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## Squeezed between external trade barriers and internal economic problems: Bulgaria's trade with Denmark in the 1970s

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### ABSTRACT

This paper investigates Bulgaria's trade strategy towards the European Economic Community (EEC) in the 1970s: a decade of intensified economic exchange between East and West thanks to *détente* and, simultaneously, of growing trade barriers due to the consolidation of the EEC's Common Market. The successes and failures of Bulgaria's endeavours are discussed through a study of economic cooperation with Denmark before and after its accession to the EEC in 1973. The main argument is that while Bulgarian economic policy focused on the rising regulatory impediments to trade with EEC members, it neglected the structural deficiencies of Bulgarian export production. Thereby, Bulgarian state officials strove to resolve foreign trade problems through diplomatic negotiations over customs regulations instead of advancing domestic economic reforms. This argument is supported by analysis of intergovernmental economic negotiations and trade deals between Bulgaria and Denmark during the 1970s. It highlights the different ways in which Bulgarian trade envoys in Copenhagen and top officials at home evaluated recurrent problems in accessing the Danish market and formulated solutions for these problems. Thus, instead of tackling internal structural problems, the blueprints for Bulgaria's foreign trade focused on external foes, namely trade discrimination against socialist countries.

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In the summer of 1972, the Bulgarian trade attachés stationed in the West convened in Sofia to deliberate on global market trends and how they impacted on the prospects of Bulgarian trade with the developed capitalist economies.<sup>1</sup> Although issues of long-distance trade also entered the discussion, the focus was firmly on the European Economic Community (EEC), also known as the Common Market, which accounted for the major part of Bulgarian commercial transactions outside of the Soviet bloc.<sup>2</sup> The most pressing questions stemmed from the changing relations between the EEC and Bulgaria in light of the Community's supranational regulations of members' trade with non-members and their discriminatory thrust specifically towards the socialist states. The urgency of this problem was twofold due to the broadening of both EEC competence and membership, that is, the implementation of the Common Commercial Policy (CCP) and the upcoming accession of the UK, Denmark and Ireland.<sup>3</sup>

Despite their concerns about rising trade barriers, the attending attachés all veered into far more mundane trade problems once they got the chance to speak out. The

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source of all these problems was Bulgarian producers, as illustrated by the trade representative in Brussels: 'We asked two Belgian machine-building enterprises to test our electric trucks and they agreed. But [the trucks] travelled five months [...]. Finally, the trucks arrive and it turns out that their ignition keys are missing.'<sup>4</sup> A similar complaint was voiced by his colleague in Stockholm:

It often happens that we work on [the placement of] a certain product but when we come to an agreement and the deal is sealed, the enterprise says this product is no longer available and they cannot deliver. For four years, Electroimpex has wanted to sell cables in Sweden. When we arranged a deal for them, they said they didn't have cables.<sup>5</sup>

Dimitar Alexiev, trade attaché in Copenhagen, discussed at length the repercussions of Denmark's approaching entry to the EEC on bilateral trade only to get back to the same frustrations with home organizations that had nothing to do with the changing terms of trade. At the end of the day, he concluded, the main problem was their 'sluggishness' that spoilt actual opportunities for exports to the Danish market.<sup>6</sup>

Based on an in-depth study of Bulgarian–Danish economic cooperation, this paper tackles the Bulgarian foreign-trade strategy *vis-à-vis* the EEC in the 1970s: a decade of intensified economic exchange between East and West thanks to *détente* and, simultaneously, of growing trade barriers between the two halves of Europe due to the EEC's deepening integration. The main argument is that while the Bulgarian government focused on the tightening regulatory impediments to access the Common Market, it largely evaded the structural deficiencies of its export production. While at home bureaucrats had been experimenting with various administrative measures to raise production quality and thereby customer satisfaction ever since the early 1960s, as long as these measures steered clear of in-depth reform of the central planning system, they failed to incentivise producers to boost quality rather than quantity.<sup>7</sup> In foreign trade, consequentially, Bulgarian state officials concentrated their efforts on resolving foreign-trade problems through futile diplomatic negotiations instead of advancing domestic economic reforms.

While seemingly less important than Bulgarian trade relations with larger Western European countries like the FRG, Italy and France, cooperation with Denmark provides solid grounds for a study of East–West exchange at the cross-section of new opportunities for political dialogue opened by *détente* and new difficulties for economic cooperation due to the consolidation of the Common Market. On the one hand, Denmark was a strong supporter of East–West rapprochement playing a significant role in the *détente* process in Europe.<sup>8</sup> On the other, its entry into the EEC in January 1973 occurred at a moment when its commercial relations with socialist countries and Bulgaria in particular were already well established. Rather than a starting limitation as in the case of Bulgaria's main Western partners, therefore, the Danish membership in the EEC represented a sudden disruption. Denmark's accession, however went through a five-year transition period of gradual harmonization of external tariffs. This gave its socialist trade partners time to reassess their strategy, to test new approaches and explore alternative options to circumvent rising barriers. These attempts were particularly urgent because the stakes also went up due to the looming threat of the CCP, which would eventually transfer the rights to negotiate

international commercial agreements from the individual EEC members to the supranational body of the EC Commission.

Bulgaria's economic relations with Denmark had thus far evolved on pragmatic terms, nurtured throughout the 1960s by business operatives rather than politicians. This had not been the case with economic partnerships with the FRG, the main trade partner of socialist Bulgaria in the West, where geopolitical considerations often ran contrary to economic interests.<sup>9</sup> In the 1970s, however, Danish membership in the EEC catapulted bilateral economic relations into the middle of the political stalemate between the EEC and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).<sup>10</sup> The intricacies of upholding the Soviet bloc's policy of non-recognition of the EEC's authority while preserving access to its markets posed a new challenge for Bulgaria's cooperation with Denmark – a challenge of a political, not purely an economic nature. The political search for solutions subsequently obscured persistent pragmatic problems in Bulgarian–Danish economic partnerships. This caused a dissonance in the views of the Bulgarian foreign-trade operatives in Copenhagen and their superiors in the government.

Through a case study on Bulgarian–Danish economic cooperation, this paper therefore provides a qualified assessment of the impact of the Common Market on the trade strategies of the socialist regimes towards Western Europe. It is based on declassified documents from Bulgaria's Central State Archives as well as Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives concerning both the macro-strategy of Bulgarian foreign trade towards the EEC and the activities on the ground of the trade envoys in Denmark.<sup>11</sup> Documents from the Danish National Archives regarding relations with Bulgaria are also consulted to corroborate the viewpoints of Bulgarian institutions. The analysis juxtaposes the perspectives of Bulgarian state officials and foreign-trade operatives towards the pressing problems they identified, and the successes and failures of the strategies they devised to tackle these problems.

