

O P I N I O N

on the competition for the academic position of "professor"

Field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching... (Theory and methodology of physical education).

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Lyubomir Spasenov Borisov, PhD

I. Competition details

The competition was announced in the State Gazette, issue 96 of 11.11.2025, for the needs of the Department of Physical Education Theory at the Faculty of Pedagogy at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski", in accordance with the Decision of the Faculty Council under Protocol No. 10 /02.12.2025. I am a member of the scientific jury for the competition in accordance with Order No. ZP-1290 / 04.12.2025 of the Rector of the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski". The only candidate participating in the competition is Assoc. Prof. Todor Zhelyazkov Marinov, PhD, who has a permanent employment contract with the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski".

The competition procedure was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Act, the Regulations for its application, and the Regulations for acquiring the academic degree of "Doctor of Science" and for occupying academic positions at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski." No violations were found.

II. Information about the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Todor Zhelyazkov Marinov, PhD (born on 22 August 1981 in Sofia), is an established lecturer and researcher in the field of physical education and

sports methodology. His professional career is marked by consistent academic development and significant contributions to the administrative and scientific management of the National Sports Academy (NSA) "Vasil Levski".

Education and qualifications

Assoc. Prof. Marinov's academic career began at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski," where in 2004 he earned a bachelor's degree with honors and two specializations: "Physical Education Teacher" and "Aikido Coach." In 2005, he furthered his expertise with a master's degree in "Physical Education and Sports" with a specialization in "Sports in School and Leisure Time." In 2005, he furthered his expertise with a master's degree in Physical Education and Sports, specializing in Sports in School and Leisure Time.

In 2014, he successfully defended his dissertation on "A Model for Specialized Training of Students for Survival in Disaster Situations," for which he was awarded the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in the scientific field of "Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports Training" (including the methodology of therapeutic physical education).

Academic development and positions held

His professional career at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski" began in 2007 as an assistant in the Department of Theory of Physical Education. Thanks to his high level of theoretical training and methodological experience, he was elected to the academic position of associate professor in 2016. In terms of administration, Assoc. Prof. Marinov has held a number of key positions:

- Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Pedagogy (elected in 2024) ;
- Head of the Department of Theory of Physical Education in the period 2020-2024;
- Marketing Manager at the Center for Postgraduate Qualification (CPQ) at the NSA;

- Member of the Academic Council of the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski" and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Pedagogy.

Expert activity

Assoc. Prof. Todor Marinov is actively involved in project work, having participated in two international scientific projects and served as an expert on 13 national scientific projects. As a scientific supervisor, he has successfully prepared three doctoral students who have obtained a PhD degree and four graduates. His participation in a number of faculty committees and expert councils underscores his authority in the academic community.

Personal skills and competences

The candidate has high digital literacy and outstanding organisational and communication skills, which form the basis of his effective teaching and administrative work. His work is characterised by purposefulness and high professionalism in the methodological support of the teaching process.

III. Research activity and contributions of the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Todor Marinov, PhD, participates in this competition with significant scientific achievements, which exceed the requirements of the ZRASRB and the specific criteria of the NSA "Vasil Levski" in terms of quantity and quality. His academic career is marked by a strong integration between long-standing teaching experience and in-depth research activity.

The data on the candidate's scientometric indicators are as follows:

- Indicators in group A: total 50 points
- Indicators in group B: total 100 points
- Indicators in group C: total 268 points
- Indicators in group D: total 210 points
- Indicators in group E: total 371.7 points

In the announced competition for the academic position of "professor," the candidate presents the following works and publications:

Monographs – 1

Book based on a defended dissertation – 1

Published university textbook – 1

Articles published in scientific journals indexed in world-renowned peer-reviewed databases – 4

Articles published in non-peer-reviewed scientific journals – 20

Teaching aid used in the school network – 1.

In 7 of the publications, Assoc. Prof. Marinov is the sole author, and in 17 he is a co-author. The number of citations is 19, of which 4 are in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific information databases, and 15 are in monographs.

