
Irina Yakimova***BULGARIA IN THE EEC/EU'S POLICY TOWARD EASTERN
EUROPE IN THE LATE 1980s AND DURING THE 1990s**

(Summary)

The preserved archival documents show that the European Economic Community (the future EU) began to build its political line towards the countries to the East of the “Iron Curtain” even before the outbreak of the “velvet revolutions” in 1989, in order to counterbalance the Soviet ideas of restructuring and “opening” to the West. After the collapse of communism, it was further clarified, especially in the field of diplomacy as regards the legal settlement of bilateral relations, in their entire spectrum of commercial, economic and later, political topics. The article focuses on the “Bulgarian aspect” of this large-scale process, which has so far remained partially examined in historiography. By the use of a complex problem-chronological approach and several parallel levels of analysis – bilateral, Eastern European and global – the “case” of Bulgaria is placed in the direct context of the CEE-EEC contacts, and hence also in the inevitable general context of the ongoing rapprochement between the East and The West. Based on newly declassified and published documents, the general and specific manifestations of Bulgaria’s association to the European geopolitical space are analysed, although without searching explicit parallels with the other former Soviet allies. The author’s assessments and conclusions regarding the challenges which Bulgaria had to overcome in the course of its integration into the EEC/EU are presented,

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as well as the reasons for the permanent suspicion on the part of the Brussels' institutions. The article reveals also the inevitable influence of the international political conjuncture on the legal settlement of practical tradeeconomic issues, before and after the official collapse of the State socialism and its international structures for political and economic cooperation.

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