### **The spur of Bulgarian economic reforms in the 1960s and the start of economic cooperation with Denmark**

In the early 1960s, the Bulgarian regime made cautious attempts at economic reforms following a general trend throughout the Soviet bloc whose most radical manifestation would eventually take shape in Czechoslovakia and precipitate the Prague Spring.<sup>12</sup> The shared impetus of bloc-wide reforms was industrial modernization through a shift from extensive to intensive growth. Like elsewhere in the bloc, the overhaul of the economic base in Bulgaria necessitated both institutional and technological improvements. The first reform component, institutional change, was founded on a relative decentralization of the planning process: that is, increasing the managerial powers of enterprises to determine plan targets, negotiate purchases and sales, and decide on the allocation of profits.<sup>13</sup> Technological upgrade, for its part, was largely conditional on transfer of knowhow and factory equipment from the West, since both domestic and bloc advancement in production facilities was stalled by the accelerated industrialization during the Stalinist era.<sup>14</sup> Taken together, these two factors pushed Eastern European

countries towards an economic course that would lead them to a growing interpenetration with the capitalist world from the 1960s onwards.

Not matching the economic policy of quasi-liberalization, the financial policy retained central price-setting, which not only isolated the socialist economies from the world market but also eliminated incentives for innovations and quality improvements among the domestic producers.<sup>15</sup> While the CMEA market accommodated the financial inflexibility of socialist economies by facilitating barter transactions, the Western markets became crucial for high-quality imports.<sup>16</sup> Inevitably, therefore, exports to Western markets became indispensable for generating hard currency to pay for such purchases. In the Bulgarian case, this vicious circle was exacerbated by the fact that a large share of the export production consisted of agricultural goods, which were undervalued on the CMEA market.<sup>17</sup> Agricultural exports also confronted protectionist restrictions on the Western European markets. In effect, despite being the most foreign-trade oriented country within the Soviet bloc (proportionately to its industrial output), Bulgaria remained the country with the highest share of exports tied to fraternal countries (Table 1).<sup>18</sup> Held back by belated industrialization, its national production was poorly suited to respond to the demands of foreign customers. Moreover, under the paternalistic conditions of the planned economy, producers were unmotivated to do so, given the secure 'sellers' market' at home.<sup>19</sup>

These predicaments prompted the Bulgarian foreign-trade officials to search for new markets in the West and thus to tackle qualitative problems with essentially quantitative measures. In the late 1950s, Denmark fell into the scope of this endeavour despite the geographical distance and historical unfamiliarity between the two countries. After the Second World War, bilateral relations were limited to a trade agreement signed in 1947

**Table 1.** Distribution of Bulgaria's imports and exports by blocs and some countries (including Denmark), 1960–80.

Country/Year		1960	1965	1970	1974	1976	1978	1980
CMEA total	<i>Import</i>	80.8%	72.3%	74.8%	67.9%	75.4%	80.1%	77.1%
	<i>Export</i>	81.3%	77.4%	77.4%	73.1%	78.2%	76.7%	68.8%
Soviet Union	<i>Import</i>	52.5%	50.0%	52.2%	43.6%	54.4%	59.5%	57.3%
	<i>Export</i>	53.8%	52.2%	53.8%	50.3%	54.2%	53.9%	50.0%
Non-CMEA socialist countries total	<i>Import</i>	3.1%	1.9%	1.4%	2.2%	1.7%	1.4%	1.8%
	<i>Export</i>	2.7%	2.0%	1.9%	2.9%	2.1%	2.4%	2.0%
Developed capitalist countries total	<i>Import</i>	13.7%	22.3%	19.1%	22.5%	18.5%	15.0%	17.2%
	<i>Export</i>	12.5%	15.9%	14.2%	11.7%	10.5%	9.8%	15.8%
FRG	<i>Import</i>	6.0%	5.8%	2.7%	7.0%	5.8%	4.5%	4.8%
	<i>Export</i>	3.3%	3.1%	2.6%	2.5%	2.1%	1.6%	2.6%
France	<i>Import</i>	1.2%	2.1%	2.4%	1.7%	1.9%	1.2%	1.8%
	<i>Export</i>	0.9%	0.6%	1.9%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%
Italy	<i>Import</i>	1.1%	2.8%	3.1%	2.4%	1.6%	1.4%	1.4%
	<i>Export</i>	1.7%	3.3%	2.8%	2.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.4%
Denmark	<i>Import</i>	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
	<i>Export</i>	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Norway	<i>Import</i>	0.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	1.0%	0.0%
	<i>Export</i>	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Sweden	<i>Import</i>	0.2%	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%
	<i>Export</i>	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.2%
Developing countries total	<i>Import</i>	2.4%	3.5%	4.7%	7.4%	4.4%	3.5%	3.9%
	<i>Export</i>	3.5%	4.7%	6.5%	12.3%	9.2%	11.1%	13.4%
Total in valuten lev (millions)	<i>Import</i>	740.1	1377.9	2142.3	4195.8	5436.0	6800.9	8282.9
	<i>Export</i>	668.6	1375.7	2344.5	3720.8	5199.8	6649.6	8901.5

Source: Compiled by author based on *Statisticheski Godishnik na NRB 1979*, 376–8; *Statisticheski Godishnik na NRB 1985*, 370–2.

shortly before the nationalization of the Bulgarian economy started.<sup>20</sup> Under the ensuing autarchic turn, for more than a decade the agreement remained just a legal framework with no practical effects. It was only after 1960, when Bulgaria's Ministry of Foreign Trade (MFT) opened a trade representation (Bultarg) in Copenhagen, that commercial transactions between the two countries began to pick up.

In the following years, bilateral trade became a major channel for the nascent contacts between the two countries. The Bulgarian trade envoys in Copenhagen took the lead in bridge-building, as neither country had yet dispatched a resident ambassador to the other: as of 1957 the Bulgarian ambassador to Sweden was accredited also to Denmark and Norway, but even after Bulgaria opened an embassy in Copenhagen in the mid-1960s, it would take some years for full-fledged diplomatic representation.<sup>21</sup> Although Bultarg's employees were newcomers in the Danish business field, they quickly identified promising niches for Bulgarian products in the Danish market. Furthermore, they perceived the Danish economy as a model for the ongoing industrial modernization at home. As Bultarg argued time and again, both Bulgaria and Denmark had been agricultural countries prior to the Second World War that set out to industrialize in the post-war era.<sup>22</sup> In the 1960s, their industrial outputs for external markets were limited in range. Yet, the bulk of Danish industrial exports – factory assemblage including patents, knowhow, construction and machine equipment – attained a high standard, albeit concentrated in specific niches. The narrow industrial profile of Denmark – similar to Bulgaria's low level of industrialization – hampered its trade flexibility and indeed both countries suffered from trade deficits.

