

EDITORIAL NOTE

The first issue of the *Bulgarian Journal of International Economics and Politics* for 2026 brings together a collection of articles exploring the profound transformations reshaping international politics and the global economy. Against a backdrop of intensifying geopolitical competition, rapid technological change, shifting patterns of economic interdependence, and the emergence of new regional and global partnerships, the contributions in this issue examine how states, institutions, and regions adapt their strategies to an increasingly complex international environment.

The issue opens with a theoretically grounded contribution that examines strategic narrative contestation among European powers, demonstrating how competing narratives shape national roles, foreign policy identities, and political interaction within Europe. The second article addresses one of the defining challenges of the twenty-first century by analysing the opportunities and policy implications of artificial intelligence for Latin America and proposing a framework for regional cooperation in this rapidly evolving field.

Several contributions focus on the growing importance of geo-economics and connectivity in international relations. One contribution examines the strategic role of Chabahar Port as a driver of regional integration and trade across South and Central Asia. Another revisits the concept of the „bridge state“ through the case of Bulgaria’s cooperation with Central Asia along the Middle Corridor, highlighting the growing geopolitical significance of transport and connectivity initiatives. A third analyses how economic interdependence has reshaped Argentina’s strategic orientation toward China, illustrating the increasing role of economic statecraft, South-South cooperation, and emerging financial arrangements in contemporary international relations.

The dynamics of international negotiations and domestic politics are addressed in the article on the Indonesia-EU Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, which applies the two-level game framework to explain the interaction between domestic constraints and international bargaining processes. Economic transformation constitutes another central theme of the issue. The article on Algeria analyses the country’s efforts to restructure its public finances in response to the challenges of the post-oil era, highlighting both the opportunities and structural constraints facing resource-dependent economies. The issue concludes with a study on cultural relativity in international business, using the Bulgarian case to demonstrate how cultural contexts continue to shape business relationships and managerial practices in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

The *Expert’s Insights* section features an article by Vesselin Valchev, a distinguished Bulgarian career diplomat, former Ambassador to Cyprus (2009–2014), Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria (2014–2016), Consul General in Los Angeles (2016–2020), and currently Managing Director of the Economics and International Relations Institute. Drawing on his extensive diplomatic experience, the author

explores the ongoing transformation of the international order, examining the transition to multipolarity, the resurgence of geopolitics, and the strategic challenges confronting the European Union in an increasingly fragmented and competitive global environment.

The *Book Review* section presents Sandrine Kott's recent monograph *A World More Equal: An Internationalist Perspective on the Cold War* (Columbia University Press, 2024), reviewed by Tsvetelina Marinova, Associate Professor of Economics at New Bulgarian University and Research Associate at the University of Picardie Jules Verne, France. The review highlights the book's original reinterpretation of the Cold War through the lens of international cooperation, international organizations, and global governance, demonstrating its continued relevance for understanding today's geopolitical fragmentation and the future of multilateralism.

Together with the *Expert's Insights* and *Book Review* sections, the contributions in this issue demonstrate that contemporary international politics can no longer be understood without considering the interplay between geo-economics, strategic connectivity, technological transformation, and evolving patterns of international cooperation. It is precisely at the intersection of these processes that the *Bulgarian Journal of International Economics and Politics* seeks to contribute to contemporary scholarly debates on the evolving political and economic architecture of the international system.

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