The scientific works of Assoc. Prof. Todor Marinov submitted for review can be systematically classified into three main thematic areas:

1. Theory and methodology of physical education;
2. Psychological research in physical education and sports;
3. Theory and methodology of survival and preparedness for survival in disaster situations.

The monograph and teaching aids, which represent a complete system of theoretical knowledge and practical guidelines, occupy a central place in the candidate's scientific work.

The monograph "Fundamentals of Physical Education. Theory and Methodology" (B3) represents a significant contribution to sports pedagogy. In it, Assoc. Prof. Marinov offers a comprehensive view of physical education in sync with contemporary social transformations. The main scientific merits of the work are:

- **Systematic characteristics:** For the first time, a detailed analysis of the structure of the physical education system is presented. The author specifies its main functions, placing special emphasis on their social dimensions — educational, constructive, and especially integrative (inclusive) functions, which are critically important in the contemporary multicultural context.

- **Organizational and methodological structure:** The work defines and analyzes the pillars on which the functioning of the system in Bulgarian schools rests. This includes the regulatory framework, program content, staffing, and material and technical conditions.

- **Classroom and extracurricular activities:** Assoc. Prof. Marinov proposes innovative approaches to organizing the learning process, clarifying the typology of physical education and sports (PES) lessons and the specifics of extracurricular forms of learning, ensuring a smooth transition between students' compulsory and free time. A comprehensive differentiation of the motor abilities of adolescents and their dynamics in different ontogenetic periods is presented, while at the same time specific methodological approaches for optimizing each quality within the physical education and sports learning process are defined.

In the NSA Vasil Levski textbook *Theory and Methods of Physical Education*, Assoc. Prof. Todor Marinov is the author of key segments. Within the total volume of 324 pages, he has developed four sections of the first part of the publication and is co-author of the final fifth part, focused on the methodology of scientific research in sports. The textbook has been developed with a high degree of didactic precision and is directly aimed at the training of future educators.

Publication activity and international recognition:

The candidate demonstrates a sustained presence in international scientific exchange with publications in refereed journals. His research in the Trakia Journal of Sciences addresses current interdisciplinary issues:

- Emotional intelligence and conflicts: The positive role of aikido in building harmonious strategies for dealing with conflicts has been proven (G7.20).
- BMI and motor skills: The analysis of the body mass index (G7.15) provides valuable guidelines for the prevention of physical inactivity in adolescents.

Within the thematic area "Theory and methodology of preparedness for survival in extreme and disaster situations," the author presents a series of scientific papers [G7(5), G7(10), G7(13)-(15)], whose contributions are defined primarily as scientific and applied. Central to this is the conceptualization of "survival readiness" as a complex psycho-functional state that determines the adequacy of human responses in critical conditions. Of particular value are the experimentally tested methodologies in the field of physical education and sports, aimed at optimizing mental, technical, and tactical training [G7(10), G7(15)].

A logical continuation of this research is the monograph "Specialized Training for Students on Survival in Disaster Situations" (2025). The publication offers a methodical model verified in practice, which builds on the author's dissertation contributions and offers contemporary solutions to current problems of stress management and risk prevention among adolescents.

I declare that I have no joint publications with the candidate in the competition – Assoc. Prof. Todor Zhelyazkov Marinov, PhD.

IV. Conclusion

Assoc. Prof. Todor Marinov, PhD, is an established university lecturer, scientist, and expert with proven authority in the field of physical education theory and methodology. He has high pedagogical and scientific research expertise and

excellent theoretical and methodological-practical training. His candidacy in this competition meets all the requirements and criteria set by the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application, and the regulatory requirements of the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski."

Based on everything stated so far and knowing the qualities of the candidate, I confidently propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to award Assoc. Prof. Todor Zhelyazkov Marinov, PhD, the academic position of "Professor" in the professional field 1.3. Pedagogy of Education in..., specialty "Theory and Methods of Physical Education" at the Department of Theory of Physical Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski".

16.02.2026

Sofia

Prepared by:

/Assoc. Prof. Lyubomir Borisov, PhD/