Trade contacts between Bulgaria and Denmark opened up some beneficial opportunities for matching their economies. In manufacturing, Bultarg Copenhagen perceived as particularly attractive cooperation contracts in which Danish companies supplied Bulgarian factories with complex equipment while Bulgarian costs were offset through compensatory sales of produce or joint participation in industrial projects in third countries. In agriculture, Bulgaria found a welcoming market in Denmark for early-season vegetables and fruits due to climatic differences, while at the same time pursuing options to import knowhow and technology for the industrialization of its own farming and stock-breeding.<sup>23</sup>

In 1962, Bulgaria and Denmark signed a Long-term Trade Agreement with a validity of three years, followed by a five-year renewal (1966–70).<sup>24</sup> Under this treaty, Bulgarian imports reached a higher level of liberalization, with 30% remaining under quota restrictions.<sup>25</sup> Trade quotas, however, were hardly an impediment to trade expansion. As noted by the Danish authorities, actual deals rarely filled up the negotiated contingents.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, bilateral trade volume gradually increased: doubling its value from US \$0.6 million in 1960 to US\$1.2 million in 1962, it continued growing to approximately US\$5 million in 1968, which would be its median level until Denmark's entry to the EEC.<sup>27</sup> All the while, Bulgaria struggled with a trade deficit in the margins between US\$0.2 million (1960) and US\$2.1 million (1965).<sup>28</sup>

Towards the end of the 1960s, Bulgaria and Denmark signed another accord which aimed to expand the scope of their economic relations – the Agreement on Economic, Industrial and Technological Cooperation.<sup>29</sup> It was negotiated in the first top-level inter-governmental talks during an exchange of visits by their ministers of foreign affairs in 1967.<sup>30</sup> This accord laid the grounds for the establishment of another institutional platform to promote economic cooperation: the Mixed Bulgarian–Danish Commission for Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation (MBDC).<sup>31</sup>

## The abrupt end of Bulgaria's economic reforms in 1968 and new guidelines for trade with the EEC

The crackdown of the Prague Spring – understood by the Bulgarian Communist Party (Balgarska Komunisticheska Partiya, BKP) as a change of wind across the bloc – pushed the regime towards a more conservative course in economic management. The backlash against the foreign-trade sector in Bulgaria was particularly strong. Not only did it suffer major purges, including the Minister, but centralized control over its operatives was also tightened with the new Foreign Trade Act of 1969.<sup>32</sup> In the short span of 1969–72, the macro-strategy for trade with capitalist countries underwent revisions at the party's top level, and of these, many focused on the EEC.

In fact, the BKP had never yet specifically addressed the issue of the Common Market though it had not been completely oblivious. It was the enhanced EEC's regulatory discrimination towards the socialist camp that placed the Common Market on the agenda of the BKP's Politburo for the first time in January 1968. At this point, the party's top brass endorsed a five-page document entitled 'Considerations for the directions of the foreign-economic relations of PRB [People's Republic of Bulgaria] with the countries in the EEC (Common Market)'.

Its preamble emphasized the need to expand and deepen economic ties with the EEC members and other capitalist states for the import of high-tech factory equipment, machines and licences as well as prime and raw materials. The fundamental policy goal, formulated further on, was to 'secure the most favourable conditions, despite the growing discriminatory measures'.<sup>33</sup> The document envisaged bilateral negotiations with individual EEC members, a task assigned to the MFT and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), leaving enough room for the two ministries to devise their course of action. The general objectives included bargaining for elimination of protectionist non-tariff barriers and official requests for making restrictions flexible. However, the only domestic measure in the party strategy was an amendment of the Bulgarian customs system – through the introduction of differential rates based on reciprocity.<sup>34</sup> This was specifically planned to serve as leverage in bargaining with the EEC countries, though clearly in a bold overestimation of Bulgaria's bargaining position.

The party programme was appended with a memorandum by Bulgaria's permanent representative at the CMEA, Tano Tsolov, which explained the nature of the EEC and underlined its growing share in Bulgaria's trade volume – represented by a fourfold increase between 1961 and 1966 when the total volume only doubled.<sup>35</sup> Expressing alarm that Bulgarian imports from the EEC twice exceeded reverse exports, Tsolov emphasized a continuous trend of import dependency on the EEC countries for complex machinery and synthetic production inputs, as well as an urgent need to increase the national export capabilities.

A year later, in May 1969, the Politburo passed a much lengthier resolution on the 'Chief guidelines and main tasks of the foreign policy of People's Republic of Bulgaria PRB by regions and countries'. Its general tone regarding the West was hardened, in an international situation assessed as one of intensified ideological struggle.<sup>36</sup> Yet, it also underscored Bulgaria's successful advances in its relations with certain European capitalist countries, among them the entire Scandinavian region.<sup>37</sup> Further on, the strategy demanded closer cooperation between the MFA and the economic ministries, as well as between the



Bulgarian embassies and trade representations, noting that the central task of the diplomatic missions was economic. In the paragraphs on operational weaknesses, therefore, the main shortcoming of the diplomatic corps in the EEC countries was 'their insufficient effort to eliminate the significant trade deficits' and to counter the discriminatory measures of the Common Market.<sup>38</sup> Ultimately, the new instructions were not that different from the old: diverting exports to countries with lesser trade restrictions and reducing imports to what was 'truly indispensable'.<sup>39</sup>

Following the ratification of Bulgaria's foreign-policy strategy, in July 1969 the MFT submitted to the Politburo its own 'Conception on the strategy and tactics of foreign trade', a document of more than 200 pages. Unsurprisingly, the main objective *vis-à-vis* the West was the elimination of Bulgaria's trade deficit.<sup>40</sup> Three years later, in April 1972, the MFT submitted another comprehensive strategy for its sector with a time span until 1990.<sup>41</sup> The rubric on developed capitalist countries opened up with more antagonistic wording: 'to wage a struggle against all restrictions that individual capitalist countries and their closed economic groupings raise against the equal and mutually beneficial development of world trade and above all trade with socialist countries'.<sup>42</sup> Yet, in its particulars, the strategy conceded the economic necessity of continuing trade with the EEC and looked for options to secure preferential treatment. The Scandinavian region was once again accentuated as a priority zone for expanding Bulgaria's economic relations with capitalist countries. In addition, the document called for protecting the interests of the socialist countries on the markets of the new EEC members, including Denmark.<sup>43</sup>

The period 1969–72, during which cosmetic revisions of Bulgaria's foreign-trade policy were regularly rolled out in response to its growing difficulties in accessing the Common Market, coincided with Denmark's negotiations for EEC membership. Ironically, this was also the time when the Bulgarian regime attributed a higher priority in economic cooperation to the Scandinavian region, including Denmark. And 1973, the year of Denmark's accession to the EEC, was also the moment when Veselin Belomazhov arrived in Copenhagen as the first Bulgarian ambassador stationed in Denmark, thus signifying its increased importance in Bulgarian foreign policy.<sup>44</sup>

### **External challenges to Bulgaria's economic cooperation with Denmark in the 1970s: the Common Market and rising trade barriers**

Under more concerted efforts on the side of Bulgarian institutions, the 1970s brought new opportunities for Bulgaria's cooperation with Denmark, but also new challenges. The consequences of Denmark's entry into the EEC in January 1973 were a topic of much discussion in the analyses sent by the Bulgarian foreign service, focusing exclusively on what this would mean for trade. The concerns spurred by Denmark's upcoming membership to a great extent shaped Bulgaria's bargaining strategy in 1970, when a new Long-term Trade Agreement for the subsequent five-year term was being negotiated.<sup>45</sup> The Bulgarian side requested a most-favoured nation (MFN) clause, which was turned down by the Danish government with the argument that it went against its established practice *vis-à-vis* the socialist countries.<sup>46</sup> Another declined Bulgarian proposal that tried to push through the MFN clause was an additional Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, which also got rejected.<sup>47</sup> As the Bulgarian envoys pressed on, taking advantage of any bilateral contact to bring up the issue, the Danes



pointed out that the proposed treaty was simply redundant. Its commercial aspects overlapped with the trade agreement under renewal and its navigation-related clauses were superfluous given the negligible exchange of ships between the respective ports.<sup>48</sup>

