

22 – 24 JUNE 2026
CONFERENCE

PROTEST!

Expression, Organization, and Impact
from a Central and Eastern European
Perspective

Gdańsk, Poland, European Solidarity Centre // NOMUS

Individuals and groups respond to perceived injustices and grievances with protest. The forms of expression are diverse and interact with the conditions defined by social and political opportunity structures. Protest is a central instrument of social negotiation processes related to participation and co-determination. It thrives on publicity and attention, yet it is – especially in authoritarian contexts – often accompanied by less visible practices of resistance that take place in everyday life or in subversive, hidden forms.

The conference focuses on various forms of protest and resistance, their structural conditions and consequences, as well as their (current and retrospective) legitimization vs. condemnation. The event is interdisciplinary in nature, as is the topic itself, and encompasses the disciplines of history, political science, cultural anthropology, sociology, literary studies, musicology, or art history.

Monday, 22 June 2026 — European Solidarity Centre, seminar rooms no. 4 and 5, 3rd floor

1:00 pm: Opening Remarks

Magdalena Mistat (*Director of the European Solidarity Centre*), **Ira Spieker** (*President of the Herder Research Council*), **Grzegorz Piotrowski** (*European Solidarity Center*)

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

The Instrumentalization of Protest by Far-Right Movements

Katarzyna Walecka (*Warsaw*), **Kinga Wojtas** (*Kraków*):
Claiming the Nation in the Streets: Youth Perceptions and Protest Legitimacy at Poland's Independence March (2018–2024)

Daniel Płatek (*Warsaw*), **Paulina Pospieszna** (*Poznań*),
Artur Lipiński (*Poznań*): Explaining Strategic Adaptation of the Far Right in Poland. Political Opportunity Structures, Networks, and Narratives

Grzegorz Piotrowski (*Gdańsk*), **Ali Jones** (*Coventry*):
Can There Ever be a State Antifa? State Intervention in Contesting Polish and East German Far-Right Communities

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Resistance and Temporality

Joshua Dubrow (*Warsaw*), **Anna Radiukiewicz** (*Warsaw*),
Alan Żukowski (*Warsaw*), **Michał Nawrocki** (*Warsaw*):
Every Protest is an Imagined Future

Katharina Schuchardt (*Dresden*): Contesting Time: Protest and the Reconfiguration of Temporal Orders at the Turów Open-Pit Mine in Poland

Michał Wenzel (*Warsaw*), **Ewelina Nowakowska** (*Warsaw*),
Kacper Leśniewicz (*Warsaw*): Revival of Agrarianism. Rural Protests in 2024 as Anti-Globalism and Counterhegemony

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm Break

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Adapting Protest Practices

Maciej Kowalewski (*Szczecin*): How Social Movement Archives Contribute to Protest Literacy?

Tomasz Gola (*Oxford*): From the Street to the Ballot Box – Civic Activism and Electoral Participation in Poland

Nina Krienke (*Bremen*), **Georgiana Bounegru** (*Bucharest*):
The Empire Strikes Back. Practices of Protest Instrumentalization by Institutional Actors in Romania

5:00 pm – 5:30 pm Break

5:30 pm

KEYNOTE

Elżbieta Korolczuk (*Warsaw*): Sowing Violence and Epistemic Chaos. How Social Movements can Damage Democracy

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Ideology, Threats, and Arts as Protest Tools

Magdalena Muszel (*Warsaw*), **Alicja Pałęcka** (*Warsaw*),
Piotr Kocyba (*Leipzig*): Protest under Political Change: Meanings, Repertoires, and Ideological Divides in Poland

Bastian Stock (*Dresden*): Hijacking the Street: How a Far-Right Micro-Party Appropriated a Leftist Protest through Cultural Threat Scenarios

Simon Niemann (*Osnabrück*): The Public Space Between Art and Political Activism

Tuesday, 23 June 2026 — NOMUS

9:30 am – 11:00 am

Music as a Form of Protest

Piotr Kowzan (*Gdańsk*), **Aleksandra Hołubowicz** (*Hradec Králové*): Pedagogies of Radical Mourning Protest Songs

Azniv Tadevosyan (*Tartu*): Dispersed Resistance Practices in Wartime Russian Popular Music

Stanislav Vysotsky (*Abbotsford*): "This Isn't a Fashion. It's a War!" The Role of Music in Antifascist and Anti-Authoritarian Protest in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine

