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Dynamics of protest mobilisation in the European poly-crisis

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ABSTRACT


Using an original protest event dataset covering 30 European countries and the period 2000–2021, this paper studies the nature and drivers of protest mobilisation across three major crises that have hit European Member States (the Eurozone, refugee, and Covid crises). Contributing a crisis-comparative perspective to social movement research, we explore crisis mobilisation in three steps. First, looking at general protest trends throughout the past decade, we find that the overall level of protest declined significantly, and especially so after the Eurozone crisis. Second, we characterise crisis-specific protest in terms of the action forms and the actors involved. We find a high involvement of institutional actors in the Eurozone crisis, a high share of radical events in the refugee crisis, and a generally non-confrontational protest organised by civil society actors in the Covid crisis. Finally, we explain crisis-specific protest levels by examining the mobilising effect of grievances. More specifically, we study the impact of problem pressure (how hard countries were affected using economic, migration, and public health indicators) and political pressure from public opinion (the salience of crisis-specific issues) and show that both were important drivers in the three crises.


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KEYWORDS Protest; European poly-crisis; refugee crisis; Eurozone crisis; COVID crisis

Introduction

The European poly-crisis of the past decade has produced renewed protest activity throughout the continent. Spurred by the Eurozone crisis and then by the refugee and Covid crises, the streets of Europe have seen rekindled action around the crisis issues, by old and new actors alike. Actors like the

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extreme right, who seldom joined street protests in the past, were the protagonists in the refugee and Covid crises, while unions, left parties, and new actors like the Indignados stole the spotlight during the earlier economic crisis. Previous research on protest in these crises highlights their mobilisation potential based on the new grievances they brought to the fore (Castelli Gattinara *et al.*, 2022; Kriesi *et al.*, 2020a; Kriesi & Oana, 2023; Kurer *et al.*, 2019). Nevertheless, as we see in our data, while protest on crisis-specific issues peaked in each of these crises, overall protest activity dwindled throughout the poly-crisis.

Going beyond crisis-specific research this paper aims to focus on overall protest trends and cross-crises comparison. In doing so, it contributes to both the literature on European crises and to the literature on social movements, offering important macro-level insights for this special issue on Europe's changing protest landscape (see Hunger and Hutter, this issue). First, with a few exceptions, the literature on demand-side political pressures within European crises has been mostly focused on studying public opinion. Examining the role of protest during crises constitutes an important addition as protest represents not only visible displays of dissatisfaction with the status-quo, but also has the potential to put pressure and constraints on the national government. Second, while there are many studies of protest on specific crises, studying protest comparatively across crises spanning different policy domains, different levels of intensity across European member states, and different patterns of engagement of political actors is a relatively rare endeavour.

Specifically, starting from the observation that protest has dwindled throughout the poly-crisis in spite of the grievances it created, this paper has two main goals. On the one hand, it aims to examine in more detail the general decreasing protest trends across the last two decades comparing pre-crisis protest characteristics with corresponding characteristics during the poly-crisis. In doing so, it focuses on some of the factors that might explain these trends such as the involvement of institutional actors. On the other hand, it zooms-in on three specific crises (Eurozone, refugee, and Covid) embedding them into the overall protest dynamics, examining the drivers associated with protest on crisis-specific issues, and highlighting their commonalities and specificities. To achieve these goals the paper presents a layered comparison of both the general protest trends before and during the poly-crisis, and of crisis-specific protest.

To begin with, we describe the basic characteristics of protest and how they have evolved throughout the pre-crisis and poly-crisis period: actions, actors, action forms (repertoire), and participation. All four require our attention as they have shifted relative to the pre-crisis period. *First*, we follow the development of the number of actions over time. Protest is highly unequally distributed across time and space, and much of it is concentrated in intense waves of contention with a broad scope in geographical and social space (Koopmans, 2004, p. 40). Protest waves as periods of intense and widespread

contention are characteristic for times of crisis. But, as we shall show, independently of the crisis-specific waves, protest action declined across time. Throughout the paper, we shall thus distinguish between crisis-related protest and protest in general. *Second*, new types of actors, such as the Spanish and Greek Indignados emerged during the initial economic crisis, while the new actors on the right descended in the streets later on in several European countries to protest against the refugee influx and the constraints imposed by the Covid lockdown regime. *Third*, action forms as well have changed, albeit less dramatically and most importantly have showcased important variation *within* the crisis period. Violent forms of protest such as riots and general strikes set the tone in the Greek campaign against the bail-outs, while the radical right later on also deployed aggressive forms of action against refugees themselves and asylum infrastructure. Fourth, participation has also ebbed and flowed throughout this period, but it was markedly higher in the years of consensus and bipolar politics in the 1990s and early 2000s. Beyond the overall description of the protest waves, we also examine their geographical variation, zooming into different European political universes. Separating the continent in three macro-regions, the North-West, the South and the East, our ambition is to analyze the variance of the key protest characteristics across these regions.

Next, we zoom-in on the poly-crisis period, focusing on the specificities of protest within three selected crises that have been previously associated with renewed protest activity: the Eurozone crisis, the refugee crisis, and the Covid crisis.¹ By analyzing crisis-specific protest we aspire to examine the triggers and factors that might have contributed to protest activity and how these vary across crises. In this step of the analysis, our main focus rests on the association between protest trends and *problem* and *political* pressure. Problem pressure is closely associated with grievances during the three crises and we refer to the scale of the pressure exerted on the European political systems by each one of the three crises (measured by indicators of unemployment, refugee inflows, lockdown strictness, and Covid mortality). Political pressure, by contrast, refers to the political opportunity for protest and denotes the force exerted on the political system by the attention to the crisis-specific issues in the general public (measured by salience in Google trends). Our results show that both problem pressure and political pressure were important drivers of crisis-specific protest, albeit to different degrees within each crisis. In line with the results highlighting a general decline of protest, especially after the Eurozone crisis, our analysis indicates that economic grievances had the highest mobilisation effect, whereas grievances associated with the problem pressure in the refugee and Covid crisis mobilised to a lesser extent.

The paper proceeds as follows. Next, we present a theoretical review section, examining what we know so far on the links between protest and the European poly-crisis. Second, we describe our data and provide an

overview of our descriptive variables. Third, we describe the overall trends. Finally, we examine more directly the association between problem/political pressure and protest events using regression models.

Theoretical considerations and expectations

We already know from the literature on protest and mobilisation that the events of the past decade did not go unchallenged in the streets. During the Eurozone crisis, mobilisation, particularly in the countries affected by a bailout was intense, massive, and violent (della Porta *et al.*, 2016; Grasso & Giugni, 2016; Kriesi *et al.*, 2020b), albeit in an uneven way, with Spain and Greece being the main stages of street theatre (Altiparmakis & Lorenzini, 2018; Diani & Kousis, 2014; Karyotis & Rüdig, 2018; de Nadal, 2021). Nevertheless, as austerity and economic hardship rose protest was ubiquitous across Europe, even in unusual cases (Beissinger & Sasse, 2014). During the refugee crisis protest came mostly from the radical right, particularly in countries that received the bulk of refugees, such as Germany and the Mediterranean front-line states (Castelli Gattinara, 2018; Andretta & Pavan, 2018; Jäckle & König, 2018; Rucht, 2020; Haselbacker & Rosenberger, 2020), but also, to a more limited degree, from solidaristic protesters and refugees themselves who challenged the hostile reception they received (della Porta, 2019; Ambrosini *et al.*, 2019; Zajak *et al.*, 2021). To complete our triad of crises, despite the strict lockdowns and attached measures, the Covid crisis also saw a small, yet unlikely mobilisation of fringe actors protesting against such measures (Heinze & Weisskircher, 2022; Hunger *et al.*, 2023; Neumayer *et al.*, 2023; Kriesi & Oana, 2023). In spite of the grievances brought forward by the later two crises, the current literature and our data point to a lower level of protest in recent years (as compared to both pre-crisis levels and to the first heydays at the beginning of the Eurozone crisis) and to the appearance of new actors and action forms in the street, both puzzling phenomena that we aim to explore.

In our analysis, we follow the literature on protest and its link to *grievances*, *resources*, and *political opportunities* in the context of crises (McAdam, 1982). Grievances are constituted by threats felt by the population or segments of it and articulated by organised groups (Almeida, 2018). Such threats were present in all three crises as people felt that their economic interests, societal identity, and political liberties were challenged. Some scholars have debated whether grievances themselves are sufficient to mobilise people in the streets (Solt, 2015). Indeed, in line with the resource mobilisation approach, we contend that protest mobilisation was the product not only of dissatisfaction resulting from the pressure exerted by each crisis (Kern *et al.*, 2015; Quaranta, 2016), but was also spurred by the action of political entrepreneurs, such as challenger parties, social movements and organised interests such as unions (Kriesi *et al.*, 2020) and most importantly, mediated by the sense that the

grievances of each crisis ought to have been addressed by an unresponsive government (Klandermans *et al.*, 2008) and/or by the sense that they were the result of deteriorating conditions rather than of structural constraints (Bernburg, 2015; Kurer *et al.*, 2019).

