

Abstract

This thesis aims to examine the influence of external actors in the Western Balkans, first in general terms, and then the influence of two important power actors, Russia and China, on Serbia as an important target actor. The thesis first offers a general discussion of the influence of external actors on policymaking of third countries in the first chapter, presenting its essential characteristics in selected substantive characteristics. It then introduces the external actors in the Western Balkans themselves, including the EU, and their influence in the region. The second chapter then presents the thesis's own theoretical framework for analysing the influence of external actors and introduces the tools used in each area of influence. It also discusses the operationalisation of the thesis, the narrowing of the thesis topic, the research question itself and the rationale for its selection. Finally, the third chapter presents the thesis's own comparative case study of the influence of Russia and China as external power actors on Serbia as the target actor, based on the theoretical framework presented in the previous chapter. Finally, it then reaches a synthesizing conclusion, presents key findings regarding the influence of the choice of goals/interests of power actors on the choice of instruments of external influence on the target actor, and also offers further reflections on the topic. Thus, the thesis seeks to offer not only an overview of the issue progressing from the general to the more specific, but also an original theoretical framework of external actors' influence applicable to other potential case studies, as well as the actual results found within the specific case study.

Keywords

China, European Union, Europeanisation, External Actors, External Influence, Russia, Serbia, Western Balkans