

Protest as a Democracy Test. Protest Culture under Transformation and as a Transformative Power (ProTest)

Overview

Project funded within the EU Horizon 2024 framework on protest cultures and their relation to democracy and de-democratization.

Duration:

01 January 2025 - 31 December 2027

Research Team:

[Prof. Dr. Sebastian Haunss](#) (Head of project)

[Prof. Dr. Sophia Hunger](#) (Head of project)

[Prof. Dr. Heiko Pleines](#) (Head of project)

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Details

In response to global tendencies towards de-democratization, including the European Union and its Eastern Partnership states, the ambition of this project is to shed light on the "black box" of relationships and dynamics between a country's protest culture and the state of democracy. The project goal is a comprehensive comparative analysis, scrutinizing the interrelations between protest culture and democracy, and examining the roles of various actors whose actions may influence each country's protest culture. The project transcends the European Union's borders and explores the complex mosaic of distinct historical contexts, divergent democratic trajectories, and intricate actor constellations. Furthermore, it fosters interconnections within the academic community, creating opportunities for further future research.

Major research objectives:

- Protesters/activists' repertoires and framing in the countries with different quality of democracy in the context of ongoing de-democratization processes
- Authorities' instrumentalization of the institutional and discursive mechanisms ("hard" and "soft" measures) to challenge protest culture in the target countries;
- The role of mainstream and social media – their mediation and agency – in triggering or

- challenging protests;
- Citizens' role in protest culture with a focus on perceptions and practices of three generations of protesters
- Trace the influence of the current patterns of protest culture on the state of democracy in the target countries

Country cases:

Consolidated democracies (old EU member states), new democracies (those part of the Eastern enlargement) and developing democracies (the EaP countries)

- Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Sweden
- Hungary, Poland and Romania
- Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine

Consortium:

- Lunds Universitet, Sweden
- University of Bremen, Germany
- Universidad Antonio de Nebrija, Spain
- National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania
- Center for Social Sciences, Georgia
- Centro de Estudos Sociais, Portugal
- Università di Bologna, Italy
- Instytut Filozofii i Socjologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Poland
- Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary (affiliated member)

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<https://www.protestproject.eu/>

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Project Type:

Third-party funded project