In terms of grievances, we theorise that *crisis-specific problem pressures* (measured respectively by the rising level of unemployment, the influx of refugees, or the severity of Covid mortality and of lockdown measures) and *political pressures* (measured by Google trends indicating public salience) have caused increasing discontent among the population of European countries. As a result of these rising grievances, we expect that *crisis-related protests*, i.e., protests related to the issues directly linked to the crisis, have increased relative to their pre-crisis level. More specifically, we argue that *crisis-specific problem pressures* have produced higher levels of discontent within each crisis which constitute mobilisation potentials for a rise in crisis-specific protest (**H1a**). Furthermore, an environment that is highly receptive to the demands of mobilisation constitutes a political opportunity for protest (Koopmans & Statham, 1999). For example, Grasso and Giugni (2016) stress the fact that societal contexts that reflect the subjective feelings of deprivation of individuals make these individuals more likely to realise that those grievances are not just their own, individualised private problems. In such contexts, individuals are more likely to understand their grievances in a politicised way and to express them by taking to the streets. In line with this argument, we also contend that a public opinion that is highly attentive to the issues of protest constitutes an environment in which the protest resonates with the broader public understanding their grievances in a politicised way and, hence, leads to increased mobilisation. To this end, we expect high *crisis-specific political pressure*, i.e., high public salience of crisis issues, to be closely associated with a rise in the crisis-related level of mobilisation potentials (**H1b**). It is important to note here that we introduce separate hypotheses about the effects of problem and political pressure as we do not expect the two to necessarily covary. On the one hand, political pressure can be created by political entrepreneurs even in the absence of high problem pressure. On the other hand, problem pressure can be depoliticised and, hence, not be highly salient in the public. Nevertheless, empirically we also explore the interactions between the two without a formal hypothesis. Furthermore, we acknowledge that our three selected crises differ significantly with respect to the type of grievances they raise and their potential to mobilise quite diverse social bases for multiple types of reasons. Within the limitations of our data, we attempt to take such differences into account by providing separate indicators for problem and political pressure by crisis, but also by exploring the kind of actors that mobilised within each crisis.

In line with the resource mobilisation perspective (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), we assume that these mobilisation potentials only lead to a rise in protest if

they are mobilised by organisational actors. Typically, political organisations, such as parties, unions and other social movement organisations have attempted to articulate the discontent in the form of street protest. From this perspective, it is important to note that the most important of these established actors, unions, are focused on economic issues. Depending on the kinds of issues that are giving rise to crisis-specific grievances, the unions tend to play a larger or smaller role in the mobilisation of protest. We can expect that they were important during the Eurozone crisis, when the focus was on economic grievances, while they lost importance in the subsequent crises. We argue that with the crowding out of economic issues and the retreat of institutional actors from the protest scene (mainly unions), the overall level of protest declines (**H2a**).

The declining levels of economic protest and participation are likely to have been reinforced by the replacement of ‘movements of affluence’ by ‘movements of crisis’ during the crisis period (Kerbo, 1982). As Shorter and Tilly (1974) have already argued, long-term deprivation is likely to reduce economic protest. Pre-crisis, unions tended to mobilise, staking claims on an expanding economic pie. During the crises, mobilisations tended to appear in outbursts, and the defeat or marginalisation of the movements during successive crises is likely to have disheartened participants, further eroding the level of protest. As Indignados and Syriza voters who had participated in the massive anti-austerity movements were faced with an electoral or political defeat, disappointment set in and the conviction that street protests could lead to significant change waned, driving people away from the streets. Accordingly, we expect that the level of protest already declined towards the end of the Eurozone crisis, as the potential activists increasingly recognised the futility of further protest (**H2b**).

In line with the political opportunity structure perspective, we finally expect the temporary rise in the level of protest as well as the long-term declining trends to vary regionally, both due to the different protest traditions and experiences of each macro-region, but also due to different economic and political developments in the period covered, and to the differing degrees to which each region was hit by each crisis. We cannot go into the details here, but it has been shown that southern Europe suffered from a double economic and political crisis during the Eurozone crisis (Kriesi *et al.*, 2020a). The southern European frontline states were also hit hard by the refugee crisis (Kriesi *et al.*, 2024) and in the Covid crisis, southern Europe more than northwestern Europe lacked the capacity to come to terms with the crisis (Truchlewski *et al.* 2025). But while the southern Europeans, especially the Greeks mobilised heavily during the Eurozone crisis, much more than Europeans from eastern and northwestern Europe, they protested much less during the subsequent crises (Kriesi & Oana 2023). We shall document these regional differences and their development over time and speculate about their structural roots.

Data and design

This paper uses the PolDem protest data, an original protest event analysis (PEA) dataset collected in the framework of the *anonymised* research project. Methodologically, our PEA dataset relies on a media content analysis of the various features characterising protest events. Specifically, the dataset was collected using semi-automated content analysis, combining, on the one hand, machine learning for corpus refinement and relevant document identification with, on the other hand, human coding for the identification of the fine-grained features of each protest event.² This semi-automated procedure relies on a vast media data corpus comprising 10 English language newswires³ including several million of news reports. Using such a large corpus provides us with two important benefits: first, it helps us better mitigate source selection bias, and second, the very permissive strategy of document retrieval helps us reduce the number of false negatives (missed protest events) in our data.

Beyond its methodological merits, the main advantage of this data collection strategy is that it allows for an extended substantive coverage of protest before and during the three crises that our paper aims to study, the Eurozone crisis, the refugee crisis, and the Covid crisis. Geographically, our dataset has an ambitious cross-sectional and temporal scope, covering the EU-26 countries (without Croatia) plus four non-EU members (United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland). In terms of temporal coverage, the dataset used for this paper covers a period of 22 years, 2000–2021, capturing mobilisation dynamics occurring before and during these crises and enabling their comparison. Finally, our dataset captures virtually all protest forms of action reported in the media irrespective of their goals together with a wide range of characteristics describing them. These characteristics involve their form of action (coded into six categories: demonstrations, strikes and industrial action, blockades and sit-ins, petitions and symbolic protest, violent protests, and other forms of action), the number of participants, the actors undertaking the action (coded into 18 categories covering political parties by family, unions, occupational and social groups, other (non-)professional organisations, and general citizens), and the issues they address (coded into 16 categories).

The three sets of results presented here employ a variety of empirical strategies based on this dataset. In the first set of results, we focus our analysis on the *overall protest trends* across the last two decades. We focus on the raw number of protest events, as well as their participation level (measured by the average monthly number of participants per protest event, adjusted by the logarithm of population size⁴), and the level of their radicality (separating blockades, confrontational actions, and violent protest from other less radical forms of protest). We also look here at regional patterns of protest

participation and at protest targeting specific issues using the variables collected within our PEA dataset.

In the second and third set of results we focus our analyses on *crisis-specific protest*. We define such crisis-specific protest as those events that address issues tightly related to the grievances associated with each crisis and happening within the temporal span of the crisis. In terms of defining crisis-specific issues we operationalise protest on private economic and public economic issues as related to the Eurozone crisis, protest on cultural conservative, xenophobic, and anti- and pro-immigration issues as related to the refugee crisis, and protest pro- and anti-Covid restrictions, as well as protest related to healthcare and education as related to the Covid crisis. We also delimit crisis-specific protest temporally, for the Eurozone crisis we cover the period from October 2008 to June 2015 (i.e., until the 2015 Greek referendum on the bailout memorandum and the corresponding bargaining between Greece and the EU), for the Refugee crisis the period from July 2015 to February 2020 (i.e., in line with Kriesi *et al.*, 2024, until the Greek border conflict that flared up with Turkey around Christmas 2019 and lasted until spring 2020, when the Covid pandemic started), and for the Covid crisis we refer to the period March 2020 to the end of 2021. While we acknowledge that the crises studied here are multifaceted and potentially have reverberations in other issue domains beyond the ones selected here, our choice is to focus on those protest events related to issues that are most clearly associated with each crisis. Nevertheless, we also present crisis-specific protest together with protest related to other issues for comparative purposes.

The second set of results focuses on the *organisation of crisis-specific protest* and presents a descriptive analysis of the actors involved in such protest. First, we analyze the extent to which protest was organised by established organisations such as political parties or trade unions across the three crises. Within the limitations of our data, we distinguish between political parties by party family, unions, civil society organisations as a general category, and protest without an organisational sponsor, organised by general citizens or specific social groups.⁵ Second, we analyze the forms of actions (categorised into four types – demonstrations, strikes, radical action such as violent protest, blockades, or occupations, and other forms of actions) adopted by protest within each of our three crises.