09:30 am – 11:00 am

Societies in Transformation

Nicoleta Serban (*Bucharest*): Mobilization of the European Population in Favor of a Country Beyond the Iron Curtain (1989)

Richard Rohmoser (*Mannheim*): Social Movements Between Social Integration and Radicalization. The 1980s as a Defining Era for the Development of Protest in Europe

Ondřej Daniel (*Prague*): Contesting Postsocialist Census: Protest Practices of Trade Unionists and Anarchists in 1990s Czechia

11:00 am – 11:30 am Break

Tuesday, 23 June 2026 — NOMUS

11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Cultural Forms of Protest

Noémi Katona (*Budapest*), **Beáta Nagy** (*Budapest*),
Attila Meleg (*Budapest*): Competing Narratives of Oppres-
sion in an Authoritarian Context: A Hungarian Case Study

Barát Erzsébet (*Vienna*): Artistic Forms at Subcultural
Political Protests Against the Various Articulations of
Parliamentary Autocracy in Hungary

Anne Hultsch (*Greifswald*): Pozor, padá kultúra! Attention,
Culture Falls! On the Protests Against Radical Encroach-
ments on Cultural Freedom in Slovakia

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm Break

2:30 pm – 4:00 pm
Fighting for Self-Determination

Agnieszka Balcerzak (*Munich*): Framing Resistance:
Grotesque, Absurdity, and Cuteness in Polish Abortion
Debate

Aleksandra Drobica (*Wrocław*): When the Protest Performs:
Bodies, Symbols and Music in the Polish Women's Strike

Lea Bellmann (*Dresden*): Bridging the Void in Protection:
Between State Security and Collective Safety in Times of
Far-Right Mobilization against Saxon Pride Parades

4:00 pm – 4:30 pm Break

4:30 pm
Opportunity to visit NOMUS. New Art Museum

11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Social Movements and Practices

Anna Radiukiewicz (*Warsaw*): Protest as an Arena of Civic
Recognition: Pandemic Mobilizations in Poland

Daniel Opriş (*Bucharest*): Between Visibility and Silence:
Petitioning as Protest in the Romanian Kingdom, 1878–1916

Bartosz Rief (*Warsaw / Gdańsk*): Urban Activism Strategies in
Response to Social, Spatial, and Economic Changes in the
Former Gdańsk Shipyard Area

2:30 pm – 4:00 pm
Protest as Text: Narrative Practices of Resistance under
State Socialism

Presentations by Students of the Martin Luther University
Halle / Saale:

Maja Billert
Darian Fiedler
Jean Pierre Lehmann
Saskia Lohmann
Lisa Naumann
Lea Thiede
Anna Wenger

Introduction: **Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel** (*Halle / Saale*)

Wednesday, 24 June 2026 — NOMUS

9:30 am – 12:00 am
Contesting Power and Legitimacy

Claudiu Crăciun (*Bucharest*): Militant Democracy and
Electoral Protest. The Case of Romanian Presidential
Elections

Kamila Grudniewska (*Białtów*): Mobilizing in the Networked
Public Sphere: Digital Activism and Protest Dynamics in
Central and Eastern Europe

Nina Sophie Grabowski (*Frankfurt / Oder*): Gender and
Dissent in Socialist Dictatorship – Actions and Experiences
of Women in Opposition Groups in Warsaw and East Berlin
in the 1980s

9:30 am – 12:00 am
Symbols and Contradiction

Anna Barbara Ratuska (*Warsaw*): Solidarity: A Visual
Narrative of Protest and Collective Identity

Fatos Hoxha (*Regensburg*): From Labour Protest to National
Symbol: The 1989 Trepça Miners' Strike as Political Mobiliza-
tion in Late Socialist Yugoslavia

David Groß (*Paderborn*): Economic Protest and Cultural
Resistance: The Bitterfeld Protests and Economic Resistance
in the GDR

Franziska Andrea Bartl (*Chemnitz*): "Don't Be Afraid – There
Are Still Students Here." Student Protest Potential in the
GDR and Czechoslovakia in Comparison

VENUES

European Solidarity Centre:
Plac Solidarności 1, 80-863 Gdańsk
NOMUS. New Art Museum:
Stefana Jaracza 14, 80-863 Gdańsk

REGISTRATION AND CONTACT

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ECS european
solidarity
centre

HFR Herder-Forschungsrat

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