The fact that the Bulgarian state did not give up on its ideas to expand cooperation notwithstanding the low interest of both parties in the areas in question can be interpreted as a panic reaction to the prospect of losing any ground gained in the previous years. Since Bulgaria was hardly a major trade partner for Denmark in the socialist camp, its insistence on a long-term arrangement that no other CMEA state had yet achieved, even though of little practical value, would serve to place the country in a somewhat privileged position once Denmark had sealed its membership of the EEC. An unexpected outcome of this painstaking bargaining was the discovery of a bilateral memorandum with MFN provisions from 1921–2, which was apparently still valid.<sup>49</sup> Arguing that it had not been revoked in the post-war era, the Bulgarian officials eventually managed to obtain MFN treatment in terms of export-import tariffs and transit of goods.<sup>50</sup> More importantly, despite the initial uncertainty regarding the expiration date of the newly signed Long-term Trade Agreement due to Denmark's EEC membership, its validity was secured until the end of 1975 as one of the exemptions granted by the EC Commission to member states.<sup>51</sup>

Despite the Bulgarian sense of success, the long-desired MFN clause did not have much practical weight, as Denmark reserved its right to modify its treaty obligations in accordance with the EEC regulations and declared this arrangement as 'having only symbolic meaning'.<sup>52</sup> For this reason, Bulgaria soon refocused its diplomatic efforts on the renewal of the cooperation agreement of 1967. This type of bilateral accord was exempt from the supranational authority of the EEC and could be negotiated independently by the members, unlike the strictly commercial agreements. This normative difference made the cooperation agreements highly desirable for all socialist countries as a potential loophole, in their view at least, from the EEC legal restrictions on trade deals with non-members.<sup>53</sup> Throughout the entire negotiation process for the renewal of the cooperation agreement with Bulgaria, the Danish government emphasized time and again that any phrasing alluding to trade would not be accepted. As Bulgaria had already signed such agreements with the UK, Italy, France and Belgium, the negotiating party was well aware of this condition and seemingly restrained from such overtures. Yet, it was the Minister of Foreign Trade that prepared the Bulgarian draft for the agreement, although it was *de jure* under the auspices of another state branch, the Commission for Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation (CESTC).<sup>54</sup> Eventually, the treaty entitled Long-term Agreement on the Development of Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was signed in 1975 for a term of 10 years.<sup>55</sup>

In the meantime, the implementation of the EEC's CCP was caught in a limbo of provisional extensions. Thanks to this stalling, the Bulgarian–Danish trade agreement earned an extra year, as the curious memorandum from 1921–2 was included among individual members' agreements with non-members, permitted to operate with tacit consent until the end of 1976. For Bulgaria, only four pre-existing settlements with EEC members were indexed in this resolution and the one with Denmark was the most impactful for its trade with the Common Market.<sup>56</sup>

Despite moderate Bulgarian achievements in trade bargaining, Denmark's customs tariffs were meanwhile synchronized with those of the Common Market. As a consequence,

Bulgarian imports were hurt in light of their large share of agricultural products which faced the hardest protectionist barriers. Simultaneously, another important group of Bulgarian products, textile and apparel, confronted the limits of national import quotas that Denmark refused to liberalize.<sup>57</sup> Increasing exports of manufactured goods and machinery, a long-standing priority for Bulgaria's foreign trade, was assuming new urgency.

## **Internal challenges to economic cooperation with Denmark in the 1970s: structural deficiencies of the planned economy**

### ***The hurdles of the bureaucratic process of economic management***

Despite all diplomatic efforts in negotiating better terms of trade with Denmark and futile attempts to bypass the EEC's discriminatory measures through bilateral arrangements, Bulgaria's exports to Denmark were harmed mainly by structural problems in the planned economy. Once reforms of decentralization were aborted in 1968, these problems persisted. As economic deals with Denmark in the 1970s grew in complexity and often magnitude, these structural problems only exacerbated the failures of Bulgarian exports.

By 1970, the Bulgarian trade envoys in Copenhagen had managed to build some durable partnerships with initially reluctant Danish firms, while at the same time familiarizing themselves with the business conjuncture in the country: customs regulations, price fluctuations and market competition, as well as business ethos and practices. Given the nature of the planned economy, where all the export contingents had to be determined in advance and integrated into the annual plans of several organizations along the production and distribution chain, Bultarg Copenhagen was aiming not at sporadic deals, but at stable and durable economic relations.

The work of the trade representatives, however, was ridden with problems originating back home rather than on the foreign terrain where they operated. While they maintained direct contacts with Danish firms, on their home front they were far more constrained due to the lengthy administrative chain of communication and execution of negotiated transactions. Apart from superiors at the MFT who set up the annual plans for the goods exchange between Bulgaria and Denmark, the concrete deals and deliveries were a prerogative of the Bulgarian foreign-trade organizations (FTOs), state-run enterprises specialized in certain production sectors and, in turn, filling their commodity stocks from a number of national producers. Throughout the period, there were approximately 20 FTOs working with the Copenhagen office.

As both trade and production were placed under the Bulgarian central administration, the link between FTOs and producers was complicated by the mediation of several sectoral apparatuses responsible for various production domains. Thus, whereas the annual plans of Bultarg Copenhagen itemised contingents to be delivered by each FTO to the Danish market, the plans of the individual FTOs specified the amounts to be pulled from various producers along with the projected profits and currency revenues. Most delivery failures indeed originated in manufacturing due to producers' disincentive to venture into more demanding foreign markets.<sup>58</sup> Given the bureaucratic practices of reporting plan fulfilment, the FTOs as well as the manufacturing enterprises approached their contractual obligations as a zero-sum game: underachievement in one area could easily be compensated by overachievement in another.

Bultarg Copenhagen, however, had much less space to manoeuvre within its plan and the disturbances caused by the careless adherence to the plan by others had damaging effects not only on its own plan fulfilment, but moreover on the contacts that it had painstakingly built in the Danish business community.<sup>59</sup> Whereas for the organizations at home, commodity contingents were often seen as numbers to be randomly shifted around the overall plan, for the envoys abroad all contract violations meant that the search for prospective Danish partners had to start anew. The Bulgarian representatives were also well aware that news travelled fast around the business community of the host country and breached contracts tainted the reputation of Bulgarian foreign trade.

With the arrival of Ambassador Belomazhov in Copenhagen in 1973, the trade envoys found a stronger diplomatic backing that helped increase their outreach to Danish economic authorities. Previously serving at the Bulgarian delegation at the CMEA, Belomazhov became particularly active in economic affairs, collecting and communicating additional information on Danish companies in priority fields for Bulgarian industrial modernization and often accompanying the trade representatives during high-profile business meetings. Despite this, many of the breakthroughs he accomplished fell on deaf ears at home, stirring his frustration with the inefficiency of domestic institutions, as attested in his communication with the MFA.<sup>60</sup>

The second major actor in advancing Danish–Bulgarian economic relations, the MBDC, entered the field in 1968.<sup>61</sup> As a two-party body, the MBDC was under the supervision of two governmental entities – the Danish Committee on Industrial-Technological Cooperation and the Bulgarian CESTC. From its founding, the Chairman of the Danish party was Knudt Hanover, who was the head of the Danish government agency and who subsequently took the lead in all joint committees of this kind with socialist countries; the Bulgarian counterpart was presided over by the CESTC's deputy chairman, Alexander Dimitrov.<sup>62</sup> The objectives of the MBDC encompassed the educational exchange of specialists and the transfer of scientific and technical information, as well as the facilitation of direct contacts between firms and institutes, industrial assistance and joint projects between interested enterprises.