Finally, in the third set of results, we test our hypotheses regarding *the relationship between the problem pressure and political pressure* characterising each crisis, *and the levels of crisis-specific protest*. For reasons of data comparability and availability,⁶ we restrict this analysis to the study of nine countries covering three European regions: North-Western, Southern, and Central-East European (Italy, France, Greece, Spain, Germany, UK, Netherlands, Poland, Hungary). We measure *problem pressure* using unemployment levels for the Eurozone crisis, the monthly number of asylum applications as a percentage

of the population for the refugee crisis, and the stringency of lockdowns as well as the number of reported Covid deaths adjusted by population size for the Covid crisis. In terms of *political pressure*, we look at the level of public salience of topics associated with topics related to each of the three crises and we measure this using Google Trends data.⁷ We study the effect of problem and political pressure on crisis-specific protest using contemporaneous, linear regression models for assessing effects in the same month, with a variety of specifications regarding geographical and temporal fixed-effects which we describe when presenting the results.

Overall trends

We present the overall trends based on three indicators – the monthly number of events, the average participation per month, and the monthly number of violent and confrontational, i.e., radical events. In [Figure 1](#), we present these trends for Europe at large. The upper graph refers to the trends for the number of events, the middle graph to those for the average participation, and the lower graph to the trends for radicality. The data represent five-monthly running averages. In each graph, the timeline is divided into four periods – the pre-crisis, ‘normal’ period (2000–September 2008), which serves as a benchmark for the trends during the crises periods, and the periods of the Eurozone crisis (October 2008–June 2015), the refugee crisis (July 2015–February 2020) and of the Covid-19 crisis (March 2020–December 2021). The overall number of events and the radicality of events move quite similarly across time (the correlation between their respective monthly values is positive and amounts to $r = .26$), while the participation rate is not positively associated with the two at all ($r = .02$ with number of events, $r = -.20$ with radicality). This reflects the fact that intense conflicts give rise to a large number of events, among which there are multiple radical events, which remain, however, limited to the participation of small minorities within the movements in question.

The first graph in [Figure 1](#) shows that, before the sequence of Europe’s poly-crises sets in, the monthly number of events oscillates in a trendless up and down, with two peaks in 2000 and 2005. The peak in 2000 is above all related to regionalism – the troubles in Northern Ireland and in the Basque country (mobilisations by ETA and against ETA), while the peak in 2005–2006 is related to events in France, where suburban riots broke out in fall 2005 which led to the declaration of a state of emergency, and where the labour market reform by the de Villepaign government triggered massive student demonstrations in spring 2006. The average monthly participation and the radicality of events similarly show no trends. The average participation peaks in 2003, and radicality does so at the same moments as the overall number of events. The peaks in participation are related to the anti-Iraq war demonstrations in 2003, which mobilised very large numbers,

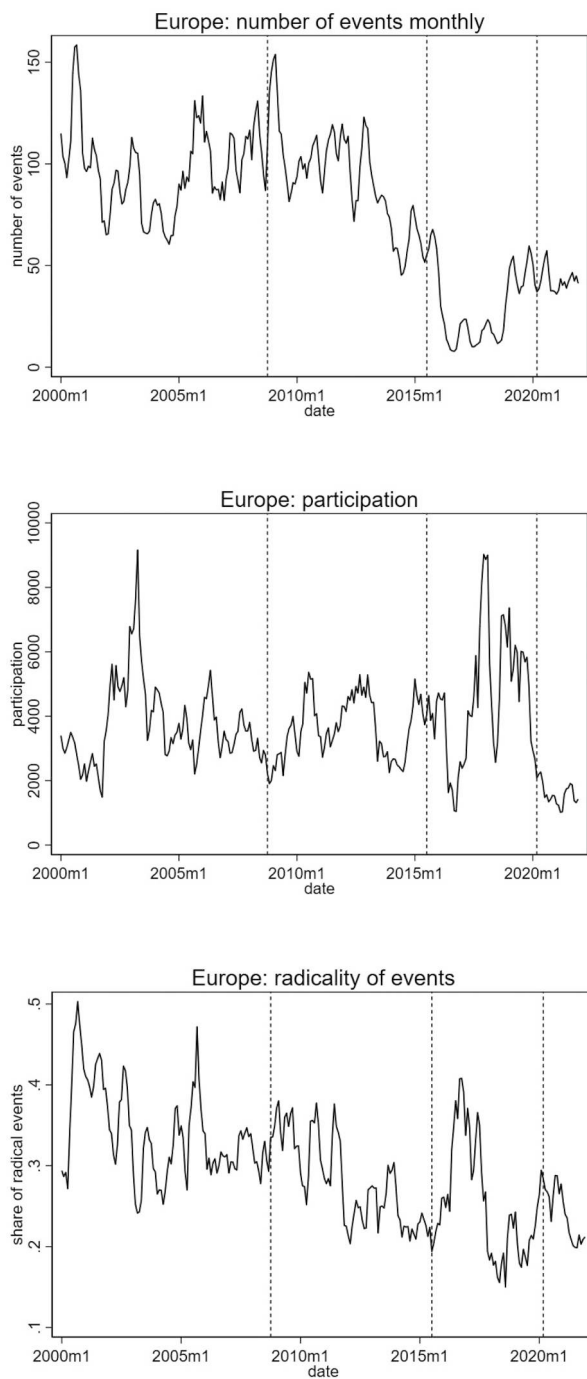


Figure 1. Overall trends: number of monthly events, average participation, and radicality (weighted): five-monthly running averages.

especially in Great Britain (London), Italy (Rome), and Spain (Madrid and Barcelona), while the peaks in numbers and radicality of events are mainly related to the already mentioned troubles in Northern Ireland and in the Basque country, as well as to the radicalisation in the suburbs of Paris in fall 2005 and the large-scale French student demonstrations in spring 2006.

The number of events culminates at the beginning of the financial crisis which becomes the Eurozone crisis in Europe. This peak is the result of a cumulation of country-specific protest waves which had already started before the onset of the crisis and were only partially related to it (see also [Figure 3](#)). Thus, a massive Greek protest wave had started already in the early 2000s, accelerated in spring 2008 and peaked in 2010–2012. Similarly, in several eastern European countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, the Baltic states), a protest wave had already started before the crisis set in and had originally addressed political (corruption) and cultural issues, only to turn against austerity measures of the government in their later phases (Kriesi, 2020; Beissinger & Sasse, 2014). After this peak, the overall number of events is declining throughout the crisis periods: this decline follows a linear trend from October 2008 until the end of 2021, which accounts for roughly half of the monthly number of events during this period in a regression analysis. What is driving this trend is an open question to which we turn below. The decline in the number of events becomes already very marked during the Eurozone crisis after 2012, and it accelerates during the refugee crisis. The number of events only picks up again, at a very low level, in the aftermath of the refugee crisis and remains rather stable during the Covid-19 crisis.

We do not observe similar declining trends for participation and radicality. The pattern for both of these indicators takes the form of waves which are largely unrelated to the three crises. The monthly participation reaches new heights during the refugee crisis period, but these are unrelated to the refugee crisis and are mainly due to the mobilisation of Catalan separatism and the French Gilets Jaunes. The renewed peaks of radicalism in the refugee crisis period are related to this crisis, as we shall see below.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis in March 2020, when Europe was in a state of shock which paralyzed the countries also in terms of protest, the number of events precipitously declined (Kriesi & Oana, 2023, p. 9), a result which is not reflected in the rolling averages presented in [Figure 1](#), given their longer time span. However, after a lull lasting roughly one month, the number of protests quickly picked up again, peaked in summer 2020 in between the first two epidemiological waves, declined again during the second epidemiological wave, only to pick up once more, on a low level, during the third epidemiological wave. Participation rates remained overall very low, given the constraints imposed by the lockdown measures in all

European countries. The radicality of the events, which was considerable at the beginning of the crisis declined in later waves.

Figure 2 turns to the variation of the protest mobilisation across European regions. We now can see that, in terms of numbers of events, the overall variation during the pre-crisis period is very much shaped by the protest events in north-western Europe. In this part of Europe, the overall decline of protest events sets in already at the beginning of the Eurozone crisis, while southern Europe experiences a wave of protest that starts in early 2009 and peaks in 2011–2012 before it declines as well. In eastern Europe, protest also peaks at the beginning of the Great Recession, but then drops rather rapidly to the low pre-crisis levels. Given that our emphasis lies in discerning overall trends, rather than pointing out specific national contexts, the graphs in Figure 2 present the data in an aggregated manner. Nevertheless, Figure A8 in the Appendix shows country specific temporal trends which highlight that for most of the countries with enough recorded data we find the same downward trend, especially after the Eurozone crisis.

During the subsequent crises, however, the number of events develops similarly across regions, albeit on a much lower level, and with the exception that, in the Covid-19 crisis, protest mobilization is less pronounced in southern Europe than in the other two regions. As far as participation is concerned, the second graph in Figure 2 shows that the peaks in participation are almost all dominated by events in southern Europe, where the mobilisations against the Iraq war and by regionalist movements have been particularly intense. Finally, it is hard to discern region-specific trends in terms of radicality. It varies in rather trendless fashion across regions.

