

# Protest in 'post-crisis' Southern Europe: Sustained Activism or Demobilization and Disengagement?

## Panel Chairs

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## Abstract

Following the onset of the global financial crisis European anti-austerity and pro-democracy movements marked the beginning of a new cycle of protest. Accordingly, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain experienced a notable increase in the levels of protest. Similarities have been more pronounced in the cases of Spain and Greece, which saw the significant expansion of protest (across social groups and sectors) and the intensification of conflict. Moreover, in both countries collective mobilizations were followed by the electoral rise of left-wing 'movement parties' (Syriza and Podemos). There has been an impressive amount of literature analyzing the emergence and escalation of anti-austerity and pro-democracy movements in Southern Europe. However, there is a lack of academic research concerning the de-escalation and ultimately demobilization of anti-austerity movements. This panel aims to explore the current state of protest in Southern European countries, focusing especially on the process of demobilization. The notion of demobilization covers a plurality of phenomena ranging from individual disengagement to the political demobilization of an entire social movement sector. The panel invites papers focusing on the macro- and meso-level of collective demobilization as well as on the micro-level of individual disengagement. It especially welcomes papers adopting an integrative approach that links contexts, processes and actors. Papers may cover the region comparatively or focus on single-country case studies. We are particularly interested in papers addressing the following (non-exclusive) questions:

Has demobilization been limited to anti-austerity movements or has it affected the whole social movement sector? What has been the impact of the decline of the anti-austerity campaign on activism in other political domains? Which were the most significant factors in the mobilization phase (e.g. actors involved, organizational structure and unity, the state's response) that shaped the demobilization process? Have the networks and organizations that supported anti-austerity protests lost their mobilizing force and been replaced by more localized or temporary or issue specific networks? Have the collective action frames of anti-austerity protests lost their resonance? Which were the critical events that acted as a decisive push towards demobilization and individual disengagement? What was the impact of the electoral cycle and the alteration of political elites on the level of protest? What has been the interaction between demobilization and institutionalization? How has the political context, organizational structures and personal life trajectories affected activists' commitment levels? Did the disengagement pace differ for radical and moderate

activists? Individuals, who disengaged from protest politics, did they return to contentious politics at a later stage?

To submit a Paper proposal, you need to create a MyECPR account (if you don't already have one) and send the following information to [Marilena Simiti](#) by **15**

**February:**

- your name, academic affiliation and email address
- a title for your paper
- an abstract of up to 500 words
- 3-8 keywords