Gruber, S: Wilder Osten oder Herz Europas?

This book considers the role of the EU in the consolidation of democracy in Slovakia during the 1990s. The first chapter explores the concept of "Europe" in Slovak politics, which was used by all political forces as a rhetorical tool. The relationship between Slovakia and the EU institutions and member states is analyzed in the second chapter. Within the EU there was initially great insecurity about the development of Slovakia. But the disastrous results in democritization and rule of the Meciar government made the 1997 decision not to commence accession negotiations largely uncontroversial. The last chapter deals with the part the EU played in Slovakia's democratic consolidation. EU integration was a hotly discussed topic in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in 1998. The country's failure in the integration process fueled growing concerns that Slovakia might not be able to catch up with the West. Among the sources used are documents from the diplomatic archives of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the author's own interviews with some of the persons involved. The author argues that the EU, thanks to its huge prestige in Slovakia, helped significantly to rid it of authoritarian tendencies.

Historians, Political scientists, Social scientists.

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85,00 € 79,44 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

ArtikeInummer: 9783899715996

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-3-89971-599-6 Verlag: V & R Unipress GmbH Erscheinungstermin: 16.06.2010

Sprache(n): Deutsch
Auflage: 1. Auflage 2010
Serie: Schriften zur politischen

Kommunikation

Produktform: Gebunden

Gewicht: 970 g Seiten: 446

Format (B x H): 163 x 245 mm