Figure 3 presents the trends by issue. For this presentation, we distinguish between three types of issues: economic issues, cultural issues (including political, culturally liberal, peace, ecological, immigration and culturally conservative, European integration, and Covid pro and anti-containment measures) and all other issues (mainly regional issues such as separatism). Each one of the three categories accounts for roughly one-third of the events. We single out economic and cultural issues not only because they account for major shares of protest, but also in order to show to what extent crisis-related issues have been mobilising protest. For the Eurozone crisis, crisis issues correspond to the economic issues. For the refugee and the Covid crises, crisis-related issues are part of the category of cultural issues and include migration-related, xenophobic and cultural conservative protest. While Covid was indeed also an economic crisis, Figure 3 shows that economic protest was hardly present throughout the crisis, whereas mobilisation focused mainly on the anti-containment measures which we code directly as such and include into our cultural category.

In terms of number of events, the first graph in Figure 3 documents that both economic and cultural issues have been equally important for protest

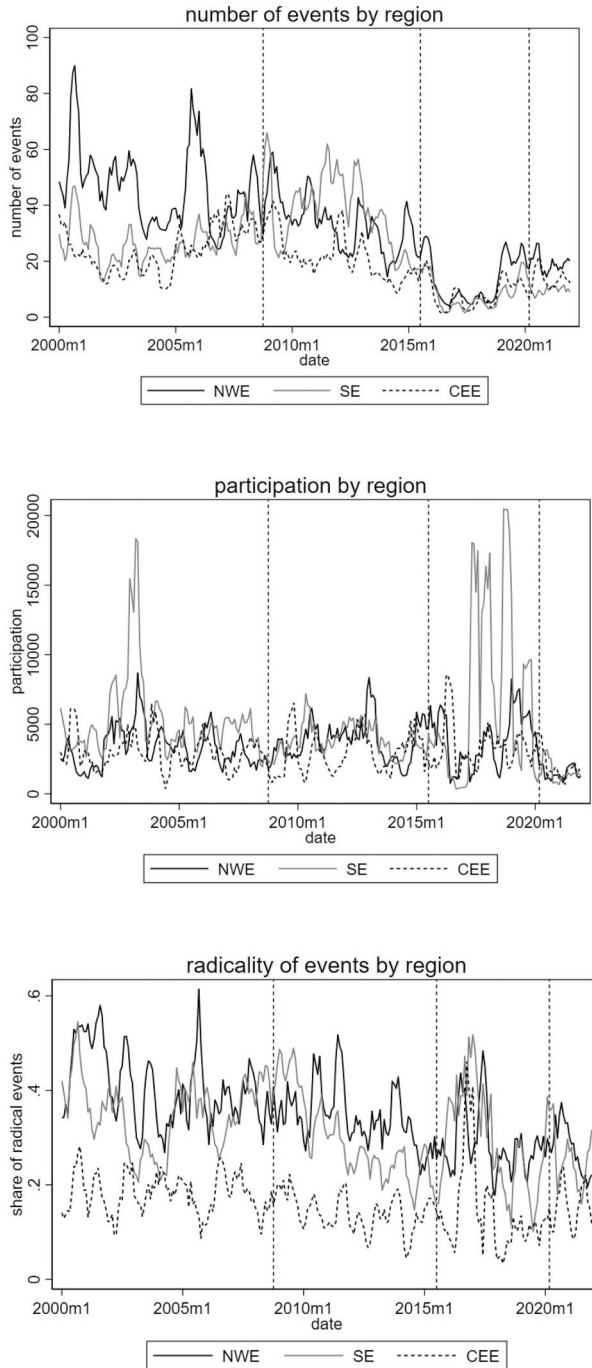


Figure 2. Overall trends by region: number of monthly events, average participation and radicality of events (weighted).

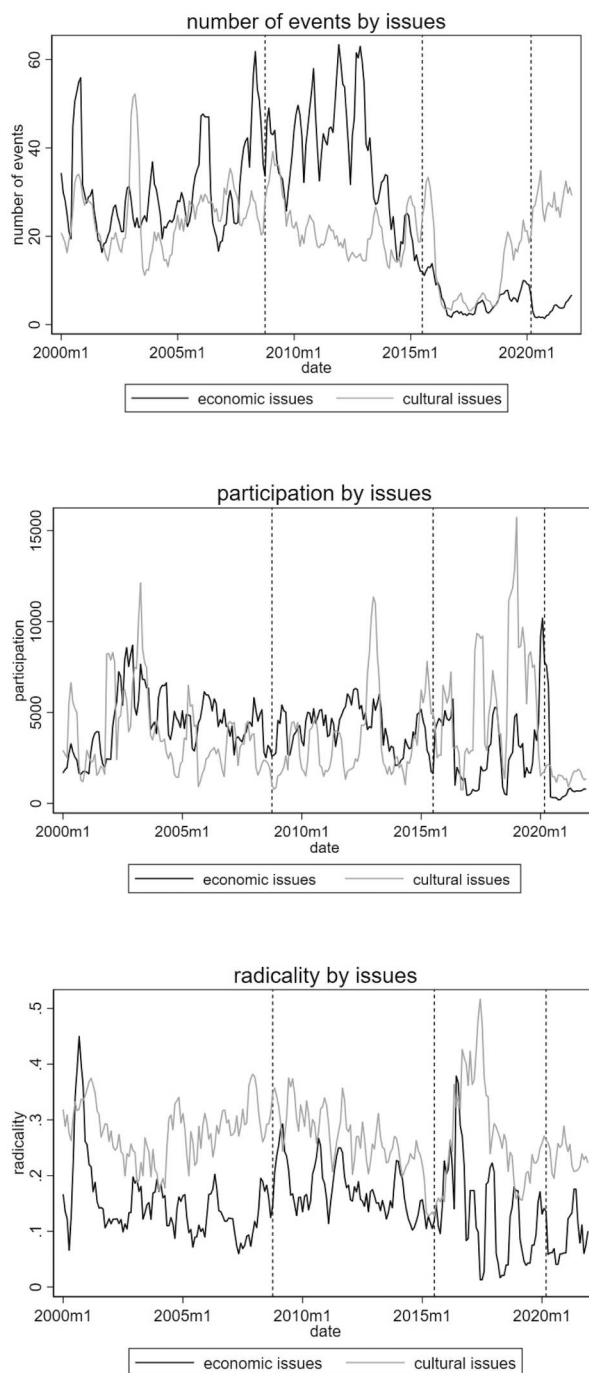


Figure 3. Overall trends by issue: number of monthly events, average participation and radicality (weighted).

mobilisation in the pre-crisis period. Depending on the specific circumstances, the one or the other type of protest prevailed in the short run. In terms of participation, economic issues tended to mobilise more people in the pre-crisis period than cultural issues, with the exception of the mobilisation against the Iraq war. By contrast, cultural protest generally was more radical than economic protest.

Once the Eurozone crisis hit, economic issues have come to dominate protest mobilisation, in terms of number of events and in terms of participation, but not in terms of radicality. In line with our discussions surrounding regional variation and H1a, it dominated above all in southern Europe. However, by the end of 2012, the number of economic protest events and the participation in these events started to decline. This decline was steady and continued during the subsequent refugee and Covid-19 crises. By contrast, cultural protest increased both in terms of events and participation at the beginning of the refugee crisis. Subsequently, migration-related protest demobilised as well, but towards the end of the period of the refugee crisis it recovered and reached pre-crisis levels in terms of both numbers of events and participation. It also remained more radical than the remaining economic protest. This analysis documents that the overall decline in protest that characterises its more recent development is above all due to a decline in economic protest.

