

Resistance against autocratisation: media, society, and politics

16.01.2026 – 10am - 6pm – Sprachatlas, Pilgrimstein 16, 35037 Marburg

10.00 a.m.	Introduction	Master Students		
10.30 a.m.	Keynote	Iryna Kovalenko <i>Europe-University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder)</i>	Autocratisation, its strategies and the transition to resistance.	
11.45 a.m.	<i>Coffee Break</i>			
12.00 p.m.	Workshop I & II	Jiréh Emmanuel <i>Founder of Noirsociety, artist and activist, Munich</i>	Art-based activism	
		Nazanin Noori <i>Among other things, artist at the Maxim Gorki Theater, Berlin</i>		
1.15 p.m.	Mutual Exchange and Workshop Recap			
1.45 p.m.	<i>Lunch Break</i>			
2.45 p.m.	Workshop III & IV	Marta Lempart <i>Polish Women's Strike Foundation, Warsaw</i>	Journalistic, legal, and feminist perspectives on resistance	
		Sofija Popović <i>European Western Balkans, Belgrad</i>		
4.00 p.m.	Mutual Exchange and Workshop Recap			
4.30 p.m.	<i>Coffee Break</i>			
4.45 p.m.	Final Group discussion with all participants			

Content focus of the workshop

The policy workshop examines how different forms of resistance can counter processes of autocratisation. It focuses on artistic, journalistic, academic, and legal perspectives on practices of resistance under conditions of shrinking civic space. A wide range of forms of resistance is considered, from artistic and aesthetic interventions and civil society engagement to journalistic and legal work in repressive contexts.

The workshop opens with a keynote on artistic forms of protest during the Maidan. In an interactive, artistically activist format, participants and guests jointly explore how resistance is creatively practised, which aesthetic strategies are employed, and how art functions as a form of political practice in contexts of autocratisation. Building on this, actors from journalism and legal practice offer insights into their work and discuss challenges, protection needs, and political responses. A concluding discussion brings together the impressions of the day and critically reflects on the potentials, limitations, and ambivalences of resistance practices against autocratisation.

The workshop is primarily aimed at undergraduate students of media studies and combines analytical perspectives with practice-oriented insights. Based on the discussions, master's students of peace and conflict studies will subsequently produce a policy paper.

Biographical Notes on the Speakers

Iryna Kovalenko

Iryna Kovalenko is a graduate of the European University Viadrina and a literary scholar. She is currently writing her doctoral thesis in the Collaborative Research Center of Intervening Arts at the Free University of Berlin. There she is researching artistic forms of protest on the Maidan. She is particularly interested in the aesthetics of the Maidan, which were broadcast to the world via the media and social media channels. She was born and raised in Kyiv, where she witnessed the Euromaidan protests at close proximity.

Jiréh Emmanuel

Jiréh Emanuel is an activist and musician from Munich who is committed to civil society alliances and the fight against racism through his political and artistic work. In particular through his involvement in movements such as Black Lives Matter and the promotion of the Afro-German community. In 2021, he founded Noirsociety, a self-supported initiative of people of African descent with the aim of artistically communicating educational topics in the field of anti-Black racism and anti-discrimination.

Nazanin Noori

Nazanin Noori (Farsi: نازنین نوری ; IPO: ['na:zəni:n 'nʊəri/]) is an artist who lives and works in Berlin. Her interdisciplinary work encompasses installation, sound art, composition, live and lecture performance, directing, and writing. With a background in theater, film, and media studies, Noori explores the fusion of sound, space, sculpture, and post-dramatic poetry, linking art and resistance. In her book “The Echo of Protest is distant to the Protest,” she examines the psychological consequences of the protests in Iran since the death of Jina Mahsa Amini. Her work has been presented internationally in renowned art and cultural institutions. In 2026, Noori was awarded the *ars viva* prize for visual arts.

Marta Lempart

Marta Lempart is an experienced activist in the field of civil society mobilization and advocates for women's rights, human rights—including the rights of LBGT+ and vulnerable groups—as well as the rule of law and democracy in general. Her greatest achievement is the organization and founding of the Polish Women's Strike—the first women's rights movement, which she has successfully led since 2016 with the PWS Foundation. For her advocacy for abortion rights and her leadership of protests she has been charged in more than 80 cases. As a trained lawyer, she has years of judicial experience and is the former director of the Polish Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.

Sofija Popović

Sofija Popović is a journalist at the Center for Contemporary Politics and a journalist at European Western Balkans. She holds a bachelor's degree in international relations and EU integration from the University of Belgrade.

From 2021 to 2023, Popović was a correspondent for the Serbian weekly magazine *Vreme*. As a journalist, she participates in the regional project “Western Balkans Anti-Disinformation Hub Exposing Malign Influences through Watchdog Journalism – WBADH” (WBADH). She specializes in EU and foreign policy. She is currently covering the anti-government protests in Serbia.