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FATIGUE Research Project: WP5 - Civil Society and Protest Movements

**Project Title:**

***Post-1989 Social Movements in East Central Europe: Activist Cultures of Conteporary Feminist Movements and Women’s Mobilisations in Poland and Slovakia***

**Abstract**

In recent years the increasingly authoritarian governments in East Central Europe have employed so-called *anti-gender* discourse that is characterised by an opposition to questions related to topics such as reproductive rights, access to abortion, the rights of LGBTQ folks, sexual education, or legal tools for elimination of violence against women. These dynamics go hand in hand with the emergence of

conservative and often fundamentalist *anti-gender* movements in East Central Europe and elsewhere. At the same time there has been a significant increase of women’s protests and feminist mobilizations. In East Central Europe, particularly in Poland, attacks on reproductive rights have mobilized diverse actors around the large-scale protests across the country, challenging the conservative policy-making decisions, as well as inspiring the formation of new activist platforms. Similarly, in Slovakia, a new wave of protests to protect the reproductive rights have emerged as a reaction to the attempts to limit legal access to abortion, opening up a space for questions around different forms of feminisms and intersectional resistance. Based on my ethnographic fieldwork with contemporary feminist activist cultures in Poland and Slovakia where the dialectical relationship between the progressive movements, anti-gender groups and the state are particularly urgent, in my research I explore the reflections on following questions:

What are the feminist activist cultures in CEE today? How do the contemporary feminist movements react to the emergence of anti-gendered politics? How the emergence of anti-gender movements and anti-gender discourse of the populist right politics challenge the feminist movements in their strategy building towards systematic change in Poland and Slovakia and in the CEE region at large?