Figure 3 does not provide us with sufficiently specific information on the development of crisis-specific protest during the refugee and Covid-19 crises, both which were characterised by specific issues related to immigration and Covid containment measures. For this purpose, we present Figures 4 and 5, which allow us to zoom in on the mobilisation of protest related to the three crises on crisis-specific issues. Figure 4 presents the overall trend and the trend for protest on crisis-specific issues – economic issues during the Eurozone crisis immigration-related issues (issues related to immigration, xenophobia and cultural conservatism) during the refugee crisis and Covid-related issues during the Covid crisis. In the figure, the crisis-specific issues are represented by the solid black line. In addition, it also includes the trend for economic issues and immigration-related issues for the pre-crisis period and the crisis periods when these issues were not in the focus (the dashed lines). There were no Covid-related issues before the Covid crisis. As this figure shows, the share of crisis-related issues among the overall number of events varies considerably from one crisis to the other: thus, during the Eurozone crisis, economic issues made up roughly 45 percent of all the protest events (compared to 33 percent during the pre-crisis period), while the immigration-related issues only accounted for 15 percent of the protest events during the refugee crisis (which is still double the share of the pre-crisis period (7 percent)). During the Covid crisis, the crisis-specific share of events lay in between these two extremes with Covid-

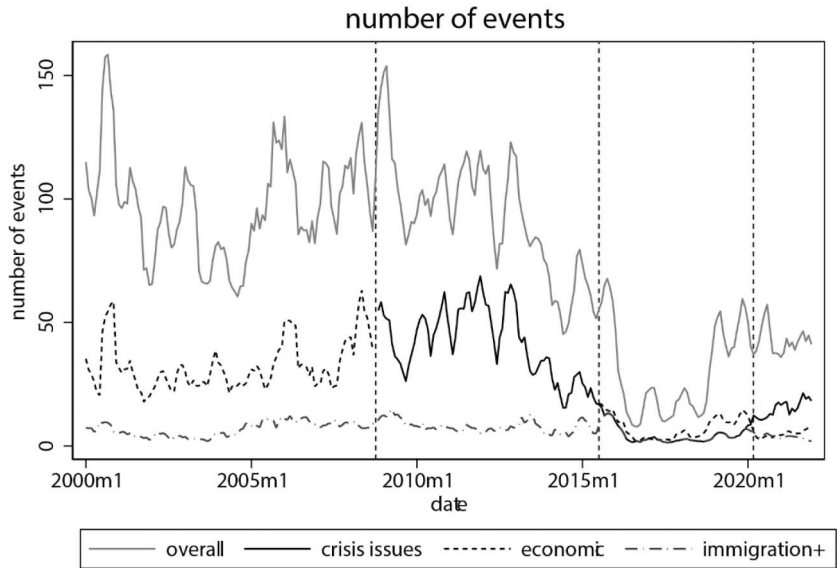


Figure 4. Trends, overall and crisis issues: number of monthly events, three-monthly averages (weighted).

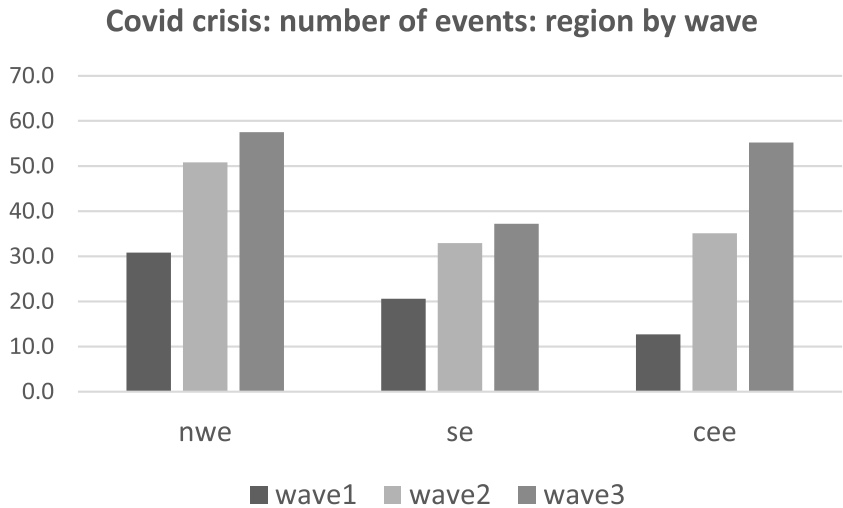


Figure 5. Protest in the Covid crisis: number of events by region and epidemiological wave (weighted).¹³

related protest accounting for 36 percent of all the events during this crisis. As we already know, economic protest continued to decline markedly after the EA crisis. During the refugee crisis, it accounted for only 25 percent of all protest, and during the Covid crisis, both economic and immigration-

related protest became rather rare occurrences, with respectively 11 and 8 percent of all protest events.

Figure 4 also shows that immigration-related protest, at a low level, already picked up before the refugee crisis set in for good. Thus, the German Pegida movement ('Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the West') was founded in Dresden already in October 2014 and mobilised the greatest number of people in its demonstrations in the aftermath of the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack in January and February 2015. Immigration-related mobilisation then surges again in fall 2015 and reaches its peak together with the peak of the refugee crisis 2015–2016, after which it ebbs down to a trickle and remains of low intensity during the Covid-19 crisis. As is documented by the third graph in Figure 3, during the refugee crisis, radicality has increased, especially for cultural issues during the refugee crisis. This increase is related to immigration issues. Among other things, it is the result of a series of terrorist attacks in Germany and France. Moreover, early on in the refugee crisis, Germany not only saw the mobilisation of the 'welcome culture' by civil society, but also a wave of violent attacks on asylum centres, especially in eastern Germany, which peaked in late 2015/early 2016 at the same time as the overall immigration-related protest (Benček & Strasheim, 2016; Jäckle & König, 2017). There was also notable anti-refugee violence in Greece, Italy and France. In terms of regional distribution, the immigration-related protest events were almost exclusively concentrated in north-western Europe, however. It is in the destination states, where the protest against immigration was most pronounced, a finding that aligns with H1a.

In addition, Figure 4 displays the development of Covid-related protest during the Covid-crisis. Overall, this kind of protest follows an increasing tendency. This protest is dominated by protest against Covid restrictions (Hunger *et al.*, 2023; Kriesi & Oana, 2023). As is shown by Figure 5, the generally increasing trend is observable in all three regions, but it is particularly pronounced in eastern Europe. As the Covid-related protest increases, its share in the overall protest during the Covid crisis increases as well, from 24 percent in wave 1 to 43/40 percent in waves 2 and 3. In relative terms, too, the increase is most pronounced in eastern Europe (from 13 to 46 percent). The pattern of increasing crisis-related protest in the Covid-crisis again speaks to H1a and H1b: with the increasing duration of the crisis, the original rally-around-the-flag effect dissipated, and the grievances accumulated. Moreover, the belated mobilisation of anti-restriction protest in eastern Europe is related to the fact that this part of Europe was hit later than the other regions (Truchlewski *et al.* 2023). But note that not only the level, but also the increase in crisis-related protest is most limited in southern Europe, arguably the region most hit by the pandemic, which runs counter to H1a.

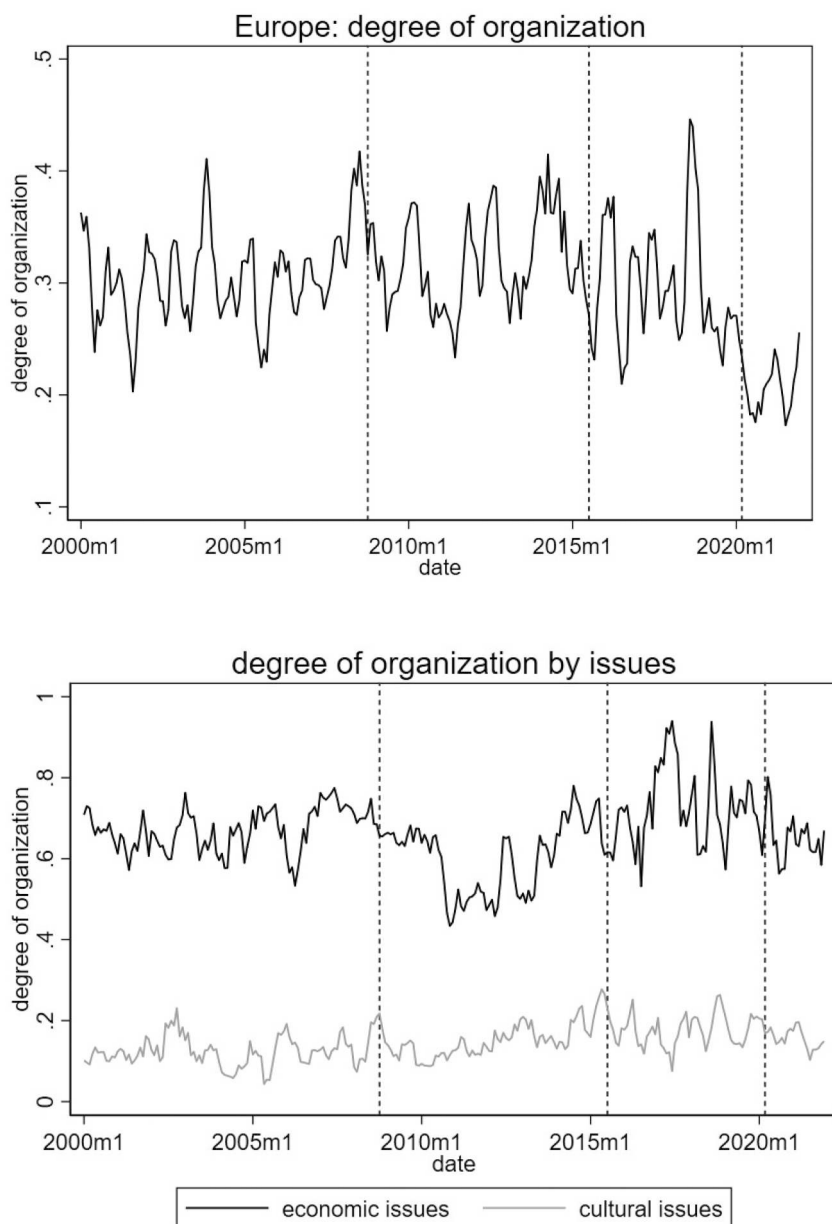


Figure 6. Trends of degree of organisation: share if organised events overall and by issues (weighted).