However, as soon became clear, the two national parties had divergent priorities in pursuing these goals, hence no substantial results occurred.<sup>63</sup> On the one hand, the Bulgarian side avoided discussing issues of trade as it tried not to interfere in the foreign trade's parallel chain of command.<sup>64</sup> So it consistently turned down Danish proposals involving commercial commitments. What it was truly interested in was the transfer of knowledge mainly through the specializations of Bulgarian experts in Denmark, as in this field Denmark had much more to offer than Bulgaria could reciprocate. On the other hand, the Danish party, where initiative seemed to be dominated by entrepreneurs, showed exclusive interest in cooperation that could yield tangible financial returns – so most of their proposals touched upon matters of trade.<sup>65</sup>

The MBDC sessions, convened once a year alternating between Sofia and Copenhagen, proceeded as an exchange of concrete proposals for cooperation – each centred on an interested national enterprise and presenting its needs or capabilities. After the session, the two parties were responsible for circulating the submitted proposals among potential partners in their own country. On the Bulgarian side, this was usually the point where anticipated cooperation went into a dead end: Danish proposals were distributed among the sectoral ministries, which had to evaluate them *vis-à-vis* a multitude of plan targets, then

refer them to particular manufacturing branches from where they were forwarded to individual factories or enterprises. This lengthy bureaucratic path was rarely completed and a consistent complaint of the Danish party was the lack of any response to their proposals.<sup>66</sup> Adding to this impasse, Bulgarian proposals that found an interested partner in Denmark more often than not bore no results: once shifted from the CESTC to the appropriate ministry, they simply sank in its bureaucratic machinery. Even successful contracts had a negotiating cycle that was too protracted for the Danish taste.<sup>67</sup>

While the Danes at the MBDC were clearly losing patience with the bureaucratic travails, some improvement was noted by Knudt Hanover, thanks to the appointment of Vladimir Ganovski, an engineer, not a bureaucrat, as a head of the Bulgarian party for the fourth and fifth sessions in 1971–2. Still, Hanover complained openly about the futility of these meetings to carry through any binding decisions. He also objected that Bultarg Copenhagen made direct contacts with Danish firms, thus side-lining the Commission, and threatened to resign.<sup>68</sup>

In 1977, the Bulgarian chairmanship at the MBDC was taken over by high-ranking officials at the MFT. Although this sectoral shift could have signalled more willingness for commercial negotiations, the Bulgarian party continued to suppress Danish trade proposals.<sup>69</sup> Instead of promoting trade deals, this reorganization seemed to be motivated by a new government strategy for negotiations with the EEC. It attempted to use the bilateral commission as a platform to lobby for preferential treatment of Bulgarian exports to the Common Market. Albeit with a steadily low rate of cooperation contracts due to Bulgarian passivity, the MBDC continued its operation into the 1980s. While the Danes did not give up on exploring opportunities for commercial deals, the Bulgarians intensified their attempts to co-opt Danish assistance for a potential application to the EEC's Generalised System of Preferences.<sup>70</sup>

### ***The low quality of the national production***

Under the endeavours of Bultarg Copenhagen and the MBDC, which sometimes intersected but rarely coordinated thoroughly, both trade and industrial cooperation between Bulgaria and Denmark increased, albeit modestly, throughout the 1970s. While customs tariffs and trade quotas had been high on the agenda of Bulgarian state officials as a major cause of the trade deficit with the EEC members including Denmark, Bulgarian exports were continuously hurt by problems with quality, leading to costly reclaims and annulment of contracts. While the attention of the government focused on fighting international regulatory arrangements beyond its control, it failed to resolve domestic problems of low production quality, which were in fact within its prerogatives.

A chief guideline in Bulgarian trade was to increase the share of machinery in the overall volume of exports, as such commodities bypassed the barriers confronted by agricultural and textile goods. The fluctuations in the share of machinery exports over the years were duly noted in every annual report of Bultarg Copenhagen to the MFT, rising from 3% in 1965 to 20% in 1967 and 40% in 1970, then down to 16% in 1972 and up to 42% in 1975. Yet, any substantive increase inevitably rested only upon one or two contracts.<sup>71</sup> And these contracts proved to be quite vulnerable to defunct execution by Bulgarian factories and often collapsed long before their envisaged expiration date.

Recurrent violations of trade contracts included delays in supplies or complete failure to deliver contracted items, as well as lower quality compared to presented samples and negotiated specifics or irreparable defects. Delays were sometimes caused by the Bulgarian transportation company, and this further complicated accountability at home. Drops in quality or non-delivery at times resulted from industrial restructuring in Bulgaria that moved manufactures from one production sector into another or reassigned production lines from one factory to another. Overall, the lengthy chain of command on the Bulgarian side seriously impeded Danish importers from exerting any control over their purchases or oversight on the shipments. Among other typical problems that Bultarg Copenhagen confronted when trying to secure Danish buyers were bad packaging and transportation, non-compliance with national standards (in sizes, products' information sheets and consumer preferences), lack of spare parts or protracted repairs, unrealistically inflated prices, and disregard for the conventional payment arrangements in Denmark.<sup>72</sup> Generally, the annual trade reports from Copenhagen show an erratic plan fulfilment by the FTOs (Table 2).

Three of the major export deals in Denmark illustrate these internal problems well: the largest export line for the textile industry, a contract for menswear between the Danish company Fionette A/S and the Bulgarian factory Vitoshka represented by FTO Industrialimport; a contract for joint production of motor trucks between Je-Lau Lemvig, on the one hand, and Balkancar factory and FTO Balkancarimpex on the other; and a contract for jackscrews between V. M. Christensen and Dunav-Oryahovo factory, respectively FTO Autoimpex. All of them were sealed prior to Denmark's accession to the EEC and secured a long-term distribution of prioritized Bulgarian exports to the Danish market under favourable conditions and with significant envisaged profits. As discussed in

**Table 2.** The operation of the 10 largest Bulgarian FTOs in Denmark 1973–5: discrepancies between export targets (plan), negotiated sales (deals) and actual delivery of goods (export)

