

Call for Papers - English Version

Policing Activism in the Context of the Israel-Palestine Conflict and Antisemitism

Workshop organised by the 'Social Movements and Police' working group at the Institute for Protest and Movement Research

Venue: TU Berlin, Department of Sociology, Frauenhofer Str. 33-38, 10587 Berlin

Time: Friday, November 13th, 2026

Organisers: Katharina Fritsch (Vienna), Mina Godarzani-Bakhtiari (Berlin), Philipp Knopp (Chemnitz), Peter Ullrich (Berlin)

The events following 7 October 2023 – the terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel, the subsequent wars and the associated violence – are not only the subject of international political debates and legal investigations (such as around the alleged genocide against the population in Gaza), but also the starting point for a worldwide protest cycle involving diverse forms of mobilisation.

In this year's workshop of the ipb working group "Social Movements and Police", we aim to examine civil society mobilisations in this area of conflict, the state's (police, intelligence, judicial, etc.) responses to them, as well as the accompanying societal and media narratives. We are interested in protests in solidarity with Palestine as well as those in solidarity with Israel or those critical of antisemitism, or constellations of protests and counter-protests.

Public debates on these protests are characterised by polarisation and emotionalisation. At the same time, a considerable degree of police repression (ranging from restrictions and bans to excessive use of force) against protests in solidarity with Palestine can be observed, with varying degrees of intensity at regional and national levels.

These developments can be understood as an expression of broader social and political conflict dynamics that require further research and discussion. With regard to liberal democracies, questions arise about illiberal tendencies regarding the right to assembly and protest policing. These illiberal tendencies have also become evident in other particularly charged, highly symbolic protests and the accompanying moral panics, e.g. those around the 'Last Generation'. This raises the question of a link between these developments and the increasingly widespread legal nihilism regarding international jurisdiction.

At the same time, police and legal repression are to be situated within historical, particularly post/colonial traditions of the policing of migrants' mobilisations – such as the Kurdish or Iranian exile movements – and their solidarity movements; and whether there is a specific form of the policing of migrant and/or racialised 'others' or issues and struggles connoted as such. One might ask how the policing of the Palestine solidarity movement compares to that of anti-colonial, civil rights or Black Power movements of the past and present.

Particularly in German-speaking contexts, the question is to what extent the repression of Palestine solidarity movements is embedded in authoritarian or carceral tendencies of anti-antisemitism, which can undermine the fundamental rights of freedom of expression, artistic freedom, academic freedom and freedom of assembly. At the same time, one can observe trends towards the judicialisation and securitisation of the entire issue. Does repressive policing, therefore, represent a broader trend that affects not only protest but extends far beyond it?

Protests in the context of international conflicts and transnational movements inevitably question the central conceptual approaches in protest and movement research that were developed in national frameworks. Do transnational opportunity structures, framing efforts and protest repertoires challenge the limits of methodologically nationalist approaches? Do these require a world-system-oriented revision that contextualises movements and political responses against the backdrop of geopolitical conflicts and interests? Furthermore, the post-fascist and post-colonial context of many countries, such as the USA, France, Germany, Italy or Spain, raises the question of the extent to which protest and social movement research—and in particular the research field of protest policing—can benefit from post-, decolonial and anti-racist approaches as well as critical theories of antisemitism.

We invite contributions that engage with this social conflict constellation, its internal dynamics and external conditions from a variety of perspectives. A focus on protest policing (in a broad sense, which also includes subtle aspects of social control and discursive regimes) is desirable, but contributions analysing the protests themselves as well as the effects of state control on protest actors are also welcome. We particularly welcome contributions on protest dynamics in the affected region and in countries of the Global South.

Please submit proposals of approximately half a page to one page in length, along with a short biographical note on the speakers, by July 30th, 2026 to m.godarzani-bakhtiari@tu-berlin.de

Proposals may be submitted in German or English.

In its annual workshops, the “Social Movements and the Police” working group addresses current empirical, methodological, and theoretical issues in research on protest policing and social movements. For more information, please visit our [website](#).