Figure 6 presents trends for another aspect of protest mobilisation: the extent to which it has been organised by established organisations like parties, unions and professional organisations. The figure presents the share of the events that have been organised by such established

organisations – overall, by region and by issue. Overall, there is no visible trend until the Covid-19 crisis, when the share of events accounted for by established organisations drops to lower levels. This final drop in organised protest is the result of a compositional effect. As is documented by the second subgraph in [Figure 6](#), economic issues are generally more likely to be organised by established actors than cultural issues, independently of the crisis period or of the European region. In fact, the overall very low level of events accounted for by established organisations during the Covid-19 crisis is explicable by the relative crowding out of economic issues, which we have already observed above (see [Figure 3](#)). As expected by H2a and H2b, with the decline of economic protest, the role of the unions in organising protest declines as well, and so does the overall degree of organisation of protest.

The main take-away of this analysis confirms our previous results (Kriesi, 2020, p. 102; Kriesi & Oana, 2023): overall, the series of crises has neither led to a temporary, nor to a lasting increase in the mobilisation of protest across Europe. On the contrary, across the crises, the number of protest events has clearly fallen across Europe. It is only when we adopt a regional or even a country-specific perspective that we find wave-like patterns of protest that are closely related to the crises. The peaks of protest mobilisation are rather due to movements which react to country-specific grievances largely unrelated to the crises, especially to regionalist grievances, or to general external shocks as the Iraq War, terrorist attacks, or the Black Lives Matter movement, which elicit a strong protest response across Europe. While the number of protest events shows a clear declining trend from 2000 to 2021, the participation rate and the share of radical events rather oscillate in a non-linear fashion across this period. The role of established organisations for protest mobilisation has, however, declined as well, together with the importance of economic protest.

Organisation: actors and forms of actions within the three crises

In this section we focus on the composition of crisis-specific protest in terms of the actors involved and the forms of action they adopt. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, we expect protest related to the Eurozone crisis to be characterised by a high involvement of unions (H2a), but low involvement of political parties, as shown by previous analyses of protest during this period, while we expect comparatively little professionally organised protest during the refugee crisis and Covid given the novelty of the issue. In terms of how confrontational the forms of actions engaged in protest are, we expect refugee crisis-related protest to be the most confrontational out of the three.

In terms of the actors involved in these protests,⁸ [Figure 7](#) shows that general citizens and social groups have, unsurprisingly, been the actors

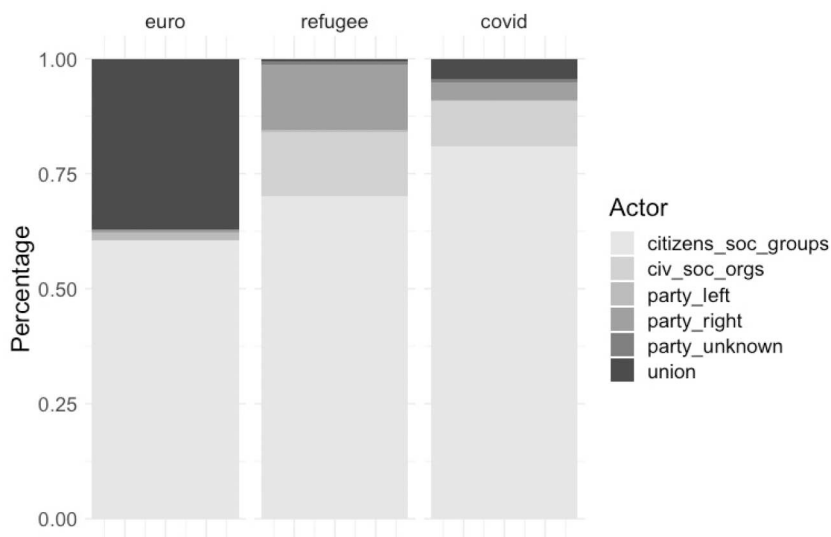


Figure 7. Actors involved in protest, percentage of each Crisis-specific protest events during each respective crisis period.

that mobilised the most across all the three crises. However, there are several substantive differences. First, while trade unions hardly got involved in the refugee and Covid crisis, they account for more than 30 percent of the protest events organised during the Eurozone crisis. Nevertheless, while we might expect unions to be responsible for very large events, when looking at the relative share of such events⁹ across the three crises we can see that big events are a minority of all events with marginal differences (see Figure A1 in the Appendix). Conversely, while protest across the last decade hardly benefited from organisational resources coming from political parties in general, the refugee crisis marks an exception as around 14 per cent of the protest events related to cultural conservatism, anti-immigration, xenophobia, and related issues were organised by parties on the right of the ideological spectrum.¹⁰ By contrast, only between two and four percent of the protest events in the other two crises were organised by parties irrespective of their ideological leaning. This comparatively higher level of involvement of political parties in the refugee crisis is in line with the results of complementary studies (Castelli Gattinara, 2018; Rucht, 2020). Generally, there is also an increase in the involvement of civil society in protest over time we can see that civil society organisations of various degrees of professionalisation have a larger involvement in the refugee and covid crises accounting for about 14 and 10 percent of events respectively while they are virtually absent in the Eurozone crisis. Finally, protest during the covid crisis appears to be the one benefiting the least from organisational resources

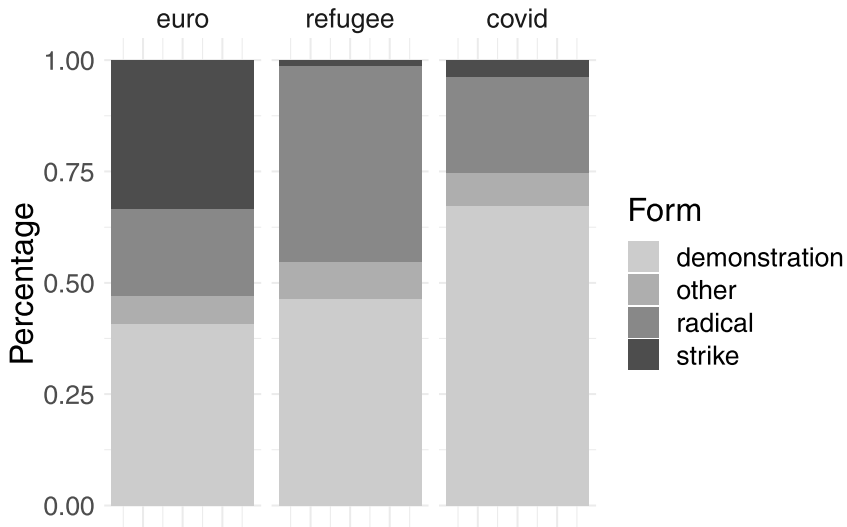


Figure 8. Forms of actions, percentage of each Crisis-specific protest events during each respective crisis period.

coming from unions, parties, and civil society organisations which is expected given that the vast majority of protest during the covid crisis was focused on the containment measures, rather than related economic issues.

Figure 8 presents the forms of action adopted within each crisis as a percentage of the total action forms adopted for each goal in part. Unsurprisingly, demonstrations are the most common form of action captured by our dataset amongst all crises. Nevertheless, as in the case of actors, one can notice substantive differences between the three crises. Within the Euro-zone crisis, given that the goals of protest were mostly economic, strikes constitute a substantial share of the protest actions undertaken – more than a third of actions were of this form. Within the refugee crisis, the pattern that stands out the most is the relatively larger share of radical action (blockades, confrontational strategies, and violent protest). If in the other three crises around 20 percent of the actions were employing radical forms, in the refugee crisis this amounts to close to half of the actions (45 per cent of the actions were radical). Finally, protest during the Covid crisis was mostly focused on demonstrations. On the one hand, the lockdowns imposed severe restrictions on demonstrations, and one could have expected protest to be channelled more through other forms of actions that do not require public gatherings (such as petitions, symbolic forms of protest, all integrated into our other category). On the other hand, as most of the protest events during Covid were against the containment measures, demonstrating is the form of action that contests the restrictions on public gatherings directly.