	1973			1974			1975		
	Plan	Deals	Export	Plan	Deals	Export	Plan	Deals	Export
<i>Foreign trade organization/types of goods in its export nomenclature</i>	<i>Values in valuten lev (thousands) and % fulfilment</i>								
<i>Bulgarplolexport</i> (fruits and vegetables)	494	n.d.	117%	650	–	67%	850	98%	81%
<i>Bulgarkonserv</i> (preserved fruits and vegetables)	655	–	108%	1,000	124%	60%	900	102%	88%
<i>Vinimpex</i> (wine, brandy and other liquors)	100	–	129%	200	–	81%	150	107%	99%
<i>Industrialimport</i> (textile, leather, glassware)	810	162%	144%	2,480	–	46%	900	69%	61%
<i>Raznoiznos</i> (toys, ceramics, carpets)	210	17%	15%	80	109%	70%	100	66%	66%
<i>Autoimpex</i> (jackscrews, mopeds)	720	–	25%	250	–	64%	200	93%	89%
<i>Balkancarimpex</i> (trucks, telfhers, car batteries)	250	–	28%	200	584%	484%	1,700	90%	90%
<i>Electroimpex</i> (electric engines, loud speakers)	410	–	110%	500	–	89%	600	70%	67%
<i>Cherna Metalurgiya</i> (steel, cast iron)	200	–	22%	–	–	–	105	100%	100%
<i>Rudmetal</i> (pipes, tin, non-ferrous metals)	300	–	8%	2,100	–	0%	50	8%	0%
<i>Pharmachim</i> (pharmaceutical substances, drugs)	270	–	30%	100	–	102%	100	249%	249%

*Source:* Compiled by author based on the following sources: TES at the Bulgarian Embassy in Copenhagen: reports by managers in charge of merchandise exchange on exports to Denmark of individual FTOs in 1973 to D. Alexiev, trade representative, TsDA, f. 259, op. 36, a.e. 402, l. 96–174; Report by P. Valchev, trade representative in Copenhagen, to MFT on Bultarg's activity in 1974, TsDA, f. 259, op. 39, a.e. 171, l. 16–106; TES at the Bulgarian Embassy in Copenhagen: reports by managers in charge of merchandise exchange on exports to Denmark of individual FTOs in 1975 to P. Valchev, trade representative, TsDA, f. 259, op. 39, a.e. 232, l. 2–102; Report by D. Dimitrov, manager in charge of merchandise exchange, to P. Valchev regarding export plan's fulfilment with products from Balkancarimpex' nomenclature in the first half of 1975, 20/06/1975, TsDA, f. 259, op. 39, a.e. 230, l. 1–6; Report by P. Valchev to MFT regarding TES' activity on Bulgarian–Danish trade in 1975, 26/01/1976, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 8142, l. 66.

detail later in this article, all deals were shaken by production problems in Bulgaria and only one survived its entire term.

In late 1971, with the assistance of Bultarg Copenhagen, the Danish company Fionette A/S increased their purchases of apparel from FTO Industrialimport (around 55,000 items of menswear, mainly anoraks and suits) and offered to buy the entire contingent within this trade position of Bulgaria in Denmark for the next two years. Signalling the company's serious business interest, its director visited Bulgaria four times in the span of nine months, also offering free assistance in industrial modernization, including delivery of machinery and proposals for fashion updates of production lines.<sup>73</sup> By 1973, Fionette A/S was the largest Danish importer of Bulgarian apparel and, based on this contract, the MFT negotiated an increase in the Bulgarian export quota of apparel in the annual trade protocol with Denmark.<sup>74</sup> This business contact was promising enough to lead to a Bulgarian proposal for industrial cooperation with the firm at the MBDC session in 1973 involving transfer of equipment for new assembly lines, fashion designs and auxiliary materials against payment in readymade production for distribution not only in Denmark, but elsewhere in Western Europe.<sup>75</sup>

Yet, the same year, Fionette A/S annulled the purchase of 9000 suits because the expected shipment of samples arrived too late for the presentation of seasonal collections. Part of this contingent was subsequently sold to a Danish competitor, provoking further discontent at Fionette A/S. At the end of 1973, 1800 suits did not reach Fionette A/S within the agreed deadline, preventing the firm from fulfilling its obligations to local stores. When his inquiries about the shipment fell on deaf ears, the company director made independent checks at border crossings, discovering discrepancies with the transport documentation provided by Industrialimport.<sup>76</sup> As this incident threatened to put an end to the entire cooperation scheme, Bulgarian authorities launched an investigation, discovering that the loaded trucks had made a detour of several days because the drivers were summoned to the annual party meeting of the transportation company.<sup>77</sup> The incident, which came on top of previous contract breaches (mainly in quality as an entire production line was moved to another Bulgarian factory), was apparently too much for the Danish company to tolerate.<sup>78</sup> Although at the 1975 MBDC session the cooperation with Fionette A/S was highlighted as a success story, that same year the company was no longer among the Danish importers on Bultarg Copenhagen's report on sales.<sup>79</sup>

The deal between FTO Balkancarimpex and Je-Lau Lemvig for licensing, joint production and export of motor trucks to Denmark and third countries, signed in September 1972, was the greatest achievement of Bultarg Copenhagen after an intense year-long effort, because it corresponded to a crucial area of Bulgaria's specialization within the CMEA and opened up a rare chance to bring such products into Western markets.<sup>80</sup> Despite his hard work on the deal, the Bulgarian trade representative in Copenhagen was unpleasantly surprised to be excluded from the final negotiation of the contract, the draft of which he himself had prepared.<sup>81</sup> The cooperation had a difficult start as already in 1973 the first shipment of 100 motor trucks fell through, with only two prototypes being delivered. This failure was reflected in the extreme underachievement of Balkancarimpex' plan for Denmark, indicating the high share of motor trucks in its exports.<sup>82</sup>

In the meantime, negotiations with F. L. Schmidt & Co. were launched for the construction of a cement factory in Bulgaria, and the costs were envisaged to be partially covered by additional contingents of motor trucks produced under the cooperation



contract with Je-Lau, as the latter was a subsidiary of the concern. This increased the annual production quota of the Bulgarian factory, which was already falling behind on its norms, with 500 motor trucks a year for the next 10 years.<sup>83</sup> In the first half of 1974, shipment delays continued to jeopardise the entire cooperation contract, but in the second half of the year Balkancar managed to compensate for it in some measure (208 out of 241 trucks), though part of the batch was turned back because of defects. Nevertheless, this delivery led to a fivefold overachievement of the FTO's annual plan for Denmark as it constituted almost 90% of their exports.<sup>84</sup> Although the identified problems extended into 1975, the Bulgarian ambassador reported this deal as a driver for the expansion of the machinery's share in Bulgarian exports to Denmark.<sup>85</sup> The same year, Balkancar and Je-Lau engaged in negotiations to expand production with two new models of heavier motor trucks.<sup>86</sup> This production remained the success story of Bulgarian–Danish cooperation, accounting for 30% of Bulgarian exports to Denmark by 1978.<sup>87</sup> At the 1982 session of the MBDC, it was cited as one of only two active cooperation agreements between Denmark and Bulgaria.<sup>88</sup>

Whereas the Je-Lau deal represented a triumph of Bulgarian–Danish economic cooperation, the one with V. M. Christensen, envisaged to be a second pillar of Bulgarian machinery exports, was the most spectacular failure for Bulgarian trade with Denmark. This cooperation contract for hydraulic automobile jackscrews was signed in March 1972 and hailed as an opportunity to increase Bulgarian sales abroad with US\$1.2 million over the course of 1972–3 alone.<sup>89</sup> However, it also had a rough start. Deliveries were immediately reported to be 'non-rhythmical' and by the end of 1973, less than half of the contracted 46,000 jackscrews had been shipped.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, in late 1973, the Danish firm expanded its order with jackscrews of higher tonnage, but soon it complained to the Bulgarian ambassador and trade representative in Copenhagen about delays in communication and execution as well as malfunctions in the received items. In 1974, FTO Autoimpex delivered slightly over 25% of the contracted 120,000 items, but 17% were reported unfit, which escalated the tense business relations to a crisis, as reported by Bultarg Copenhagen.<sup>91</sup>

From the very beginning of this cooperation, Bultarg Copenhagen had been advising Bulgarian authorities on the need to open a service station of the Bulgarian producer in town, given the large export line, and its absence soon proved to be costly.<sup>92</sup> Once the dispute over the bad quality of jackscrews led to refusal of payment, it took the factory six months to send its specialists to Denmark for an on-site inspection. No mutually acceptable agreement was reached and V. M. Christensen hired an external consultant to mediate in the settlement.<sup>93</sup> As V. M. Christensen itself had suffered reclaims from its customers and the Bulgarian producer was stalling the repairs, the firm rejected the entire shipment without verifying if items were functioning or not.

