

Central and South-Eastern Europe 2013, 13th Edition¹

“Central and South-Eastern Europe 2013, 13th Edition” is a comprehensive survey of countries and territories of Central and South-Eastern Europe that covers latest economic and political developments. As mentioned in the foreword, it is published at a time of serious uncertainty in the region, and in the European Union (henceforth EU). Greece is battling with a severe financial crisis, and other countries in the Western Balkans, despite some improvements in the framework of EU accession, also have problems with high unemployment and corruption along with the financial crisis. On the bright side, Croatia has signed the Treaty of Accession to the EU and approved it on a national referendum. So, the region is experiencing both positive and negative changes.

As already said, this is the 13th edition of a very successful series of regional surveys which has started in 2000, and is also published in the US and Canada. It is a part of the “Europa Regional Surveys of the World” series, being one of its earliest titles.

It consists of four parts covering the latest events with insightful articles on main issues, substantiated with statistical data and information regarding institutions and key figures related to the region.

Countries covered in the “Central and South-Eastern Europe 2013” edition are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Part one is a general survey and covers issues of regional interest including: the impact of the new member states on the EU’s external relations; the crisis in the Euro area; Central and South-Eastern Europe economies; Minorities in Central and South-Eastern Europe; EU integration and social policy

.....
1 London: Routledge, 2012, pp. 900. ISBN: 978-1-85743-650-1

reforms in Central and South-Eastern Europe; Environmental governance: the influence of the EU; the Baltic sea region; Modern Greece in South-Eastern Europe; Bosnia and Herzegovina since Dayton; with appendices on the religion of the region and the Kaliningrad region.

Part two consists of Country surveys, with a detailed analysis of each country, along with general information and statistical data concerning those countries.

Each country's segment starts with a description of its physical features and its climate. The Population part is substantiated with data from each country's own latest national censuses along with a short overview of the population composition by ethnic, minority, religion and language groups.

The population segment is followed by the Chronology segment which shows the dates and the events that have shaped the current situation in the country and are important to its people.

History and economy are described in short essays of analyzing a certain period of time or major events important to the country's future or even its self-determination.

Statistical surveys can also be found in each country's chapter, which are substantiated with detailed data and information regarding fields of economy and industry such as: Agriculture, Health and Welfare, Forestry, Fishing and Mining. There is also the latest data on production and the country's finance, along with data from its external trade, transport, tourism, communications media and education. Surveys on area and population can also be found in the Statistical survey section.

Each chapter is concluded with general information on the constitution, judicial system, national and local government, political organizations, diplomatic representation, religion, the media and its principal newspapers and publishers, broadcasting and communications, finance, trade and industry, transport, culture, tourism, social welfare, the environment, defense and education.

Selected bibliography can be found at the end of each country's chapter.

Part three named "Who's Who of Central and South-Eastern Europe", consists of biographical details on the region's most prominent politicians, containing their place and date of birth, education and career. Politicians listed are mostly presidents, prime ministers, parliament chairman, speakers, ministers, leaders of opposition parties and mayors. Detailed contact information is also listed at the end of each politician's biography.

Part four of the "Central and South-Eastern Europe 2013, 13th Edition", provides regional information about regional organizations which operate in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

Starting with the United Nations organization this chapter gives us a detailed overview of data and information about each organization which starts with contact info and a short history review, along with the United Nations main goals and purposes.

Member states are listed, and the list encompasses every country mentioned earlier in the book except Kosovo. Diplomatic representations and permanent missions to the United Nations (UN) information is listed for each member state, as well as information about Intergovernmental organizations, active in the region that participate in the sessions and the work of the UN General Assembly as observers, maintaining permanent offices at the UN.

For other organizations named and listed in this chapter, the description starts with their organizational structure and ends with their activities, finance or even publications and associated funds and programs.

The chapter starts with United Nations related organizations like the aforementioned Permanent Missions to the UN, and it continues with: the Economic Commission for Europe - ECE, the United Nations Childrens Fund - UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme - UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme - UNEP, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR, the United Nations Peace Keeping, Food and Agriculture Organization - FAO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO, the World Health Organization - WHO, and other UN organizations active in the Central and South-Eastern Europe.

The list of organizations continues with those unrelated with the UN that are part of the World Bank group, such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development - IBRD, the International Development Association - IDA, the International Finance Corporation - IFC, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency - MIGA and other financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund.

The chapter concludes with the description of mostly European political, economic and security organizations starting with the Council of the Baltic Sea States - CBSS, the Council of Europe, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - EBRD, the European Space Agency - ESA, the European Union, the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization - NATO, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD, the International Energy Agency - IEA, OECD Nuclear Energy Agency - NEA, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - OSCE, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation - BSEC, the World Trade Organization - WTO and other regional organizations sorted by categories.

The 2013 edition contains a list of institutes and research centers studying Central and South-Eastern Europe, not only those from Europe but also those from North and South America and Asia, providing detailed contact information and the names of people in charge of those institutions.

At the end of this very rich 13th edition of "Central and South-Eastern Europe" is a selected bibliography of books and periodicals along with a detailed index of regional organizations.

This book is highly recommended for researchers interested in Central and South-Eastern Europe and social science students.

Nikola Marijan