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**ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN  
STUDENTS IN SOFIA IN THE 1960S AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE  
1970S**

(Summary)

The article traces the initial period of the development of the Institute of Foreign Students in Sofia, Bulgaria (1963–1976). The institute was established in 1963 in order to meet the needs of a specialized institution which had to take care of the education of the citizens coming from the so called Third World countries. Students went through a preparatory department within one academic year. At the Institute they studied mainly Bulgarian language, but also general education and ideological subjects, and then continued their studies in secondary and higher Bulgarian educational institutions. The institution was important because it was the first place in which foreign citizens had the opportunity to get acquainted with the Bulgarian state and the regime, culture and customs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.