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World Protests

A Study of Key Protest Issues in the 21st Century

Isabel Ortiz
Sara Burke
Mohamed Berrada
Hernán Saenz Cortés

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Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung New York; Initiative for
Policy Dialogue/Global Social Justice

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Global Social Justice



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Isabel Ortiz
Global Social Justice, Initiative
for Policy Dialogue
New York, NY, USA

Sara Burke
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
New York, NY, USA

Mohamed Berrada
Economic Consultancy
Casablanca, Morocco

Hernán Saenz Cortés
OXFAM
Brussels, Belgium



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CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
1	<i>Background</i>	1
2	<i>Methodology</i>	4
3	<i>Organization of the Book</i>	7
	<i>References</i>	10
2	An Analysis of World Protests 2006–2020	13
1	<i>The World Awakens: Protests Increase 2006–2020</i>	13
2	<i>Main Grievances/Demands</i>	15
3	<i>Grievances/Demands on Failure of Political Representation and Political Systems</i>	20
3.1	<i>Real Democracy</i>	21
3.2	<i>Corruption</i>	24
3.3	<i>Justice</i>	24
3.4	<i>Sovereignty and Patriotic Issues</i>	25
3.5	<i>Transparency and Accountability</i>	25
3.6	<i>A “Deep Government”/Oligarchy</i>	26
3.7	<i>Anti-war Protests/Anti Military-Industrial Complex</i>	26
3.8	<i>Citizen Surveillance</i>	26
3.9	<i>Anti-socialism and Anti-communism</i>	27
4	<i>Grievances/Demands on Economic Justice/Anti-austerity</i>	27
4.1	<i>Jobs, Higher Wages and Labor Conditions</i>	31

4.2	<i>Reform of Public Services</i>	31
4.3	<i>Corporate Influence/Deregulation/Privatization</i>	31
4.4	<i>Inequality</i>	32
4.5	<i>Tax/Fiscal Justice</i>	32
4.6	<i>Low Living Standards</i>	33
4.7	<i>Agrarian/Land Reform</i>	33
4.8	<i>Fuel and Energy Prices</i>	34
4.9	<i>Pension Reforms</i>	34
4.10	<i>Housing</i>	35
4.11	<i>Food Prices</i>	35
5	<i>Grievances/Demands on Civil Rights</i>	36
5.1	<i>Ethnic/Indigenous/Racial Justice</i>	37
5.2	<i>Right to the Commons</i>	40
5.3	<i>Deny Rights to Groups</i>	40
5.4	<i>Freedom of Assembly/Speech/Press</i>	41
5.5	<i>Women's/Girls' Rights</i>	41
5.6	<i>Labor Rights</i>	42
5.7	<i>LGBT/Sexual Rights</i>	42
5.8	<i>Immigrants' Rights</i>	42
5.9	<i>Personal Freedoms</i>	42
5.10	<i>Prisoners' Rights</i>	43
5.11	<i>Religious Rights</i>	43
6	<i>Grievances/Demands for Global Justice</i>	43
6.1	<i>Environment/Climate Justice</i>	47
6.2	<i>Anti-international Financial Institutions</i>	47
6.3	<i>Anti-imperialism</i>	48
6.4	<i>Anti-free Trade</i>	48
6.5	<i>Global Commons</i>	49
6.6	<i>Anti-G20</i>	49
7	<i>Who Protests?</i>	49
7.1	<i>Main Groups Leading Protests 2006–2020: From NGOs and Trade Unions to Hackers</i>	49
7.2	<i>Greater Grassroots Participation</i>	50
8	<i>Number of Demonstrators</i>	52
8.1	<i>Some of the Largest Protests in History</i>	52
8.2	<i>Protests and Civic Space</i>	56
9	<i>Methods of Protest</i>	57
9.1	<i>Marches and Protest Assemblies/Rallies</i>	59