Once payment was cancelled, the cargo remained stranded for months in the warehouses of Sønderborg freight station. In December 1974, the Bulgarian side agreed to take back all the unchecked products, but instead of terminating the dispute, this only shifted its focus to the issue of the growing rental costs for the unpacked containers. According to the contract, this cost was an obligation of V. M. Christensen, but the firm refused to cover it under the circumstances. Despite the appeals of the Bulgarian trade representative to expedite the issue, the MFT at first turned down his request to bring back the shipment at its own expense. Throughout the ensuing legal dispute, 51 containers remained stationed for more than a year in Denmark, causing not only a huge debt (US\$34,000), but also further damage to the contents.<sup>94</sup>



Given the importance of this deal, its bad end was not immediately accepted as a closure of this export line. In Bultarg Copenhagen's 1975 plan, FTO Autoimpex had only two positions for exports to Denmark, and the one for jackscrews, amounting to 25% of their projected sales, had zero fulfilment in the first half of the year. In the second half, their planned exports were cut to one third of the initial target and yet fulfilment reached only 30%.<sup>95</sup> In the following year, the trade representative suggested a reduction of the FTO's annual plan to an eighth of the originally set volume, still basing this lower target on the hope of recovering market opportunities for Bulgarian jackscrews in Denmark.<sup>96</sup> At the same time, the Bulgarian delegation at the MBDC session was still reporting the contract with V. M. Christensen as an accomplishment in bilateral cooperation, with the optimistic note that 'efforts are being made to overcome the recently arising difficulties'.<sup>97</sup>

To sum up, despite the vigorous service of the Bulgarian envoys in Copenhagen, including Ambassador Belomazhov, cooperation with Denmark did not go smoothly, facing the challenges of the different work style of Bulgarian organizations and the inflexibility of national production to improve quality in accordance with Western standards.<sup>98</sup> Although the main priority of the Bulgarian trade strategy was to increase the exports of machinery in order to bring in hard currency, there were very few successfully executed deals in this area and the one that stands out in significance was the joint production with Je-Lau. On the other hand, the failure of high-profile contracts like the one with V. M. Christensen entailed not only lost market opportunities, but also serious damage to the reputation of Bulgarian production in a country that it was trying hard to enter.

## Conclusion

Once Bulgaria ventured out into Western markets, the significance of foreign trade for its planned economy was only increasing. The success of the national economic reforms was tied from the onset to an increase in both costly imports of production equipment, inputs and knowhow from technologically advanced Western economies as well as of high-value exports to Western markets that could replenish the hard currency reserves of the country.<sup>99</sup> In the 1970s, when *détente* broke down barriers for diplomatic contacts, trade became the main engine of Bulgaria's foreign policy pursuits towards the West. However, this was also a time when Bulgarian exports faced rising trade barriers due to the EEC's discrimination on trade with non-members. In this uncertain situation, the Danish market became quite attractive for Bulgaria, prompting its foreign services to intensify their bargaining with the Danish government in order to secure preferential treatment under the changed terms of trade. All the while, however, Bulgarian economic exchange with Denmark suffered from continuous problems in meeting contractual obligations and these problems were never addressed systematically.

While much of the Bulgarian foreign policy throughout the early 1970s was dedicated to futile attempts to renegotiate EEC policies on a bilateral basis, the regime persistently ignored the internal obstacles to improving Bulgaria's exports to the free market outside of the CMEA. This study on Bulgarian–Danish economic relations demonstrates that recurrent problems in Bulgaria's foreign trade were conditioned by the divergent logics of plan fulfilment of various actors (mainly production units and trade organizations), which were indeed structural problems of the planned economy. These internal discrepancies extended across the national borders as the operational logic of the foreign-trade services could not

be harmonized with that of the FTOs, and especially the national producers. The ensuing clash of rationales translated into persistent conflicts among Bulgarian institutions and made cooperation among sectors and organizations more confrontational than cooperative. Ultimately, failures in quality and regular delivery caused by structural problems in the planned economy proved to be a greater problem for Bulgaria's foreign trade in the West than the EEC's restrictions.

## Notes

1. Protocol of deliberation with trade representatives in developed capitalist countries 25/07/1972, Tsentralen Darzhaven Arhiv (hereafter TsDA), fond 259, opis 36, arhivna edinitsa 168, list 1–32.
2. Memorandum by P. Penkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, to I. Nedev, Minister of Foreign Trade, regarding allocation of planned imports from developed capitalist countries in 1972 by FTOs, TsDA, f. 259, op. 36, a.e. 142, l. 32.
3. Romano, "Untying Cold War Knots," 155.
4. Protocol of deliberation with trade representatives in developed capitalist countries 25/07/1972, TsDA, f. 259, op. 36, a.e. 168, l. 9.
5. *Ibid.*, 12.
6. *Ibid.*, 11.
7. For various attempts to improve quality domestically, see Guentcheva, "Material Harmony"; Stanoeva, "Organizirane na sotsialisticheskata targoviya."
8. Villaume, "Pathfinders and Perpetuators of Détente."
9. Baev, "The Establishment of Bulgarian–West German Diplomatic Relations"; Békés, "The Warsaw Pact, the German Question," 113–14; Stanoeva, "The Imperative of Opening to the West."
10. Kansikas, *Socialist Countries Face the European Community*, 101–15.
11. On the macro-level, the main sources are made up of comprehensive programmes formulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade under the supervision of the Department of Foreign Policy and International Relations at the party's Central Committee and then authorized by its Politburo (contained in the party's archival repository: f. 1B), or otherwise ratified by the Council of Ministers (f. 136). On the micro-level, the analysis relies on diverse documents from lower-ranking state organisations affiliated at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (f. 1477), the Ministry of Foreign Trade (f. 259) and the Commission for Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation (f. 1244).
12. Wallace and Clark, *Comecon, Trade and the West*, 7–8.
13. Avramov, *Stopanskiyat XX vek na Balgariya*; Ivanov, *Reformatorstvo bez reformi*.
14. Aunesluoma, "Finlandisation in Reverse," 99.
15. Avramov, *Pari i de/stabilizatsiya v Balgariya*; Stanoeva, "Organizirane na sotsialisticheskata targoviya."
16. Kansikas, *Socialist Countries Face the European Community*, 40.
17. Stone, *Satellites and Commissars*, 139.
18. Lampe, *The Bulgarian Economy*, 177–8.
19. Kornai, *The Socialist System*.
20. Information on the contractual-legal relations between Bulgaria and Denmark, TsDA, f. 259, op. 39, a.e. 231, l. 150.
21. I discuss the development of Bulgarian–Danish diplomatic relations throughout the 1960s in Stanoeva, "The Imperative of Opening to the West."
22. Information on cooperation between Bulgaria and Denmark in agriculture [1970], TsDA, f. 1477, op. 27, a.e. 1116, l. 47–52.
23. Minutes of meeting between Ambassador Gantchev and Danish Minister of Agriculture Thomsen 2/03/1965, Rigsarkivet (hereafter RA), GS 73 D 25.a/1 pk XII; Report