Problem pressure, political pressure, and crisis-specific protest

While documenting and explaining a generally declining protest trend, we do expect that at least *crisis-related* protest, i.e., protest on the issues directly related to the crisis, should have increased relative to their pre-crisis levels, in close association with rising grievances, but also as a reflection of the wider political environment and the opportunities it offers. In this section we further zoom-in to the poly-crisis period in order to examine the triggers and factors that might have contributed to protest activity focusing on the association between protest trends and *problem* and *political* pressure. In order to study the contemporaneous effects (in the same month or week) of problem and political pressure on protest levels we present here contemporaneous linear regression models separately for each crisis (defined both temporally and by using crisis-related protest events defined in the data and design section above). Since our data is structured temporally and spatially, we control for the eventual seasonality or country-clustering of protest by introducing seasonal fixed effects and an index of protest propensity for each country (calculated via the number of protest events taking place in each country in the pre-crisis period, 2000–2008). Given the nature of our problem pressure indicators, we run monthly analyses for the Eurozone and the refugee crises as unemployment levels and asylum applications are not reported on a more frequent basis. For the Covid crisis, we run weekly analyses given that the stringency of lockdowns and the levels of Covid deaths often changed rapidly within the same month and were reported with a higher frequency. We refrain here from using the standard fixed effects for countries since the independent variables used in these models (such as unemployment levels) are often highly country-dependent varying spatially more than temporally. While recognising that the observed effects could in this case be the result of non-observed features of the countries in the sample, we argue that the feature that is most likely to affect our dependent variable and that varies by country is each country's protest culture and organisation which we account for with our protest propensity index. Given that our series are short, and our country-level protest data is sparse, country-level analyses are not feasible as they lack statistical power and result in very large confidence intervals. Nevertheless, we provide a series of robustness test of our models in the Appendix. First, in Figure A6 we report models with regional fixed effects which are important given the large regional differences in protest. These models show that the effects of problem and political pressure are robust to this specification, albeit with changes in effect magnitudes. Second, we do report the results of tests using country and time fixed effects in Figure A2 in the Appendix, where we can notice smaller effects particularly for those indicators that are highly country specific.¹¹

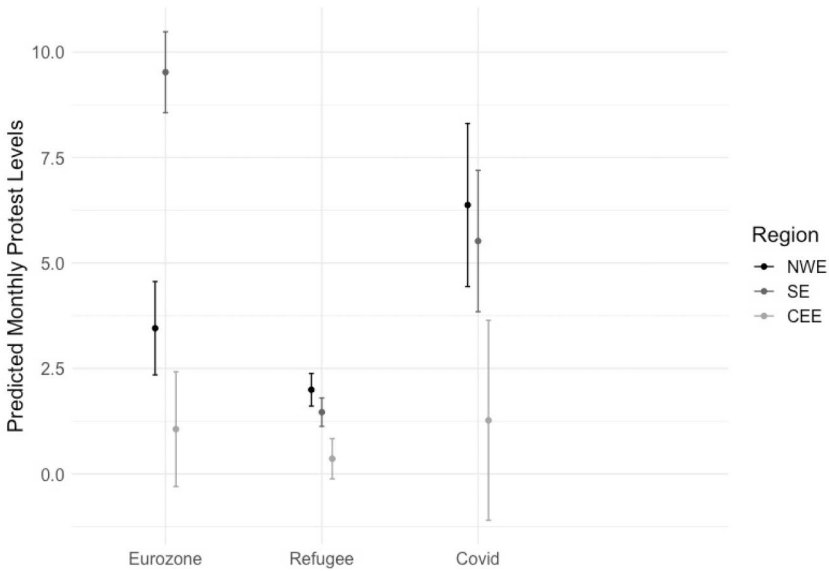


Figure 9. Predicted crisis-specific protest levels within each crisis period by region (OLD model with seasonality fixed effects).

We begin here by exploring crisis-specific protest levels for each crisis period by region in [Figure 9](#). The most striking result in this figure is the outlier nature of Southern European countries with regard to their level of mobilisation in the Eurozone crisis in particular, but not across the other crises. The predicted number of monthly protest events in Southern Europe during the Eurozone crisis was around nine events per month, while in North-western Europe it was less than four. This is in line with our discussion surrounding regional variation and H1a, as Southern Europe was the worst hit region in Europe during the Eurozone crisis. For the other two crises, the refugee crisis and Covid, the differences between Southern and North-western Europe are not significant. Generally, we see that protest levels for all three crises are lowest in Central-Eastern Europe. This is an unsurprising result given that post-communist countries have been characterised as having a weaker civil society (e.g., Howard 2003), but still interesting insofar as the grievances created by the poly-crisis and politicisation related to it have not changed this pattern.

We now turn to studying the effects of problem and political pressure more directly. [Figure 10](#) shows the results of the models regressing the number of protest events *having crisis-specific goals* within a crisis timeframe on problem pressure (unemployment for the Eurozone crisis, asylum applications for the refugee crisis, and lockdown stringency and Covid deaths for the Covid crisis) and political pressure (crisis-specific salience). Generally,

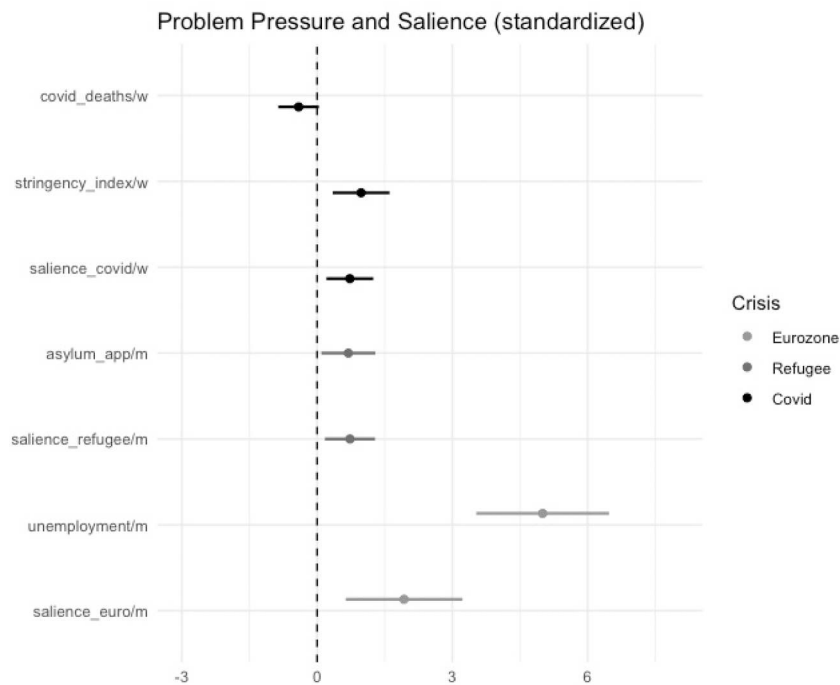


Figure 10. The effect of problem and political pressure on crisis-specific protest levels within each crisis period with fixed effects for country protest propensity and seasonality (OLS model, standardised coefficients).

we see that problem pressure exerts an effect on crisis-related protest across all three crises, largely confirming H1a. While levels of unemployment, the number of asylum applications, and the stringency of lockdowns were all associated with higher levels of protest in the same month/week, the number of Covid deaths reduces levels of protest. Further exploring the results obtained for the Covid crisis in Appendix Figure A3, we see that problem pressure in the form of lockdown stringency and Covid deaths mostly drives anti-restriction protest as this constituted the largest share of protest during this crisis and as these indicators stood behind the grievances of the anti-restriction protesters. These results confirm the results by Kriesi and Oana (2023) on a more extended temporal sample (we include here also protest in 2021, while the previous paper was restricted to the first year of the pandemic). As our coefficients are standardised, we can directly compare their magnitude using Figure 10. Unemployment has the largest effect out of all predictors in the model (in line with H2b): if unemployment rises by two standard deviations in a specific month, it will produce more than five additional protest events in the same month. Additionally, Figure A4 in the Appendix shows that this effect of

unemployment becomes even stronger when the number of strikes within the overall protest levels increases, which again points to the important role played by unions during the Eurozone crisis (H2a). By contrast, the number of asylum applications and the stringency of lockdowns, while having significant effects, increase protest to a much smaller extent (an increase of two standard deviations in these indicators produces only around one or two additional protest events).

In terms of political pressure, confirming H1b, the salience of issues related to all the three crises in the public is associated with increased protest levels, with the magnitude of the effects being very similar across the three crises (an increase of two standard deviations in salience, would produce between one and two additional protest events). Generally, the indicator standing out in our model is unemployment, underscoring again the potential of mobilisation given economic grievances that we argue is also one of the main reasons behind the general declining trends in protest participation after the Eurozone crisis.¹²

Conclusion

Since 2008, the EU and its member states have faced a series of major crises. On the one hand, these gave rise to specific grievances which constituted unique mobilisation potentials for protest. On the other hand, successive crises brought about long-term structural deprivation which is likely to reduce protest as the defeat or marginalisation of the movements can dishearten participants and, therefore, erode levels of protest. In this paper, we set out to explore this tension between long-term and short-term crisis effects by examining how protest trends evolved across the last two decades in general, and within three crises periods (Eurozone, refugee, and Covid) in particular. For this purpose, we used the original PolDem protest dataset covering 30 European countries and virtually all protest forms of action reported in the media together with their characteristics. We summarise here our results in turn and indicate potential avenues for future research.

