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Achieving democracy through interest representation: interest groups in Central and Eastern Europe

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This book assesses the quality of democracy through the study of organized interests in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) since the collapse of communism in 1989 up to 2017. It offers a much-needed comprehensive look into formal interest representation in CEE countries and compares this with the model in Western democracies. Drawing on democratic theory and comparative analysis, the authors explore the effects of a legal framework, political as well as social contexts. The volume contributes to debates on the performance of young democracies in CEE, where scholars argue that there is a 'democratic crisis' and democratic fatigue while the interest group system is often labelled as weak and, in some cases, underdeveloped. Although great efforts have been made to deepen our understanding of interest organization and lobbying tools, the current literature fails to provide a comprehensive answer on the influence of unsupportive environments on population ecology. The case of CEE countries shows significant effects of political and social contexts on interest representation, stimulating a debate about the quality of democratic institutions following the collapse of communism.

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