9.2	<i>Blockades, Occupations and Civil Disobedience/Direct Action</i>	59
9.3	<i>Strikes and Walkouts</i>	59
9.4	<i>Vandalism/Looting</i>	60
9.5	<i>Internet Activism and Whistleblowing/Leaks</i>	61
9.6	<i>Pot-Banging/Noisemaking, Street Music, Educational Events</i>	61
9.7	<i>Boycotts and Legal/Paralegal Methods</i>	62
9.8	<i>Hunger Strikes and Self-Inflicted Violence</i>	62
10	<i>Who Do Protesters Oppose?</i>	63
10.1	<i>Governments</i>	63
10.2	<i>Political/Economic System</i>	63
10.3	<i>Corporations/Employers</i>	64
10.4	<i>Elites</i>	65
10.5	<i>Political Parties</i>	65
10.6	<i>Military/Police</i>	65
10.7	<i>The European Union and European Central Bank (ECB)</i>	65
10.8	<i>The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank</i>	66
10.9	<i>Financial Sector</i>	66
10.10	<i>The United States of America</i>	67
11	<i>What Do Protests Achieve?</i>	67
12	<i>Violence, Repression, and Surveillance</i>	72
12.1	<i>Limited but Increasing Protestors' Violence</i>	72
12.2	<i>Increasing Repression and Surveillance of Protestors: Arrests, Injuries, and Deaths</i>	74
	<i>References</i>	79
3	Selected Key Issues in World Protests	83
1	<i>Rising Populism and Radical Right Protests</i>	83
1.1	<i>From Left-Wing to Far-Right Populist Protests</i>	83
1.2	<i>Weaponizing Protests</i>	87
2	<i>Inequality</i>	89
2.1	<i>Inequality and Protests</i>	89
2.2	<i>Protests and the Perception That Governments Serve a Few</i>	93
3	<i>Protesting Against Corruption</i>	94
4	<i>Fighting for Women's Rights</i>	97

5	<i>From the Arab Spring to the Latin America Spring: Ignored Economic Demands Lead to Political Dissent</i>	99
6	<i>Protests, Human Rights and Development Policies: What Governments Can Do</i>	102
	<i>References</i>	108
4	Conclusions	111
	<i>Reference</i>	117
	Annexes	119
	Main References	175
	Index	179

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Isabel Ortiz is director of the Global Social Justice Program at Joseph Stiglitz's Initiative for Policy Dialogue, based at Columbia University, New York. Earlier she was director at the International Labor Organization (ILO Geneva, 2013–2019) and at UNICEF (New York, 2009–2012); senior official at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN New York, 2005–2009) and at the Asian Development Bank (ADB Manila, 1995–2003), where she was a founding member of the ADB Poverty Reduction Unit. In 1993–1995 she was a researcher at the Department of International Economics of the High-Level Council of Scientific Research (CSIC Madrid) and a lecturer at Madrid and Salamanca Universities in Spain. In 1992–1993 she worked at the European Commission in Brussels and in 1991 at the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC Buenos Aires). Isabel Ortiz has worked in more than 50 countries in all world regions, providing advisory services to governments and engaging in high level initiatives at the United Nations, G20, BRICS, African Union and UNASUR, among others. Additionally, she actively supports policy advocacy work of civil society organizations. She has a M.Sc. and a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics, and has written more than 80 publications translated in several languages.

Sara Burke is a senior expert on the global economy and international financial institutions at the German think tank, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Based in the New York office since 2008, she provides policy analysis

and advice on economic policy frameworks and the multilateral system, as well as on their social and political impacts. Prior to that, in 2003 she founded and co-edited *Gloves Off*, a webzine with an economic lens, linking current and historical events. She has published a number of papers on economic and social rights. She has an M.A. from Stanford University and a B.A. from Reed College.

Mohamed Berrada is an economics consultant and entrepreneur. Besides starting and managing a gym in Casablanca, his main research focuses on the long-term impact of colonialism on development. He is a Fulbright scholar and Ph.D. candidate at the New School for Social Research, New York. He has worked on research projects relating to protest movements, inequality, colonialism, and economic development.

Hernán Saenz Cortés is an International Relations Ph.D. from Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, with ample experience both in research and policy analysis. His main research interests are power relations and its impact on governance, development and finance with a focus on Latin America. He has worked for different NGOs, think tanks and Private Foundations. From 2009 to 2013 he was the Policy and Advocacy Manager at the UBUNTU-World Forum of Civil Society Networks in Barcelona. In 2014, he worked as consultant for different organizations such as the Overseas Development Institute (ODI, London), and became Senior Policy Analyst on Tax Justice and Financing at EURODAD (Brussels, 2014–2017). From 2017, he works as a Senior Researcher on Inequality and Tax and as Advocacy Coordinator on European Union—Latin America relations at Oxfam.

