

Advantages and disadvantages for bulgaria in the european union



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There has always been one common dream for the peoples who inhabit the continent of Europe-to create a united and powerful country. It is now the first time since the Roman Empire that this chance has been given. As time passed the people of Europe have changed from invading worriers to diplomats, who have been working for the better future of the Union, which they have created. Established in 1957 its goal has been to integrate more countries in Europe and to make a state with no boundaries, both physical and social.

Recently, the less developed countries, being either former Soviet Union or Satellites of the USSR, had been offered the help of the older members of the organization in order to integrate themselves and to become a part of the European family. One such country called Bulgaria is situated in a crossroad between the East and the West, between Asia and Europe. Having a population of only 8 million people, Bulgaria has been going through the process of joining the European Union, which will hopefully happen in 2007.

Programs such as SAPARD (Special Accession Programme for Agriculture & Rural Development), PHARE and ISPA (Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession) have been assisting the small Southeast European country to make significant progress in the agriculture, tourism, legislative and production sectors. As soon as Bulgaria joins the European Union the people will feel more confident in investing. Although it will certainly take time, the economic situation will improve, thus making living standard in Bulgaria safer and desirable.

Free trade and the Union's requirements for production would allow the producers and their goods to be competitive. Moreover, historical heritage and nature, as being the dearest treasures of the country, will become more popular and visited. The otherwise suppressed and hesitating way, in which society thinks and behaves, would be substituted by all the positive factors of the Union. Thus the Bulgarian community will be able to uphold its place in the European Union.

However, the way to reaching the economical level and stability of the older members of the European Union is not short and smooth, but rather long and bumpy. Therefore, Bulgaria has to be prepared not only for the advantages but also for the disadvantages of the organization and its policy of conduct. At first it is more likely for the economy to go into recession. Inflation will be almost certainly an issue. With the permission of people to leave the country, the population will decrease dramatically because of immigration.

Living in an age of globalization, part of the Bulgarian traditional culture will be replaced by western way of living. Hence, the people and the government have to be extremely conscious with the adoption of everything that the Western world has to offer. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to discuss in detail the rewards and the drawbacks for Bulgaria being in the European Union, and make a suggestion if it is worthwhile joining.

Advantages Economic Advantages One of the essential goals of the European Union since its creation has been economic integration.

Having the experience of WWI and WWII the Europeans realized that a union which forms an environment where its members are economically

dependent on each other is one of the most certain ways which will make them unwilling to engage in war for once more. Therefore a crucial feature of every country attempting to enter the Union is to have a stable economy, which will not by any means threaten the well-being of the alliance.

However, for economic integration to start taking place, there should be provided an appropriate setting.

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain Bulgaria has become a place, which is more than ever desirable for foreign capital investment. " Sixty percent of the Bulgarian firms sold out to foreign investors" 1 stated the Internet publication of Sega newspaper on November 15, 2004. The reasons for that could be found in the abundance of natural resources, four-seasoned weather, inexpensive labor force, low-price infrastructure and gaps in the legislative system. In December 1994 the Essen Summit selected the countries which could be accepted as future members of the EU. Bulgaria was among the chosen ones.

That decision automatically attracted programs such as SPARAD, ISPA and PHARE. The budgets of these programs for Bulgaria have been fare enough to develop a pleasing environment, which would satisfy foreign entrepreneurs and corporations. They, on the other hand improved some of the main sectors of the Bulgarian economy, such as tourism, agriculture and services. It is not only the investors who benefit from the country but also the country itself. Variety of goods and services which were not available for the Bulgarian consumer were introduced. The quality of the already existing ones improved.

It was namely those factors which offered competition to the Bulgarian producers, thus their production enhanced as well. All of the above created job places for part of the population, consequently decreasing unemployment to 13.17 per cent², which in the transition years (1991-1998) was of a much greater rate. One of the advantages of Bulgaria being a member state of the EU is that the movement of resources, including labor force will increase employment. Thus, Bulgaria as a post-communist country will more easily adapt to the capitalist way of governing and working.

The Union's requirements for factories, power stations, hotels etc, will standardize, thus making equipment more advanced and desirable for far-off venture. As big international corporations buy shares of the Bulgarian market the import of goods will increase, since those corporations will place an already established commercial route to the disposal of the Bulgarian production. The free movement of resources also includes communication and transport nets which will be accessible to all sector of the economy and in some parts renovated.

In long term perspective all of these factors-employment, investment, equipment and technological advance will lead to economic growth which will be doubtlessly bigger than the economic growth if Bulgaria was not to become a member of the European Union. In the Balkan region that will make a difference since most of the countries are still undergoing development and having a member of the European Union in the heart of the peninsula will set an example of how a post-communist, economically poor state can be integrated into the Union.

Other advantages for Bulgaria will be the decrease of influence of the black economy. Fighting corruption would be much more organized since the enforcement of the laws under Chapter 24 of the Acquis, (the Acquis shows the achievements of the EU law), is gradually becoming a reality. The upper-mentioned chapter gives an account for the developments of the cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs departments. In the 2004 Regular Report of the Commission there is an emphasis on further progress made by the organs fighting corruption, money laundering, currency fraud, etc.

