

# EUROPEAN CIVIC ACADEMY

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## REBUILDING TRUST IN DEMOCRACY

CHALLENGES  
AND OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR CIVIC ACTIVITSTS

**24 MARCH ONLINE**

**15:00-18:00 CET**

ORGANISED BY:



WITH THE SUPPORT OF:



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# ABOUT

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The **European Civic Academy** was launched by the European Civic Forum in 2016 to connect and build bridges between civil society and academic agendas, to provide space for civil society actors to discuss with academics and identify priorities and possibilities for collaborations related to the role of CSOs in enhancing civic and democratic spaces in Europe. The objectives of the European Civic Academy are three fold: (1) mapping civil society needs in terms of research priorities; (2) enable civic actors to gain knowledge about existing research, methodology and approaches to inspire a strengthening and a renewal action framework; (3) increase awareness among academic researchers about civil society needs and priorities and identify collaborative opportunities for future research.

Three sessions have been organised so far: in 2016 in La Rochelle (France); in 2017 in Brussels; in 2019 in Slubice (Poland). It allowed exchanges, but not yet the building of a strong linkage between the civic actors and the academic world. The editions to come shall benefit from the cooperation process that has developed between ECF, Civil Society Europe, Solidar and the Colegium Polonicum Foundation.

During this fourth edition of the European Civic Academy, we will bring together leading academics and civic actors to discuss obstacles and ways forward for civic organisations and social movements in the current context, characterised by growing distrust in democracy and divisions inside our societies. **Read the working paper for the event [here](#).**

# PROGRAMME

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## Session 1: Inclusion – For the people, with the people

24 March, 15:00–18:00 CET, Zoom

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- 15:00 **Welcome** by Jean-Marc Roirant, European Civic Forum (ECF) Co-president & Karolina Dreszer-Smalec, ECF Vice President  
**Introduction:** concept and thematic approach by Raffaella Bolini, ECF Co-president
- Setting the scene for the thematic session:  
Inclusion – For the people, with the people**
- 15:15 Interview with **Priscillia Ludosky**, leading activist from Yellow Vests movement and member of Convention Climat, France
- 15:30 **Keynote** by **Donatella della Porta**, Dean of the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, Director of the PhD program Political Science and Sociology, Director of Centre of Social Movements Studies, Scuola Normale Superiore, Florence, Italy
- 15:45 **Break-out groups\***
- 16:45 **Coffee Break**
- 16:55 **Closing Session**  
Rapporteurs from the small groups share insights and questions from the group's discussions (3 min. each), and academics react giving insights from their research.
- **Håkan Johanson**, Professor, School of Social Work, Lund University
  - **Christian Lahusen**, Professor of Comparative Cultural Sociology and Political Sociology in Europe, University of Siegen
  - **Elżbieta Korolczuk**, Associate Professor in Sociology, University of Södertörn
- 17:50 **Conclusions and next steps** by Jan Robert Suesser, Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, ECF Vice President
- 18:00 **END**

# \* BREAKOUT TOPICS

15:45–16:45 CET

## Format

- Discussion of topics from different angles and formulation of questions for research and action to address in the final session;
- Group discussions to be kicked-off by short impulse contributions (7 min.) from one activist and one academic who co-host the session;
- Each group to designate a rapporteur (activist) to present a short summary (3 min.) of the discussion and address the key questions in the closing session.

## 1 **Marginalisation and alliance building in mobilisations for housing rights across Europe**

Co-hosts: **Rebecca Tolosa**, Madrid Tenants Union (Spain) & **Eniko Vincze**, University Babes-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca (Romania).

The emerging housing struggles in several EU countries involve diverse social groups and can offer food for thought on how to encourage participation and alliance-building. What can we learn about mobilising across diverse social sectors or reaching out to geographical areas that experience exclusion?