ACRONYMS

COVID-19	Corona-Virus Disease of 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECB	European Central Bank
FEMEN	Radical Feminist Group (Ukrainian: <i>Фемени</i>)
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung/Foundation
G20	Group of 20
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LGBT	Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered people
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEA	Protest Event Analysis
PEGIDA	Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident (German: <i>Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes</i>)
TTIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
TTP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
UN	United Nations
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations (Spanish: <i>Unión de Naciones Suramericanas</i>)
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VAT	Value Added Tax
WSF	World Social Forum

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1

- Fig. 1 List and map of countries covered in the study, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/> [Covered countries are darkened]) 5

Chapter 2

- Fig. 1 Number of protests by grievance/demand topics, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>) 17
- Fig. 2 Number of protests by main grievance/demand from year 2006 to 2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>) 19
- Fig. 3 Protests failures of political representation/political systems by income group 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>) 20
- Fig. 4 Map of protests on failure of political representation and political systems, 2006–2020 (*Source* <https://worldprotests.org/>) 23

Fig. 5	Grievances/demands arising from the failure of political representation/systems by year, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	23
Fig. 6	Protests for economic justice/against austerity by income group, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	28
Fig. 7	Map of protests on economic justice and anti-austerity, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> https://worldprotests.org/)	30
Fig. 8	Grievances/demands on economic justice/against austerity by year, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	30
Fig. 9	Protest for civil rights by country income group, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	36
Fig. 10	Map of protests on civil rights, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> https://worldprotests.org/)	39
Fig. 11	Grievances/demands on civil rights by Year, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	39
Fig. 12	Protest for global justice by country income group, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	44
Fig. 13	Map of protests on global justice, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> https://worldprotests.org/)	46
Fig. 14	Grievances/demands on global justice by year, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	46
Fig. 15	Main groups leading protests by region, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	51
Fig. 16	Number of protests and civic space (Legend: CIVICUS Rank is 1: Open freer society; 2: Narrowed; 3: Obstructed; 4: Repressed; 5: Closed) (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and CIVICUS 2020b)	57
Fig. 17	Methods of protests 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	58

Fig. 18	Main targets of world protests, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	64
Fig. 19	Number of protests and achievements by year, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	67
Fig. 20	Achievements by targeted opponent, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	70
Fig. 21	Riots and violent protests, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	74
Fig. 22	Reported repression of protests, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	76

Chapter 3

Fig. 1	Radical right protests: demands/grievances correlated with the denying of rights, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: https://worldprotests.org/)	85
Fig. 2	Inequality and protests in high-income countries (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)	90
Fig. 3	Inequality and protests in middle-income countries, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)	91
Fig. 4	Inequality and protests in low-income countries, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)	91
Fig. 5	Protests in countries with increasing inequality, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)	92
Fig. 6	Protests in countries with decreasing inequality, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)	93
Fig. 7	Protests and the perception that governments serve the few (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Alliance of Democracies & Dalia Research, 2020)	94

Fig. 8	Protests against corruption, 5-year periods, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 see: https://worldprotests.org/)	95
Fig. 9	Protests against corruption per region, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 see: https://worldprotests.org/)	95
Fig. 10	Map of protests against corruption and for real democracy, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> https://worldprotests.org/)	97
Fig. 11	Protests for women rights, 2006–2020 (<i>Source</i> Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 see: https://worldprotests.org/)	98
Fig. 12	Main grievances per region 2006–2020	101

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 2

Table 1	Number of protests in 2006–2020	14
Table 2	Number of protests by country income groups, 2006–2020	15
Table 3	Number of protests by region, 2006–2020	16
Table 4	Protests against the failure of political representation/political systems by region, 2006–2020	22
Table 5	Protests for economic justice/against austerity by country region, 2006–2020	29
Table 6	Protests for civil rights by region, 2006–2020	38
Table 7	Protests for global justice by region, 2006–2020	45
Table 8	Main groups leading protests 2006–2020	50
Table 9	Largest protests 2006–2020. Crowd estimates—more than 1 million demonstrators (selected protests)	53
Table 10	Reported repression of protests, 2006–2020	75
Table 11	Protests with high numbers of reported arrests, injuries and deaths 2006–2020	77

Chapter 3

Table 1	Main human rights and development policy demands from world protesters 2006–2020	103
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Abstract The Introduction of “World Protests: A Study of Key Protest Issues in the 21st Century” provides the background and methodology of the study, including the countries covered. It also describes the structure of the volume chapter by chapter, from protestors’ demands and methods to achievements and repression, guiding the reader through the content of the book. An annex presents 250 methods of non-violent protest.

Keywords Protests · Social movements · Democracy · Crisis · Civil rights · Human rights · Social justice

I BACKGROUND

The two first decades of the twenty-first century saw an increasing number of protests around the world. From Africa to Europe, from the Americas to Asia, people have taken to the streets demanding real democracy, jobs, better public services, civil rights, social justice, and an end to abuse, corruption and austerity, among many other demands. What these protests have in common—regardless of where they take place geographically or where their demonstrators are on the political spectrum—are

failures of democracy and of economic and social development, fueled by discontent and a lack of faith in the official political processes. The main findings of this study indicate that social unrest rose in every region during the period covered.

