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Ukraine: What Went Wrong and How to Fix It

Anders Åslund

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Anders Åslund : Ukraine: What Went Wrong and How to Fix It before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ukraine: What Went Wrong and How to Fix It:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Arkadiusz KulaGreat author, and well written book.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerSad but true.7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Key to understandingBy Lost JohnPublished on 30th April 2015, and researched and written between July 2014 and January 2015, this is currently one of the most up to date books on the subject of Ukraine's Euromaidan

Revolution, the Russian annexation of Crimea, and ongoing conflict in the Donbas. It has to be said too that, thanks to Anders Åslund's long association with Ukraine, it is also one of the best informed. (Åslund served as an advisor to President Leonid Kuchma as long ago as 1994, and since then has built-up contacts with a wide range of political movers and shakers in Ukraine.) More up to date books will no doubt soon be along, but even as that happens this book will still be of value as it concentrates most heavily not on describing what has occurred in the past (that serves as background), but on policy prescriptions for the immediate future. And 'immediate' is the byword. Åslund is adamant that the moment of the crisis presented by the economic and military situations pertaining at the time he wrote his book must be seized, as it makes possible radical changes to institutional, legal and other structures that could not be achieved at other times. Ukraine's great problem ever since independence in 1991 has been corruption. It assumed astronomic proportions during the Yanukovich presidency - and the Euromaidan's demand for an Association Agreement (AA) with the European Union was underpinned by the understanding that the conditions of the AA would progressively eliminate corruption - but corruption was at all times endemic and, most disappointingly of all, was scarcely checked by the 2004 Orange Revolution or the Yushenko presidency that followed. Åslund prescribes reform at the top and from the top, with wholesale removal of those who were entrenched in corruption in law enforcement and the judiciary, and in all areas of government administration. 'Political reform must come first' is one of his chapter headings, followed by 'Next comes reform of Ukraine's state'. Then he goes on to 'Achieving financial stability and sustainability', in the course of which he looks at taxation and banking. Then he turns to 'Cleaning up the energy sector', and finally 'Social policy cannot wait'. In the last he looks at pensions, healthcare, schooling and higher education. In every area examined, Åslund makes detailed recommendations for reform. In some cases, especially at the top and in the judiciary, dispensing with recent office-holders will (already has) created a need for many suitably qualified replacements. Åslund hopes that some of the international Ukrainian diaspora and other foreign nationals might be attracted to fill the gaps. Åslund has great respect for the clean-up of Georgian government and administration that was achieved under the 2004-2013 presidency of Mikheil Saakashvili, following the 2003 Rose Revolution. He notes with evident approval the appointment of the former health minister of Georgia, Aleksandre Kvitashvili, to the same position in Ukraine. Since Åslund's book went to press there have been further Georgian appointments to senior positions in Ukraine, including Saakashvili himself, who is now the Governor of Odessa. It appears that much of what Åslund advocates is being implemented. His book is therefore key to understanding some of the most positive and constructive developments that are currently occurring in Ukraine.

Ukraine has been wracked by a year of unprecedented political, economic, and military turmoil. Russian military aggression in the east and a legacy of destructive policies and corruption have created an imminent existential crisis for this young democracy. Yet Ukraine also has a great opportunity to break out of economic underperformance. In this study, Anders Aslund, one of the world's leading experts on Ukraine, traces Ukraine's evolution as a market economy starting with the fall of communism and examines the economic impact of its recent difficulties. Aslund argues that Ukraine must undertake sweeping political, economic, social, and government reforms to achieve prosperity and independence. For its part, the West must abandon its hesitant approach and provide broad economic assistance to help Ukraine transform itself.

No Western analyst has been more involved with or written more on Ukrainian economic reform than Aslund. Here, he offers a manual of sorts on what the Ukrainian government and its international benefactors must do if Ukraine is to claw its way out of its current economic crisis. --Foreign Affairs As the conflict continues in Ukraine with international media outlets painting an unequivocally pessimistic situation, Anders Aslund argues that Ukraine's political class is facing an opportunity to make things right on the economic and administrative front. --Global Risk Insights About the Author Anders Aslund has been a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics since 2006. He is also an adjunct professor at Georgetown University. He examines the economic policies of Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe, as well as focuses on the broader implications of economic transition. Aslund served as an economic adviser to the governments of Russia in 1991-94 and Ukraine in 1994-97.