## 2 **Building solidarity with the European Black Lives Matter movements**

Co-hosts: **Almamy Kanouté**, Adama Committee (France) & **Niamh Bhriain**, Transnational Institute (Ireland).

As Black Lives Matter demonstrations spread across the world following the murder of George Floyd, in Europe many have started calling for a reflection on systemic racism and exclusion. How can civic organisations best support and channel the voices of this movement?

## 3 **Breaking the chain of exclusion: diversity and inclusion practices in civic organisations**

Co-hosts: **Oriana Castillo**, CIVICUS – world alliance for civic participation & **Milka Ivanovska Hadjievska**, Lund University (Sweden).

Civic organisations participate in systems that continue to exclude people based on gender, age, race, and ability, and therefore may reproduce organisational practices and leadership cultures that lead to exclusion. How can we ensure that our organisational cultures reflect the communities we serve and advocate with and for?

# \* BREAKOUT TOPICS (CONTINUED)

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15:45–16:45 CET

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## **Defeating regressive forces: Lessons learned from democratic activism in non-metropolitan areas**

Co-hosts: **Franco Uda**, ARCI (Italy), **Giulio Iocco**, University of Calabria & **Natalia Mamonova**, Swedish Institute of International Affairs (tbc).

Right-wing populism often captures the hearts and minds of populations that live outside metropolitan areas and in the peripheries of Europe. What can we learn from those that successfully organise democratic activism outside of larger cities? And how can we re-capture those that are attracted by regressive ideologies?

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## **How to foster integration by supporting self-organising in migrant communities: reflections from Germany**

Co-hosts: **Ehsan Djafari**, Iranian community in Germany & **Susanne Huth**, INBAS-Sozialforschung (Germany).

In some countries, migrants have started to self-organise in order to support each other and speak with a collective voice. How can civic organisations empower the most vulnerable to stand up for their rights and ensure rights-based integration policies?

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## **Empowering youth participation in democratic mobilisations: food for thought from central Europe**

Co-hosts: **Filip Pazderski**, Institute of public affairs (Poland) & **Tea Jarc**, Mladi Plus (Slovenia).

Young people are often reluctant to engage in conventional democratic politics but are at the forefront of a new generation of environmental, feminist, anti-racist, and democratic movements. What mobilises them and how can we support their engagement?

# ORGANISATIONS

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The **European Civic Forum** is a pan European network that brings together over 100 associations and NGOs across 28 European countries: a great variety of civic organisations ranging from big federations of associations deeply rooted in local constituencies, national platforms of NGOs uniting hundreds of thousands of NGOs across different sectors, human rights advocacy and campaigning organisations, or smaller groups working at community level or engaging with the public on local issues around the democratic values of Equality, Solidarity and Inclusiveness.

**Foundation for Collegium Polonicum** strives to encourage various forms of citizens' activity, strengthening pro-social attitudes, development of an awareness and involvement amid civil society. The Foundation's mission is based on an active cooperation with the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (Poland) and the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder) (Germany). We aim to build the bridge of understanding and cooperation between NGOs, local governments, universities and the society.

**Civil Society Europe** (CSE) brings together 29 European networks of civil society organisations (CSO) working towards regenerating the European project around the shared values of Equality, Solidarity, Inclusiveness and Democracy. Our main objectives: to facilitate and enable horizontal and vertical dialogue between European civil society organisations and policymakers and help strengthening CSOs in their activities and relations with the institutions. The organisation was founded in December 2014 in Rome at the close of the European Year of citizens as an initiative of organisations that had worked together in the European Year of Citizens Alliance.

**SOLIDAR** is a European and worldwide network of Civil Society Organisations working to advance social justice in Europe and worldwide. With over 60 member organisations based in 29 countries (24 of which are EU countries), member organisations are national CSOs in Europe, as well as some non-EU and EU-wide organisations, working to advance in Europe and worldwide.

Please **REGISTER** for the event  
by **Monday 22nd March 2021.**

For more information, please contact:  
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