

OPINION

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**Regarding: reviewed scientific works and academic activity
of Assoc. Prof. Todor Zhelyazkov Marinov, PhD,**

the only applicant for participation in a procedure for filling the academic position Professor, announced by the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“ in State Gazette, Issue 96 of 11 November 2025 in professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of education in..., specialty „Theory and Methodology of Physical Education“ at the Department of „Theory of Physical Education“ at the Faculty of „Pedagogy“ of the National Academy of Sciences „Vasil Levski“.

I.Procedure details

The competition was announced for the needs of the Department of „Theory of Physical Education“ at the Faculty of Pedagogy at NSA „Vasil Levski“, according to the Decision of the Faculty Council under protocol №10 / 02 December 2025. I participate in the scientific jury of the competition according to Order № ZP-1290 / 04.12.2025 of the Rector of NSA „Vasil Levski“.

II.Applicant details

Todor Marinov was born on August 22, 1981 in Sofia. In 2004, he graduated from the Vasil Levski National Sports Academy with a bachelor's degree in two specialties – „Physical Education Teacher“ and „Aikido Coach“. In 2005, he graduated from the Vasil Levski National Sports Academy with a master's degree in „Sports at School and Leisure“. In 2007, through a winning competition, he was appointed as an assistant professor in the Department of „Theory of Physical Education“ at the Vasil Levski National Sports Academy. In 2014, he obtained the educational and scientific degree of „PhD“, and in 2016 he became an „Associate Professor“.

The candidate has an extremely rich career. From 2016 to the present, he has been a Marketing Manager and a member of the Program Council of the Center for Postgraduate Qualification at the Vasil Levski National Sports Academy. From the same 2016 to the present, he has been the head of a number of specializations for acquiring the professional qualification „Physical Education Teacher“ at the Center for Postgraduate Qualification of the Vasil Levski National Sports Academy. He is an organizer and administrator of training courses for physical education teachers for acquiring qualification credits.

He is a member of the program council of the doctoral program „Physical Education in the Educational System“. From 2019 to the present day he is a member of the Academic Council of the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“, and from 2020 to the present day he is a member of the Faculty Council

of the Faculty of Pedagogy at the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“. From 2020 to 2024 he is the head of the Department of „Theory of Physical Education“ at the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“. From April 2020 to the present day he is a member of the program council of the master's program „Physical Education and Sport“. From 2024 to the present day he is the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Pedagogy at the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“. Since 2024, he has been the Chairman of the Faculty Attestation Committee of the Faculty of Pedagogy for the term 2024-2028. Also from 2024 to the present, he has been a member of the Committee for the Recognition of Foreign Diplomas and the Committee on the Erasmus+ Program at the Vasil Levski National Sports Academy.

III. Summarized quantitative and qualitative data for the pedagogical and research activity of the candidate

The scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD fulfills the criteria for science such as truthfulness, reliability, innovation, contribution to science and practice and other features specific to scientific knowledge. The evaluation of the scientific results of the candidate, which he presents as scientometric data, written by National Center for Information and Documentation are as follows:

- Indicators in group A: a total of 50 points.
- Indicators in group B: total 100 points.
- Indicators in group G: total 268 points.
- Indicators in group D: total 210 points.
- Indicators in group E: total 371,7 points.

As can be seen, the scientometric indicators of the scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD in all three groups (G, D and E) significantly exceed the values of the required minimum requirements, according to Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

As a result of his many years of training, Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD has acquired specialized scientific knowledge and specific professional skills and competencies, which he successfully applies in academic and professional terms, in research and project activities. The candidate has participated as an expert in 13 national and 2 international scientific and educational projects in the field of physical education and sports. Here we should mention that the candidate was a functional expert for the Faculty of Pedagogy under the project „Student Internships – Phase 2“ of the Ministry of Education and Science from 2020 to 2024, as well as a functional expert for the Faculty of Pedagogy under the project „From Higher Education to Employment“ of the Ministry of Education and Science from 2025 to the present.

Evidence of the high professionalism of Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD is also found in the citation of his works in 19 scientific papers, of which 4 are in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information, and 15 in monographs, which is undoubtedly valuable for all specialists.