Our first set of results based on analyses of protest over the last two decades show that, first and foremost, protest levels have dwindled over time, and especially so after the Eurozone crisis. We put forward several non-mutually exclusive explanations that stand behind this trend. To begin with, we show that this decline corresponds to a decline in economic protest in particular. While protest focusing on cultural issues shows a more stable trend and is characterised by event- or crisis-specific peaks, protest focused on economic issues experiences a steep decline after 2012. As economic issues are generally more likely than cultural issues to be organised by established actors, unions in particular, we argue that this decline in protest is further accelerated by the decline in the involvement of union

actors. Unions are institutions with large organisational networks and outreach capacity that are able to mobilise protesters relatively effectively and, since unions did not actively participate in the crisis-specific protests of the refugee and Covid crises, their resources were not mobilised.

Furthermore, going beyond the scope of this paper, a likely reason behind this decline in economic protest over the last two decades is, arguably, a lack of efficacy and disillusionment with such protest being able to reach its desired goals. Successive crises bring about long-term deprivation which can erode economic protest as the defeat of movement mobilisation disheartens participants. While we do not study systematically the relationship between levels of economic protest and such disillusionment, we believe that this is a fruitful avenue for further research. Another possible reason for the general declining levels of protest captured by our data is a switch to other channels of participation and activism which move such protest further away from the streets. On the one hand, social movement scholarship points to ever closer interactions between electoral and protest politics giving rise to so-called 'movement parties' on both the left and the right side of the ideological spectrum (Borbáth & Hutter, 2020). While such political parties can sponsor protest activities in the streets, they also offer an alternative channel, closer to the electoral arena, for expressing grievances. On the other hand, alternative forms of voicing discontent through digital tools are becoming an increasingly routine part of the toolkit of social movements. An overview over four important recent movements – Arab spring, Occupy Wall Street, BLM, and far-right movements reveals a variety of ways in which these movements have used social media for their mobilisation (Caren *et al.*, 2020). Coupled with the shift to the partisan arena, the shift to new social media may be also have contributed to the declining trend of protest in the streets.

Our second set of results show that, while general levels of protest are declining over time, protest focused on crisis-specific issues still intensifies in crisis-specific periods. Our paper zooms in three crises: the Eurozone, the refugee, and the Covid crisis, and attempts to describe and explain levels of crisis-specific protest within these periods. We first describe the organisation of such crisis-specific protest in terms of the action forms adopted and the actors involved. We show that the Eurozone crisis was characterised by a high involvement of institutional actors such as unions, the refugee crisis was distinguished by its high share of radical events, but also by an unusual involvement of radical right parties as compared to the other crises, while protest in the Covid crisis was generally non-confrontational and organised by civil society actors. We then move on to explaining crisis-specific protest levels by examining the mobilising effect of crisis-specific grievances in selected European countries. More specifically, we study the impact of problem pressure (how hard countries were affected by the specific crises using economic, migration, and public health indicators) and

political pressure from public opinion (using the salience of crisis-specific issues in the public). We show that both problem pressure and political pressure were important drivers in each of the three crises. When studying the size of the effects comparatively across crises, we also show that economic grievances have the highest mobilisation effect out of the three.

All in all, these results have important implications for the study of protest during crises. In line with the grievance mobilisation literature, they further stress the importance of crisis-specific grievances in driving protest activity by providing additional evidence for the association between crisis-specific protest trends and *problem* and *political pressure*. Our results show that these indicators work similarly across crises of different nature and focusing on different issues. In line with the resource mobilisation literature, they also point to the importance of efficacy and organisational resources which are likely to stand behind declining trends of participation of economic protest in particular over the last two decades. Nevertheless, our results also qualify these findings by highlighting a tension between long-term and short-term crisis effects. Going beyond specific crisis studies and taking a long time span into account, they indicate that while in the short-term crisis-specific grievances constituted unique mobilisation potentials that lead to outbursts of protest, in the long-term structural deprivation, disillusionment, and changes in both the political party and the protest arena reduced protest throughout the poly-crisis.

Notes

1. While there are other crises or threats one could consider as part of this period, we decided to focus on those crises that can be easily temporally defined rather than slow-burning threats (for example, the climate crisis) where problem pressure slowly increases through a long period of time. Nevertheless, when empirically exploring protest trends across the last two decades we do acknowledge large protest waves related to these other crises when appearing in the data.
2. The main data collection steps involved: raw document identification via an extensive keyword search on LexisNexis, classification of relevant protest documents using several machine learning algorithms, and manual annotation of the selected documents remained following the previous steps using a dedicated codebook and online coding platform. For details on the exact steps of the data collection see the Kriesi et al., 2020b codebook available at: https://poldem.eui.eu/downloads/pea/poldem-protest_30_codebook.pdf. The codebook also details the wide series of tests (comparisons with ICEWS data, comparisons with national news sources based data, inter-coder agreement scores, etc.) conducted to establish the reliability of the sampling and coding strategy.
3. Agence France Presse, ANSA, Associated Press, British Broadcasting Corporation, Baltic News Service, Czechoslovak News Agency, Deutsche Presse-Agentur, MTI Hungarian News Agency, Press Association, Polish Press Agency.
4. We use the logarithm of the population size rather than size directly as the later would overcorrect for the size of the country: large countries would be

punished too much, whereas small countries would become too prominent (Beissinger & Sasse, 2014).

5. Given the trade-off between collecting large scale data and having very detailed distinctions in some of our variables, note that our data does not allow for disentangling the more fine-grained types of civil society organizations.
6. As part of our data on problem and political pressure (e.g., comparable asylum application numbers) is only available for specific countries, we restrict the total sample to those countries for which data is available on all crises and variables.
7. For gathering the Google Trends data we analyzed the salience in Google searches of the following topics and search terms: European Debt Crisis – Topic, Eurozone – Topic for the Eurozone crisis; Immigration – Topic and Refugee – Topic for the refugee crisis; Coronavirus – Topic, Covid – Search Term, Covid-19 – Search Term for the Covid crisis. Furthermore, A ‘topic’ is a group of terms that share the same concept in any language, while a ‘search term’ only includes data for that language. For example, for Italy under the Immigration – Topic we can find searches such as: ‘migranti’, ‘profughi’, ‘migrant salvini’, etc.. For Hungary some top trending searches are: ‘nemzeti konzultacio’, ‘bevandorlok’, etc.. Another example, for Italy under the European Debt Crisis – Topic we can find searches such as: ‘euro crisi’, ‘debito sovrano’, ‘crisi europea’, etc.. For Germany some top trending searches were: ‘eurokrise’, ‘griechenland krise’, etc.. Finally, note that the results obtained do not need to be weighted by country population as Google trends data is already weighted. Search results are normalized to the time and location of a query by dividing by the total searches of the geography and time range it represents to compare relative popularity.
8. We code political party actors according to their party family whenever mentioned explicitly. Union actors include both private and public trade union mentions. Civil society actors include social groups (women, students, occupational groups), other professional organizations and NGOs (not parties and unions), and non-professional social movements.
9. We define large events as events having over 10,000 participants for large countries or larger than one standard deviation of the average participation numbers for smaller countries.
10. Borbáth & Hutter, 2020, 2021 report overall shares of party-sponsored protest events of 14 or 13 percent respectively, but they focus on the subset of events that has at least one organizational sponsor (see Borbáth & Hutter, 2020, p. 259).
11. Additionally, *Figure A5* reports the result of a different modelling approach fitting a negative binomial model given the count nature of the dependent variable. The figure shows that the effects of problem and political pressure are robust to this specification, albeit with changes in effect magnitudes.
12. We also explore empirically the interaction effects between problem and political pressure by crisis in *Figure A7* in the Appendix. The results show that when there is an interaction, this is highly crisis specific. In the Eurozone crisis salience in the public increases the effect of unemployment on protest events, in the refugee crisis the two do not interact, while in the covid crisis a high lockdown stringency reduces the effect of salience on protest (most likely due to the restrictions in place).

13. In this Figure we examine protest in the Covid crisis by looking at its distribution across epidemiological waves. We detail the timeline of the pandemic by splitting it into three waves corresponding to three broad waves of infections and policymaking turnarounds. The first epidemiological wave (March to September 2020) was marked by a high degree of uncertainty, but also the landmark passing of the NGEU. The second epidemiological wave (September 2020 to June 2021) was characterized by high infection and fatality rates in the lead-up to mass vaccination. The third wave (June 2021 to December 2021) saw the advent of mass vaccination and the green pass.

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Data availability statement

The data and replication code that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

Supplementary material information

Separate file attached.

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