- by M. Petrov, Chairman of the Bulgarian party at MBDC, regarding the Bulgarian delegation's position for the 6<sup>th</sup> MBDC session 22/03/1974, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 7984, l. 8.
24. Council of Ministers Resolution 35 (29/01/1966) on the approval of signed trade agreements and protocols, TsDA, f. 136, op. 43, a.e. 34, l. 2, 75–9.
  25. Information on implementation of Politburo's Resolution 168 (18/04/1967) and Resolution 430 (31/10/1967) on development of Bulgarian–Danish relations, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 26, a.e. 1015, l. 4.
  26. Notes on the trade agreement with Bulgaria by the Ministry of Trade 25/01/1965, RA, GS 73 D 25.a.1 pk XII.
  27. Information regarding development of economic relations between Bulgaria and Denmark 27/06/1968, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 25, a.e. 867, l. 18; Information on implementation of Politburo's Resolution 168 (18/04/1967) and Resolution 430 (31/10/1967) on development of Bulgarian–Danish relations, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 26, a.e. 1015, l. 4; Information on political, economic, industrial and scientific-technical relations between Bulgaria and Denmark, Feb.1973, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 6781, l. 5.
  28. Report by Bultarg Copenhagen, Oct. 1974, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 8037, l. 227–8.
  29. Council of Ministers Injunction 277 (22/09/1967) on the ratification of the Agreement on Economic, Industrial and Technological Cooperation between PRB and Denmark, TsDA, f. 136, op. 44, a.e. 326.
  30. Draft communique on the visit of the Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ivan Bashev in Denmark 3–7 March 1967, RA, GS 5 D 78.a pk I.
  31. Information on political relations between Bulgaria and Denmark [1968], TsDA, f. 1477, op. 25, a.e. 867, l. 113–14.
  32. Radio Free Europe Research East Europe: Structural and Personnel Changes in Bulgaria 3/01/1969, Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archive (hereafter HU OSA), 300-8-3-776, p. 5; CM Decree 36 (25/10/1969) on the approval of draft law on foreign trade, TsDA, f. 136, op. 48, a.e. 35.
  33. Considerations for the directions of PRB's foreign-economic relations with the countries in the EEC (Common Market), Nov. 1967, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 12, l. 12.
  34. *Ibid.*, 15.
  35. Memorandum by T. Tsolov to Politburo on the PRB's approach towards the EEC (Common Market) 16/11/1967, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 12, l. 17.
  36. Resolution of Politburo for raising the role and responsibility of MFA in the elaboration and implementation of PRB's foreign policy and its further activation 27/05/1969, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 704, l. 3–8.
  37. Chief guidelines and main tasks of PRB's foreign policy by regions and countries, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 704, l. 68.
  38. Resolution of Politburo for raising the role and responsibility of MFA in the elaboration and implementation of PRB's foreign policy and its further activation 27/05/1969, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 704, l. 6.
  39. Chief guidelines and main tasks of PRB's foreign policy by regions and countries, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 704, l. 66.
  40. Conception on the strategy and tactics of PRB's foreign trade, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 1202, l. 83, 186–7.
  41. Protocol A N332 of Politburo's session on 25/04/1972, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 3079, l. 2.
  42. Strategy and tactics of PRB's foreign trade 1972, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 3079, l. 104.
  43. *Ibid.*, 108–11.
  44. Denmark, on its part, would open an embassy in Sofia as late as 1977 and dispatch a resident ambassador only after 1989. Cable from Niels Boel, Ambassador of Denmark for Romania and Bulgaria, to Peter Mladenov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 13/05/1977, Arhiv na Ministerstvoto na Vanshnite raboti (hereafter AMVnR), op. 33, a.e. 1083, l. 1.

45. Council of Ministers Resolution 372 (30/11/1970) on the approval of long-term trade agreement and trade protocols with Denmark, Austria, India and Pakistan, TsDA, f. 136, op. 50, a.e. 398, l. 7–14, 67–9.
46. Information on the development of Bulgaria's commercial relations with Denmark 14/08/1970, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 26, a.e. 998, l. 34.
47. Letter from Bultarg Copenhagen to MFA 3/04/1970, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 26, a.e. 1027, l. 5; Letter from MFT to MFA (appended by draft Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Bulgaria and Denmark) 22/04/1970, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 27, a.e. 1090, l. 2–11.
48. Pro Memoria from MFA of Denmark 18/03/1971, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 27, a.e. 1090, l. 37–8.
49. Note 14/01/1965, RA, GS 73 D 25.a.1 pk XII; Memos from the Danish Legation in Paris to the Bulgarian Minister Plenipotentiary in France 26/10/1921 and 21/01/1922, Memo from the Bulgarian Legation in Paris to the Danish Minister Plenipotentiary in France 11/07/1922, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 27, a.e. 1090, l. 31–3; Memorandum on a meeting of the Bulgarian ambassador and trade envoy to Copenhagen at the Danish MFA 15/03/1971, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 27, a.e. 1090, l. 35; Memorandum on a meeting of the Bulgarian trade envoy to Copenhagen at the Danish MFA 29/01/1971, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 27, a.e. 1088, l. 3.
50. Report by L. Avramov, Minister of Foreign Trade, to Todor Zhivkov regarding the ratification of Long-term Trade Agreement 1971–1975 and 1971 trade protocol with Denmark 20/10/1970, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 26, a.e. 1017, l. 14.
51. Letter by Bultarg Copenhagen to First Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade 28/10/1974, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 8037, l. 208–10.
52. Information by V. Belomazhov on trade negotiations with Denmark 28/02/1974, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 8037, l. 62; Memorandum on a meeting of the Bulgarian trade envoy to Copenhagen at the Danish MFA 29/01/1971, TsDA, f. 1477, op. 27, a.e. 1088, l. 2.
53. Kansikas, *Socialist Countries Face the European Community*, 151–3; Letter by Bultarg Copenhagen to First Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade 18/10/1974, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 8037, l. 206; Letter by Bultarg Copenhagen to First Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade 28/10/1974, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 8037, l. 209.
54. Information 27/05/1974, TsDA, f. 1244, op. 1, a.e. 8037, l. 2.
55. Long-term Agreement between Bulgaria and Denmark on the Development of Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technological Co-operation, TsDA, f. 259, op. 39, a.e. 223, l. 103–10.
56. EC Council, “EC Council Resolution 75/147/EC”; EC Council, “EC Council Resolution 75/148/EC.”
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