IV. Description of the scientific works

For his participation in the competition Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD. presents for review in theoretical, scientific-applied and practical aspects a total of 28 scientific papers in the field of Physical Education and Sports, of which by type:

1. Monograph – 1 issue
2. Articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases – 4 issues
3. Articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review – 20 issues
4. University textbook – 1 issue
5. Teaching aid used in the school network – 1 issue

The authorship of scientific publications is: independent author – 9 works and co-authorship – 17 works, of which in seven he is the first author, in six he is the second, and in four he is the third author. He is a member of the authorship team of the published university textbook and the teaching aid used in the school network.

The presented scientific production can be distributed thematically as follows:

- Theory and methodology of physical education (monograph – №V3 and publications №G6(2), G7(1), G7(2), G7(9), G7(12), university textbook №E20(1) and manual №E20(2) from the list of scientific works);
- Psychological research in physical education and sports (publications №G6(1), G6(3), G6(4), G7(7), G7(8), G7(16), G7(18) from the list of scientific works);
- Research related to the martial arts aikido, kung fu and karate, as well as the influence of twain therapy and yoga practices (publications №G7(3), G7(4), G7(6), G7(11), G7(17), G7(19), G7(20) from the list of scientific works);
- Theory and methodology of survival and preparedness for survival in disaster situations (published book based on a defended dissertation – №G5 and publications with Nos. G7(5), G7(10), G7(13), G7(14), G7(15) from the list of scientific works).

V. Scientific contributions

Of significant interest is the monograph "Fundamentals of Physical Education. Theory and Methodology", published in 2020. It has made a significant contribution to enriching knowledge in the field of physical education and is a fundamental work that clarifies the theoretical and methodological foundations of physical education, in accordance with modern trends in the development of society.

As a continuation of this topic, the textbook „Theory and Methodology of Physical Education“ E20(1), which provides the theoretical and methodological preparation of students in the specialty „Physical Education“ at the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“, as well as a Guide to the subjects of the sectoral and specific professional preparation for training in the profession of „assistant coach“ in sports schools, which is intended for students from grades IX to XII in sports schools and its purpose is related to one of the leading priorities in the

policy of the Ministry of Youth and Sports for building in sports schools a supportive environment for the development of students' talent and creating conditions for their future professional realization, as well as an opportunity for effective preparation of high school graduates for the mandatory state exam for acquiring professional qualification.

Another continuation of this topic are the publications tracking the physical ability of students, its control and assessment. In this direction, the scientific publication G7(12) „State of the system for assessing the physical ability of students from secondary schools in the Republic of Bulgaria“, as well as publications G7(1), and G7(2) have contributed. With the analysis made on „the influence of body mass on the manifestation of motor abilities of students of different ages“ – publication G6(2), the logical conclusion is reached, referring to the need to update the standards for assessing the physical ability of students, in which the achievements in the tests must be linked to the level of their security. The satisfaction of physical education teachers G7(9) has been studied.

An important area of scientific research of Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD is psychological research in physical education and sports. The contributions of the research on the emotional intelligence of students from the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“ are reduced to the fact that it is a leading criterion determining the better opportunities for professional realization of students in sports management – publication G6(4). In publication G7(7), the levels of emotional intelligence among students from the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“ were assessed. 156 participants (79 men and 77 women) from the faculties of „Pedagogy“ and "Sport" were studied and the main subgroups were identified. Higher emotional intelligence helps future physiotherapy specialists to successfully realize their personal potential and build healthy relationships with their patients, which is a major factor in their motivation to actively participate in the treatment process – publication G7(16). The interrelationships between emotional intelligence and ways of reacting to conflicts in student sports educators have been established – publication D6(3), the clarification of which establishes the readiness of the sports educator in his choice of successful behavior and actions in specific situations.

The attitudes towards sportsmanship have been established in students, future physical education teachers – publication G6(1), who have some significant differences in their attitudes towards sportsmanship, depending on gender and the type of sport (individual or team) they practice. Students who engage in individual sports have a better attitude towards the opponent, the training and competition process, as well as towards officials. Students who have not actively engaged in sports have significantly more unstable attitudes towards sportsmanship. The publications G7(8) and G7(18) analyze the structure and variability of attitudes towards sportsmanship among students and assess sportsmanship in adolescents from social homes deprived of parental care.

