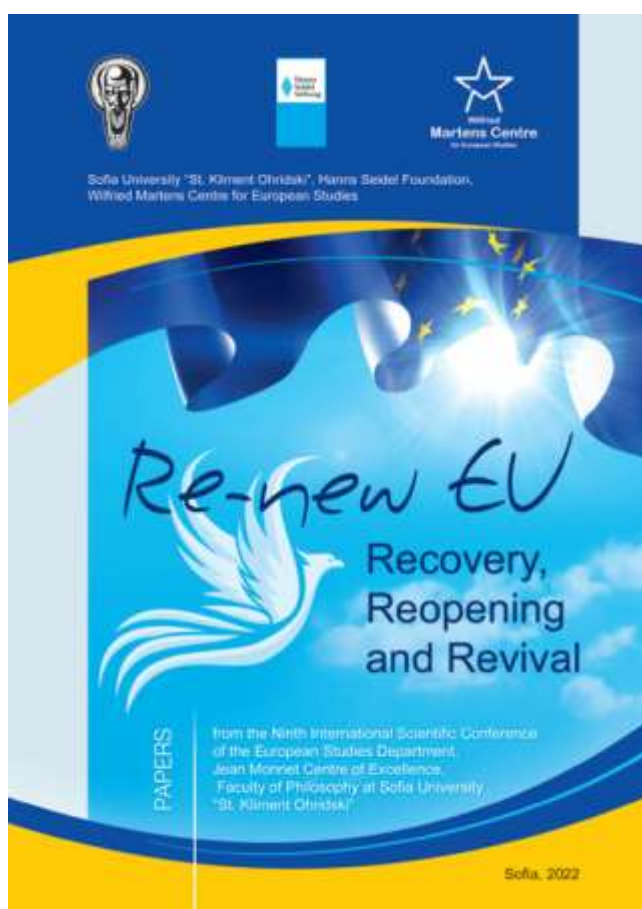


**PAPERS FROM THE NINTH INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE OF
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**RE-NEW EU
RECOVERY, REOPENING AND REVIVAL**

Ingrid Shikova¹, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”



The publication presents the papers from the Ninth International Scientific Conference “Re-new EU -- Recovery, Reopening and Revival”, organised by the European Studies Department of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” with the kind support of Hanns Seidel Foundation and Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies that took place in Sofia on 13-14 October 2022.

It is clear that Europe will have to continue to operate in the foreseeable future in a complicated environment. However, the idea behind the title of the publication stays relevant. We have understood that we need Europe more than ever and that European unity and peace need daily care because they should not be taken for granted. As António Guterres -- the Secretary General of the United Nations says: “Let’s have no illusions. We are in rough seas. A winter of global

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discontent is on the horizon. A cost-of-living crisis is raging. Trust is crumbling. Our planet is burning.”

The questions and challenges facing the European Union are numerous, but the answers and solutions are fewer. Never, since the Second World War, has Europe been that essential. Yet never has Europe been in so much danger. How to achieve a more united, more sovereign, more democratic Europe? Shall European Union move forward only in responding to crises? How to act in order to defend the EU’s interests and values in these unusual times? The climate crisis is a global problem.

Security risks create instability. How to make the EU stronger, more autonomous, and more influential?

We as researchers have a duty to seek answers and solutions because the EU should develop common solutions to common problems. We had to recall the famous phrase of Jean Monnet: “Europe will be forged in crises and will be the sum of the solutions adopted for those crises”. But is this statement from Jean Monnet’s 1976 memoirs still valid in modern conditions? Some academic research underlines the strengthening of the EU through crises, while other publications point out that the crises have a negative impact on EU unity.

This conference took place during the European Year of Youth. It is barely a coincidence that most of the authors in this volume are young researchers. The participants from Poland, Italy, Romania, India, Albania, and Kosovo contributed to looking at Europe from different angles and hearing different points of view.

Despite the diverse topics and different points of view, we all could agree that preserving the achievements of the EU as well as taking Europe forward and defending its model is an everyday responsibility. It is obvious that today we need imagination and dedication to follow the wise advice of Albert Einstein: “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that we used when we created them.”

Prof. Ingrid Shikova,
President of the Scientific Committee of the Ninth International Conference
“Re-new EU -- Recovery, Reopening and Revival”