The suppression of these actions is not only important to the way the economy advances but also to the well-functioning of the system and the everyday life of the citizens. It is by evidence that most of the post-communist countries are suffering from criminality and corruption on a large scale, therefore the European Union with its instruments for battling these will ease the performance of the administrative system and will create trust for the apparatus amongst the population. That on its behalf will certainly bring about well-functioning and further development in all sectors of the economy. Cultural and Social Advantages

It is without hesitation that the economic improvement, which the European Union will introduce, is going to have social repercussion. Since the fall of communism in 1989 the Bulgarian nation has been undergoing misery, poverty and distrust for the government on many occasions. Namely because of these reasons many people have made the decision to leave the country and to start their lives off in countries with a better status quo. With the entrance in the EU the Bulgarians will feel much more secure since they <https://assignbuster.com/advantages-and-disadvantages-for-bulgaria-in-the-european-union/>

would know that the Union sets both political and economical restrictions on the government.

The pride of Bulgaria has always been its historical heritage. Being always on the wrong side (examples: World War I, World War II, Cold War) the country has been a subject of discrimination for foreign travelers and historians. “ History is written by the victorious!. ” Consequently, this small country has never had the chance to show the world all the treasures and ancient mysteries it possesses. A major advantage of Bulgaria being in the European Union will be that much more people will visit the country. Previously unkempt sights, resorts and holiday places will be reequipped to suit the needs of the tourists, thus attracting more.

That will bring about extra financial support for the local population, but most importantly it will make the name “ Bulgaria” pronounced more often. Not only the European community but the world will learn that it is that small country and its people which have made some significant changes. The invention of the computer, the first written evidence of produced wine, the oldest processed gold in the world, and many more are all products of the land which nowadays bears the name Bulgaria. Hopefully this name will be mentioned in the textbooks of history, technology, literature and so on.

Although the country has not yet joined the coalition it has already become a world destination- “ Bulgaria 4th among World’s 2004 Hottest Tourist Spots”

3. The most profound grief of that country has always been the ignorant treatment of the big European countries. Additionally, the stereotype for the Bulgarian nation is more than upsetting- “ the gypsies of Europe”. Once the

small nation is a member of the European Union it will have the chance to show its marvelous traditions, culture and intellect. Therefore, the Bulgarians are looking forward to entering the coalition and taking their deserved position in the history of the world.

The slogan “ Europe without boundaries” suggests more than an unframed continent. Easier communication, free transportation, more global and better education, all of the upper-mentioned are factors, which will enrich the knowledge of more people. Bulgaria will not be an exception. During the years when the small Balkan state was a Satellite of the USSR the only places people could travel to were the Soviet Union and its satellites. It was considered a betrayal if someone managed to escape the harsh rules of the government and go some place else.

The West and all its objects, including information were considered evil, inhumane and forbidden for the true socialists with virtue. Education and media were censored in a way to make the people believe only in the communist idea. After the fall of communism, however, people have been given the chance to travel, live, study and work in the countries beyond the Berlin Wall. The European Union will introduce to the population of Bulgaria a different way of living. Education in Western Europe, which is famous with its learning institutions, will be accessible for more Bulgarian students, since it will become cheaper.

Intensive learning of the two main languages in the EU, English and French will most likely be a fact. That will provide the people looking for jobs with more credentials and chances to become employed in foreign firms. Probably

one of the best aspects of Bulgarian being a member of the Union will be that it will introduce values long forgotten in a society which has lived 50 years of communist rule. Liberty, unity, abiding the law, will possibly substitute the limits of the Bulgarian psyche, which still believes that every law is made to be broken, every government is tyrannical and to the detriment of the people.

Living in the 21st century in a continent renowned for its strive towards democratic and free ideas it would be absolutely inconceivable to keep the communist-type of perception for the world and the person as a center of it. Once there has been given an example to this pre-modern society of how people can live feeling secured for their property, health and well-being, and once it is shown that the social contract is one of the most important concepts which make a persons existence much well-off, this public psychology can be changed. Security

In an age where terrorism is the main issue and fear of every government a Union of countries which share the same values and unite to fight this global threat is a tremendous advantage. Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as European Security and Defense Policy are ongoing projects which unquestionably will make it harder for further attacks to take place. One should not forget that the Balkan Peninsula has always been a place where stability has almost never been a reality. After the War in Kosovo in 1999 the situation in the Balkans is again ready to explode once again, due to Macedonian-Albanian conflict in neighboring Macedonia.

Historically the Bulgarians have always perceived the Macedonians as brothers, moreover they speak the same language and share the same destiny. Therefore a future conflict in Macedonia might cause trouble in Bulgaria itself. Being a NATO and an EU member will help bring about stability in the region as well as security for its own population. Steadiness, of course is very significant factor for every region and every country which is seeking for progress. Disadvantages Economic Disadvantages One of the main problems the newly accessed members to the EU have is inflation.

