and at the same time scientific style, well illustrated and logically presented. As a specialist, it was a pleasure for me to familiarize myself with the content.

The second monograph *"Sports and animation competence of the pedagogue"*. UI Tr.U Stara Zagora, 2021; ISBN 978-954-314-108-1 was issued on the basis of a protected dissertation work by the author on the topic "Formation of professional-pedagogical competence for sports-animation activity". The book examines the academic profile of the pedagogue as a sports animator and proves categorically that through the formation of sports-animation competence in pedagogues, a real opportunity is created for them to manage to maintain optimal motor activity in young people. It can be noted that the growing hypodynamia in modern society is a disease that affects people of all age groups, and dealing with this problem sounds more and more relevant. As is known, the main symptoms of hypodynamia are lack of physical activity, overweight, reduced work capacity, insomnia and emotional lability. The scientific research of researchers from many scientific fields plays a big role in solving these problems. With the development and presentation of an author's system-structural model for the formation of the sports-animation competence of the pedagogue, the monographic work of Donka Zheleva-Terzieva contributes to the solution of part of the problem.

As. Dr. Donka Zheleva-Terzieva is part of the author team of the collective monograph "Competency Approach in Teaching Students of Pedagogical Specialties" (2021) with first author Maria Temnikova, and Assistant Zheleva-Terzieva's commitment is writing the chapter "Competency Approach in the education of students of pedagogical specialties (p. 214-223). The author of the chapter reviews the diagnosis in the field of physical culture in the educational system with an emphasis on the control, verification and evaluation of the degree of mastery of motor actions and the level of physical ability. The test battery used to assess the degree of physical ability as part of the diagnosis in the field of school education is thoroughly and graphically presented. Assessment methods and the variety of motor tests used in preschool are also indicated.

The other publications complement and deepen the monographic studies by analyzing various aspects of the field of sports-animation pedagogical competence and leading a healthy lifestyle - publications with №. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 16. The scientific the author's searches are also aimed at the education of schoolchildren and students - publications with № 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

The unequivocal conclusion regarding the scientific production of Donka Zheleva-Terzieva is that it is distinguished by thoroughness, research precision, creative approach and practical applicability. Her scientific analyzes and proposed solutions contribute to the deepening and expansion of sports-pedagogical issues.

##### **5. Contributions**

Accepting the contributions formulated by Assistant Donka Zheleva-Terzieva, I find reason to summarize that the personal contribution of the candidate Assistant Professor Donka

Zheleva-Terzieva is of a theoretical and practical-applied nature and directed in the following main directions:

- Expanding the theory and methodology of FES - application of cognitive aspects in physical education training in the context of the competence approach;
- Modernization of the academic training of students from pedagogical specialties - a developed and approved author's model for the formation of professional-pedagogical competence for the implementation of sports-animation activities with preschool and school-age children and developed curricula for university documentation;
- Formation of a healthy generation and leading a healthy lifestyle with the means of physical education and sports and animation - numerous scientific articles proving that the widespread introduction of physical exercises and sports into people's lives can contribute to the improvement of physical, mental and social well-being of the individual, group and society.

### **Conclusion**

Expressing my satisfaction with the scientific, teaching and research achievements of the candidate and assessing the contributions, relevance and significance of her developments, **I give my positive vote for Assistant Donka Dincheva Zheleva-Terzieva** for the academic position of "associate professor" in "Methodology of training in physical education (sports animation)" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.Z. Pedagogy of training in . . . , for the needs of the "Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy" department at the Faculty of Education.

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Prepared the opinion:

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