

Department

of History and Pasts, Inc. Center for  
Historical Studies, Central European University

Andrassy Universität Budapest

BlueLink Foundation

## Remembering Europe - Civil Society Under Pressure Again

Academic/practitioner workshop

December 7 - 9, 2017

The workshop gathers civil society representatives, journalists and political/social scientists from Central and Eastern Europe to reflect on the attacks on civil society during the twentieth century and generate effective practical and policy responses to today's growing pressure against critical civil society that upholds Europe's constitutive tradition of protecting human rights as well as its environmental and democratic values.

At this innovative workshop civil society representatives, journalists, political/social scientists, and historians mostly from EU member states in CEE engage in a public debate that traces the historical legacies and collective memory of the curtailment of civil society participation under non-democratic regimes, assesses the progress accomplished during the democratic transition and EU accession, and looks also at the regional and global backlash after the economic crisis in 2008. The workshop will also serve to plan policy and action responses against pressure from governments, mass media, and other sources of threat, such as the various forms of "uncivil society". Special attention will be paid to the opportunities offered by European citizen participation and the transnational cooperation of these civil society actors as a way to resist these pressures.

The workshop is hosted by the Department of History and Pasts, Inc., Center for Historical Studies at CEU, in partnership with the Andrassy University - Budapest. It is part of BlueLink's "Remembering Europe: Civil Society Under Pressure Again" project, supported by the Europe for Citizens program of the EU. The organizers will contribute focused research which maps pre-EU practices and legacies of ostracism and marginalization of the civic sector, and civil society responses to them. Scholars in multiple academic fields, civil society representatives, journalists and policy makers from EU member states in CEE will present position papers and multimedia/oral presentations.

# Workshop Programme

December 7, 2017, Thursday

Arrivals / Research team meeting

**17.30 - 18.00 Registration, Auditorium B, Central European University, 15 Nador str. Budapest**

**18.00 - 20.00 Workshop Opening Session and Evening Round Table**

Welcome statements by Balazs Trencsenyi, Head, Department of History, CEU; Pavel P Antonov, Co-founder/Executive Editor, BlueLink Civic Action Network; and Flavia Buiarelli, Project Officer, European Remembrance, Europe for Citizens Programme (to be confirmed).

**Evening Roundtable “Civil Society Ostracism before and after EU accession - and how to deal with it?”**

- Balazs Trencsenyi, Head, Department of History, CEU
- Donatella della Porta, Dean of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Director of Centre of Social Movements Studies, Professor of political science and political sociology, European University Institute (televised address)
- Sara Heltai, Deputy Programme Director of Greenpeace CEE (to be confirmed)

Moderator: Pavel P Antonov

**20.00 Dinner Reception**

December 8, 2017, Friday

Venue: Central European University, Gellner Room (9 Nador str.)

**09.30 - 11.30 Session One. Learning from CEE's History of Civil Society Ostracism.**

09.30 - 10.00 *Civil society – structural pathways and historical evidence from Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland*, Wiktor Marzec, Remembering Europe - Civil Society under Pressure Again project, BlueLink Foundation

10.00 - 10.30 *State Power and Jewish Survival in Occupied Europe*, Ethan Hollander, Wabash College, USA (to be confirmed)

10.30 - 11.00 *Transnational trajectories of Hungarian and Austrian environmentalists in the 1980s*, Daniela Neubacher, Andrassy University, Budapest

11.00 - 11.15 *Capturing civil society in Bulgaria: before and after EU accession*, Todor Yalamov, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

*Framing contemporary responses to refugees through historical legacies in Poland*, Danielle Drozdowski, UNSW Sydney and Patrycja Matusz-Protasiewicz, University of Wroclaw, Poland

**11.30 - 11.45 Tea and biscuits break**

**11.45 -13.30 Session Two. Civil society under pressure in CEE - a regional state of affairs.**

*State of civil society in the EU and Russia: 2016/2017 Report*, Andrey Demidov, IAS CEU

*Constitutional changes and opportunities for civil society across CEE during EU membership*, Renata Uitz, CEU

*When tradition is a burden. The practice of „political labelling” against the civil society – a comparison of Hungary and Slovakia*, István Kollai, Corvinus University, Budapest

*Defending democracy as a way to defend nature across CEE*, Sara Heltai, Deputy Programme Director of Greenpeace CEE (to be confirmed) (to be confirmed)

*Current challenges for organised civil society in Poland and innovative solutions developed to respond to them and defend open society values*, Filip Pazderski, Institute of Public Affairs