Although economists are not sure that this will be the case with Bulgaria it still persists as a threat. With the rounding of the prices when Bulgaria enters the Euro zone the latter would be the most likely consequence. " Some estimates indicate that 21% of the Bulgarian population are living in absolute poverty (below US\$ 1 per day), while at least 17% of the population are unable to meet their daily minimum dietary energy consumption needs" 4 therefore if the price level rises in the short run it may lead to a poverty on a bigger scale. However, misery and starvation of part of the populations are not the only issues which are disturbing. As Bulgaria enters the European Union the free movement of capital will lead to big international firms destroying domestic small ones. As for about 90 percent of the firms in Bulgaria being micro, small or medium sized compared to large enterprises this will mean massive obliteration of the small business. As a consequence there will be increase in unemployment in the short run, until the people who lost their jobs get reoriented or absorbed. Entering the Euro Zone is another possible disadvantage since the Euro itself is quite a new concept.

There have been discussions on the well-functioning of the common currency. Empirical evidence shows that European economies that have joined the euro have recorded sluggish growth. The lack of flexibility caused by the Euro brings about higher unemployment rate in countries which are in the Euro zone compared to the ones which are not. Of course, Bulgaria as a new member which accepts the Euro as its currency will be a subject of its possible drawbacks. Nevertheless, this is still an ongoing research issue therefore it could not be concluded that definitely it will cause problems for the Bulgarian economy.

In addition to the direct consequences of the entry to the European Union will be the harm of the long-existing relations between Russia and Bulgaria. Russia being one of the main importers of Bulgarian production will be pushed away by the increase in prices and tariffs once the country joins. The result of Euro-Bulgarian relations on the links with Russia can be observed even at the given moment. Traditionally Russian and former USSR tourists are the biggest group which comes to rest in the country.

As Bulgaria has been taken out of the Schengen black list of countries which need a visa to enter the union, it had to set up visas for the countries which are still in the Schengen list. Therefore, the country required visas for Georgians, Russians, Ukrainians. As an outcome of the latter the percentage of tourists coming to Bulgaria from the former USSR has dramatically declined. Moreover the tendency is for Russian investors to avoid the small Eastern European country. Thus the sacrificial Agnus Dei of Bulgaria joining the EU are the historical ties in the East. Cultural and Social Disadvantages

There has been an ongoing debate about globalization and its impact on modern society and its way of life. A Bulgarian internet newspaper releases "How can you change Shkembe Chorba⁵ with a Big Mac and a Coca Cola?!"

6. Entering the EU will with no doubt change some traditions which the Bulgarians have saved for generations. This regulation on food sale is just the beginning of a bigger question on how the Union will restrict the way people live. Comparing the European consumer public with the Bulgarian is a frightening picture to everyone who has had the chance to travel in the European Union and see the dramatic difference.

Together with the free movement of capital and ideas comes the immigration and still low-priced land. The percentage of people from Western Europe moving to Bulgaria is rising every year. There is evidence of many "English villages" as they are called, which in the long run will increase even further. In addition to that the country would be very attractive to neighbors seeking for a better living standard. Citizens from Turkey with a dual citizenship would be allowed to enter the Union thus possibly making Bulgaria the second Germany in relation to the Turkish immigration.

Knowing Bulgarian attitude towards the former ethnical group may lead to tensions inside the country as observed in the last parliamentary elections with the appearance of neo-fascist parties. Overall, however, the cultural setbacks are not very ominous, although not insignificant. In fact, in times when democracy and Christianity are the main targets for different types of radicals and terrorists the threats for the society and culture by a liberal union such as the EU are the least disturbing.

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Conclusion As a conclusion one could say that the advantages for such a country like Bulgaria to be a member of the European Union are much more and valuable than the drawbacks. Of course it is unfortunate that the country cannot manage to reach economic prosperity without dependency on other countries. However, it should be said that the history of mankind suggests that a union such as the European is at the given moment the highest evolutionary level of human organization.

The world in the 21st century is one of subordination, where every state has an effect on another one, therefore for the better of welfare a country should coordinate its actions with other countries. Technological advance and as a consequence communications and transport development are one of the main factors which dictate the way states interact with each other.

Capitalism is a mainstream tendency in the modern world, therefore a country which would like to be addressed as such should make sure that it is governed in a democratic manner, that its economy is progressing, and that its politicians are ready to cooperate with foreign such.

Once Bulgarian state enters the EU it will certainly undergo some economic difficulties, such as unemployment and inflation but in the long run these will be obliterated and substituted by a steady economic growth and stability.

Issues connected with the cultural and social development also might struggle in the short run, but changes in history have never been accepted smoothly since the human factor is very strong and it takes time for new ideas to be recognized. It is very important to understand that breaking with tradition is not always the worst that happen to a nation.

In fact if that means better and more secured life changes are necessary. In an era where the new warfare is dictated by terrorism is very important to have allies which share the same mentality, values and culture. Therefore, situated in a continent where the most powerful and influential countries believe in ideas such of free movement of people, capital, democracy, interdependency and cooperation a country should be integrated into those concepts for not only its well-being but for the well-being of its fellow-members. As a conclusion one can say that it is worthwhile for Bulgaria to join the European Union and give its best for it.