

## The Politics of Protest in Central Europe

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**Mihály Gyimesi**

# **Protesters on Both Sides of a Barricade: Political Mobilizations in Hungary 2010-2014**

The post-transition Hungarian protest sector grew to an unseen size during the years of the second Orbán government. Actors from all over the political spectrum became active in a wave of contention partly inspired by the international anti-austerity protest cycle. Still, this national peak of mobilization meant rather contained events attended by the politically most active. Democracy frames gained momentum with large-scale left-liberal protests organized in defense of liberal democracy during the years when movements of the crisis in Europe mobilized precisely against its flaws. The subsequent pro-Orbán marches produced the highest turnout rates, occasionally attracting around a hundred thousand participants. They reacted to oppositional and EU critiques of the new system of “illiberal democracy” by advocating a populist conception where the emerging will of the people is in focus instead of institutional settings. Protest event analysis and secondary sources will be used to explain interactions between popular support and dissent.

Mihály Gyimesi is a doctoral candidate at the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. He holds an MA in Political Science from Central European University. His main research interests are social movements and the media; he is working on his dissertation that seeks to explain the rise and fall of contention during the second Orbán government in Hungary.

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