Discussion

### **13.00-14.00 Buffet Lunch**

#### **14.00 - 14.30 Country cases and analyses: Bulgaria**

14.00 - 14.15 *Life under attack: the experience of Bulgaria's active environmental groups with pressure from media, politicians and government*, Yordanka Dineva, For the Earth NGOs Coalition, Bulgaria

14.15 - 14.30 *State of civil society in Bulgaria - 2017 research outcomes*, Ksenia Vakhrusheva, BlueLink Foundation

#### **14.30 - 15.30 Country cases and analyses: Hungary**

14.30 - 14.45 *Beyond civil universalism. The new patterns of political activism in Hungary*, Dániel Mikecz and Balázs Böcskei, Hungarian Academy of Sciences,

14.45 - 15.00 *Pressure factors upon civil society in Hungary, and actions for response*, Peter Nizak, Open Society Initiative for Europe

15.00 - 15.15 *Right-wing polarization and its effects on civil society in Hungary*, Veszna Wessenauer, Political Capital – Civil society programme

15.15 - 15.30 *Acceptance of LGBT Pride Protest in Budapest*, Máté Szabó, ELTE University Budapest

15.30 - 15.45 Discussion

#### **15.45 - 16.00 Tea and biscuits break**

#### **16.00 - 16.45 Country cases and analyses: Poland**

16.00 - 16.15 *The Dream of Politics without Citizens: Suppressing Political Engagement of Civic Organizations in Law and Justice Poland*, Paweł Marczewski, Batory Foundation and University of Warsaw

16.15 - 16.30 *Far-right incidents against NGOs in contemporary Poland – hate crime monitoring carried out by the NEVER AGAIN Association*, Anna Tatar, Nigdy więcej / Never again

16.30 - 16.45 *Rejecting refugees in Kaczyński's Poland: The response from civil society*, Karolina Follis, Lancaster University

#### **16.45 - 17.00 Country cases and analyses - Romania**

16.45 - 17.00 *Movement-counter-movement dynamics and structured opportunities. The case of same-sex marriage debate in Romania*, Diana Margarit, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iasi

17.00 - 17.30 Discussion

**17.30 - 18.30 Closing of Day One**

**19.00 Dinner**

December 9, 2017, Saturday

**9.30 - 11.15 Exchange of strategies and practical experiences.**

9.30 - 9.45 *Civil Society's Power for Legal Change in the EU*, Angelina Atanasova, KU Leuven

9.45 - 10.00 *Typical actions of an illiberal democracy against civil society (Hungary)*, Csaba Kiss, Environmental Management and Law Association

10.00 - 10.15 *The EU as an empowering drive: Hungarian Non-Governmental Organisations and the European Union as Resource and Partner in the Domestic Promotion of Liberal Democracy*, Sophie Schmalenberger, independent researcher

10.15 - 10.30 *Online attacks on civil society and how to deal with them*, Botond Feledy

10.30 - 10.45 *Responses to "Black-PR" in Bulgaria*, Kristina Hristova, The Red House Centre for Culture and Debate,

10.45 - 11.00 *Networking between civil society fund operators across CEE, lessons learned*, Veronika Mora, Ökotárs

11.00 - 11.15 Discussion

**11.15 - 11.30 Tea and biscuits break**

**11.30 - 13.00 Closing Session. Effective responses to civil society ostracism across CEE - before and after EU accession.**

*Historic lessons learned* - rapporteur Wiktor Marzec

*Legal and policy measures* - rapporteur Atanas Politov (to be confirmed)

*Transborder responses against pressure* - rapporteur Daniela Neubacher

*Strategies for successful resistance against pressure* - rapporteur Todor Yalamov

*Defending a pro-democracy discourse* - rapporteur Pavel P. Antonov

Closing of workshop.

**13.00 - 13.30 Buffet Lunch**

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Balazs Trencsenyi, Head, History Department, Central European University
  - Veronika Mora, Executive Director, Ökotárs, Hungary
  - Kristof Szombati, Political Advisor, Greenpeace Hungary
  - Daniela Neubacher, PhD Candidate, Andrásy University, Budapest
  - Wiktor Marzec, Research Associate, BlueLink Foundation
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- Pavel P. Antonov, Executive Editor, BlueLink Foundation / Affiliated member, Open Space Research Centre, UK

## ORGANIZING TEAM

- Monika Nagy, Research Coordinator, History Department, CEU
- Ksenia Vakhrusheva, Project Co-ordinator, BlueLink Foundation

## MEDIA PARTNER



BlueLink Stories - the e-magazine for watchdog journalism in public interest for Central and Eastern Europe at <http://bluelink.info>.



Foundation.

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