Another area of scientific research of Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD is the theory and methodology of survival and preparedness for survival in disaster

situations. The book G5, developed on the basis of a defended dissertation, presents the theory and methodology of a proven model for specialized training of students for survival in disaster situations. Its application shows that on the one hand it contributes to the preparation of students to act effectively in the event of disaster situations, and on the other hand – reveals the applied side of physical education in a new direction – preparation for survival as a specific activity of man and a prerequisite for preserving his life and health. Several studies have been conducted in this direction – publications G7(5), G7(10), G7(13), G7(14) and G7(15), through which we come to the conclusions that: „Readiness for survival is a complex psycho-functional state, determining the adequacy of human actions for survival in disaster situations“ and „The experimental means and methods of physical education and sports for the formation of mental, physical, technical and tactical readiness for survival are effective and are applied in practice“.

An important part of the research of Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD are the studies presented by him related to the martial arts aikido, kung fu and karate, as well as the influence of twain therapy and yoga practices.

As a result of the author's research, it was found that the application of training tools and methods in kung fu has a beneficial effect on increasing the speed-strength qualities of students of both sexes G7(3). In another work, the author found that students practicing kung fu have a more perfect structure of their physical ability as a result of the presence of more and stronger connections between the studied motor abilities G7(4). It has been established that young people who practice aikido have a more harmonious structure of the ways of reacting to conflicts compared to those who do not practice sports. They are more inclined to show cooperation, adaptation and reasonable compromise in conflict situations G7(20). Todor Marinov found that compared to the self-regulation of team sports competitors, karate players have significantly better abilities to manage their behavior, emotions and thinking G7(6), and that practicing karate leads to improved elasticity of the muscles of the posterior thigh joint G7(11). The author investigated the impact of tweena therapy on pain and quality of life in patients suffering from multiple sclerosis G7(17), as well as the impact of yoga practices on stress coping strategies G7(19).

The presented scientific production in a wide spectrum, its content, results and conclusions give us reason to define the author as a leader in the problems of physical education and sports. From the analysis of the scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD, the high competence and interpretation of scientific research are impressive.

The scientific production proposed by Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD meets the requirements for the academic position of „Professor“.

VI. Academic and scientific research activities

The announced competition has a full academic load with the relevant mandatory and elective courses.

Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD is a main lecturer at the Department of Physical Education Theory at the Faculty of Pedagogy at the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“. He is a lecturer in the subject „Theory and Methodology of Physical Education“ for students from the Faculty of Pedagogy in the specialty „Physical Education and Sports Teacher“, students from the Faculty of Sports in bachelor's degree and various master's degrees at the National Sports Academy, as well as for the various specializations for acquiring the professional qualification „Physical Education Teacher“ at the Center for Postgraduate Qualification of the National Sports Academy „Vasil Levski“. As such, he is the author of a number of innovative physical education programs for the needs of educational work with students. This fact testifies to his excellent preparation for creating, presenting and continuously updating the content of the lecture courses he leads. In terms of content, the created courses and programs reveal the classical appearance of sports science, but also its modern achievements, additionally illustrated with numerous examples from practice. All this makes them not only theoretically and practically oriented, but also particularly useful and attractive for the wide audience of students, doctoral students, athletes and specialists.

Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD is the scientific supervisor of 4 bachelor's and 1 master's students (graduates), who have successfully created and defended their diploma theses under his expert scientific guidance. He is also the scientific supervisor of three doctoral students who have defended their dissertations, and the topics of their dissertations are a kind of continuation of his scientific research and many years of research experience. In this way, he practically shares with them his effective methods and practices of how to teach and how to achieve high quality in scientific research and publication activities. All this testifies to the fact that he invests many years of consistent and purposeful efforts in his academic training and in achieving high professionalism.

The production submitted for review does not duplicate the works of other authors and there is no plagiarism.

We do not have any joint publications with Assoc. Prof. Marinov, PhD.

No violations were found during the competition.

VII. Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the presented scientific production, on my long-term personal impressions, I believe that the candidate for the academic position of „Professor“, Assoc. Prof. Todor Zhelyazkov Marinov, PhD, possesses the necessary professional, pedagogical and scientific training. Todor Marinov is a respected lecturer with an extremely rich practical and excellent theoretical training. He successfully combines scientific research activities with specific teaching work and activities carried out. He is respected among his students and colleagues.

Based on the above and the qualities of the candidate, I strongly propose to the Honorable members of the scientific jury to award Assoc. Prof. Todor Zhelyazkov Marinov, PhD – he academic position of „Professor“ in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in ..., specialty „Theory and

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