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REPORT ON “RESONANCE, RESILIENCE, RECONFIGURATION. STRATEGIES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN POLAND AFTER 2015” (REZONANS, REZYLIENCJA, REKONFIGURACJA. STRATEGIE RUCHÓW SPOŁECZNYCH W POLSCE PO 2015 R.), WROCŁAW, APRIL 10–11, 2025 <https://doi.org/10.2478/ppsr-2025-0009>

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Social movements are now an important part of society. One of their main goals is to seek to bring about some political, social, economic, or cultural change. They draw attention to problems in a given community, conduct information campaigns on problems in the world (e.g., human rights violations, climate change, discrimination, social inequalities), and play an important role in shaping democracy. Thanks to globalisation and the use of social media, they can reach a virtually unlimited number of people, making it possible for local movements to achieve international reach. However, social movements still face many barriers and headwinds in their activities. Therefore, the aim of the conference ‘Resonance, resilience, reconfiguration. Strategies of social movements in Poland after 2015’ was to discuss the variety of movements, the types of their activities, how they mobilise societies to act, what their interactions with the external environment look like, as well as what effects and impacts the activity of social movements produces.

On April 10–11, 2025, Towarzystwo Edukacji Obywatelskiej (TEO, Society for Civic Education) and the Institute of Political Science of the University of Wrocław co-hosted the nationwide conference titled “Resonance, resilience, reconfiguration. Strategies of social movements in Poland after 2015”. The conference was supported by funds awarded by the Ministry of Education and Science within the framework of the program Excellence in Science II, contract No KONF/SN/0353/2024/02.

The two-day conference focused on the evolution and perspectives of Polish social movements. Researchers discussed progressive movements, contemporary denialist movements, as well as environmental movements. During five panels, participants explored the functioning of social movements, the strategies they adopt, and the challenges that accompany the functioning of social movements. They also highlighted how social movements influence social problem-solving, become institutionalised, and influence politics.

The conference provided a platform where issues of linking theory and practice were addressed. In addition to a panel on social activism and participation in a theoretical and practical context, there was a debate in which representatives of social movements acting in Poland took part. They were: Anna Kowalczyk-Derłęga (Polish Women’s

Strike), Krzysztof Niciejewski (Committee for the Defence of Democracy), Paweł Pomian (EKO-UNIA), Przemysław Walas (Campaign Against Homophobia). The debate focused on Polish progressive movements in the face of Donald Trump's policies. The discussion was related to the situation in which progressive movements find themselves after Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election and how they can deal with the proposals of the new US presidential administration (such as the end of financial aid to NGOs or the lack of funding for Radio Free Europe).

The first panel involved contemporary denialist movements. Issues related to alternative right-wing movements were addressed, including those concerning the ideological basis for their construction. Also presented were backward-looking urban movements whose main focus is on urban issues and are formed in a certain counterposition to existing urban movements. Another paper dealt with a case study of incels and femcels, specific online groups that are affected by the phenomenon of loneliness and isolation in the digital age. There were also reflections on the popularity of conspiracy theories among Grey Voters. The paper on the potential impact of the activity of denialist movements in the context of human rights summed up the entire panel.

During the second panel, reflections were conducted on the diversity of progressive movements in Poland. Consideration was given to the moral limits of protests and to resilience, *i.e.*, the adaptive endurance of individuals and collectives. Issues related to social movements in Poland in the face of de-democratisation processes and the protest activity of selected social movements were also raised. The next paper presented the results of research on the way in which violations of social well-being manifested themselves during the Women's Strikes of 2020–2021. Feminist movements were presented from the perspective of the functioning of women's councils, which exemplify the strategy of resilience – the adaptive resilience of these movements in the face of restrictions on women's rights or unfavourable legislative changes, and how Russia's invasion of Ukraine affected the dynamics of protests by the Polish women's movement. The resistance strategy of Polish LGBTQ+ activists on the interactive map "Atlas of Hate" was also analysed.

In the third panel, researchers discussed changes in Polish environmental movements. Consideration was given to citizen science in a circular economy, as well as to the evolution of the strategy of Polish climate movements between 2018 and 2023. The attitudes and expectations of Polish voters towards climate issues were presented, and how they influence the programme proposals of political parties. Another paper dealt with civic behaviour in the Organisation for the Environment and showed examples of organisations where employees have contributed to pro-environmental actions in their workplaces. It also addressed issues related to religious environmental movements in Poland in the second decade of the 21st century and the anti-windmill movement in Poland – what its goals are, the activities of protesters, and whether they have a significant impact on decisions taken by public authorities.

The second day of the conference began with a panel on activism and links between theory and practice. Concepts of citizen science in the context of the relationship between science, the common good and society, and academic activities related to the social impact of science were introduced. Intergenerational patterns of unconventional political activity were presented, not only on the example of participation in elections, but also participation in demonstrations or signing petitions. Another paper dealt with the new cooperativism as a new form of citizen activism in a dynamic digital world. Issues related

to protest and civil disobedience in the strategies of environmental movements in Poland were also addressed. It was presented how, in the local government presidential campaign in Krakow in 2024, the various candidates referred to the role and importance of neighbourhoods in the life of the city and its inhabitants. The discussion also focused on social initiatives to hold the Polish Roman Catholic Church accountable for the problem of paedophilia by some of its representatives.

The final panel focused on the international contexts of Polish social movements. It addressed issues related to the activities of anti-war social movements in the Russian Federation and the strategies of Russian conscientious objectors (people who are obliged to perform military service but refuse to do so due to ethical or religious convictions) in the era of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. Consideration was also given to the activities of the non-governmental sector in Poland in assisting refugees and migrants. Another paper dealt with the 2024–2025 protests in Serbia, whose aim was not the resignation of the government, but the reimagining of democracy and coexistence. The activity of social movements in Slovakia in response to the actions taken by the government of Robert Fico was presented. The social movements that are working for the release of the Israeli hostages of 7 October 2023 were introduced and an attempt was made to answer the question of whether their activities have influenced the decisions of the Israeli authorities.

Various research centres from across Poland were represented at the conference. It was attended by researchers from the disciplines of political and administrative sciences, security sciences, international relations, sociology, communication and media sciences, and geography. The conference included discussions about existing research on social movements, the exchange of concepts and experiences, and the identification of new areas of research and potential cooperation.