This book presents the results of a protest event analysis¹ undertaken in 2013 and 2020 by a team of four researchers.² The study analyzes data on 2809 protests, which made up more than 900 protest movements. These took place in 101 countries, and a great number of protests also crossed international boundaries. The research compiles data from 15 years of news reports available online, mainly in six languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, although some research was contributed referencing news reports in Mandarin and Hindi) and published between January 2006 and December 2020. These reports covered a variety of protests, from demonstrations and strikes, to the campaigns of social and political movements, to unorganized crowd actions such as riots.³

This publication contributes to the analysis of protests in several ways. It expands the mapping of protests in the period 2006–2020 beyond non-violent protests (Leahey, 2013) and beyond English language big-data mining databases (Leetaru & Schrodt, 2013) as well as expanding the amount of information and the period covered by other websites such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Global Protests Tracker.⁴ This publication also provides new insights on areas earlier developed by scholars investigating who protests (Chen & Suen, 2017; della Porta, 2017), why (Barrett & Chen, 2021; Brannen et al., 2020; Brancati, 2016; Caren et al., 2017; Carothers & Youngs, 2015), methods of protests (Leahey, 2013; Sharp, 1973) and other issues.

¹ Protest event analysis (PEA) is a research method developed by sociologists over the past few decades to map, analyze and interpret occurrences and properties of large numbers of protests by means of content analysis, via sources such as newspaper reports (Koopmans & Rucht, 2002).

² This book updates earlier work presented in Ortiz et al. (2013).

³ Excluded from the research sample are those periods when protests escalate into armed conflicts in certain countries (e.g. Libya, Syria, Yemen); however, we have included protests in earlier years in these countries.

⁴ The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Global Protests Tracker focuses exclusively on major antigovernment protests since 2017, drawn from English-language news sources; it excludes rallies in support of political and personal causes. See: <https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/protest-tracker> (last accessed on 4.8.2021).

Many have questioned why the world has been increasingly shaken by protests in recent years. Some authors have pointed to the enabling role played by rising protests in the preservation of civic space (CIVICUS, 2020a, 2020b), the development of communication technologies (Carothers & Youngs, 2015; Qureshi, 2017) and the political use of disinformation (Brannen et al., 2020). These are all important factors, though not all carry the same weight.

Structural factors like economic change and democratic regression are necessary to fully explain the surge in protests (Carothers & Youngs, 2015; Caren et al., 2017; Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020). From Marx to Tocqueville, authors have written about unequal structural conditions and consciousness of injustice as crucial factors for protests and rebellion. Today, inequality is staggering, estimated to be the highest in history (United Nations, 2020; Oxfam, 2020, 2021). Four decades of neoliberal policies have generated more inequality and have eroded incomes and welfare for both lower and middle classes (della Porta, 2017; OECD, 2019; Ortiz & Cummins, 2019; Puschra & Burke, 2013; Schiffrin & Kircher-Allen, 2012; United Nations, 2020). Additionally, the world is experiencing the unrest effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (Barrett & Chen, 2021; Sedik & Xu, 2020).

Our analysis shows that the number of demonstrations has increased steadily since 2006 and that protests have become more political due to disappointment with malfunctioning democracies, frustration with politicians, and a lack of trust in governments. By 2020, there were fewer protests about a specific issue (e.g., an education policy reform) and more “omnibus protests” in which demonstrators raised demands related to many issues. Not surprisingly, the most prevalent demand of protesters around the world in the period 2006–2020 was for “real democracy.”

Since almost three thousand protests were reviewed in this study, they were classified into four main categories, by descending frequency of occurrence: (i) protests related to the failure of political representation/political systems, focused on a lack of real democracy, corruption and other grievances; (ii) against economic injustice and austerity reforms; (iii) for civil rights, from indigenous/racial rights to women’s rights and personal freedoms; and (iv) protests for global justice and a better international system for all, instead of the few. An innovation of the book is in the statistics and graphs presented on these and other points of focus, and the numerous examples from all world regions.

Who protests? Recent research shows the increasing participation of the middle classes in protests, both in high-income and developing countries (Chen & Suen, 2017; della Porta, 2017). Our study confirms the increasing involvement of unorganized citizens, grassroots movements, and young and old persons. People have taken to the streets in the Arab Spring, the *Indignados* (Outraged) and “yellow vests” movements of Europe, the Occupy movement in the United States, and in the *Estallido Social* (Social Uprising) in Chile and other countries in Latin America. Trade unions continue to be a major organizing power, leading some of the largest protests in history.

What methods do protesters use? Our research identifies 250 methods of protest, presented in Annex B, updating the pioneering study of 198 methods of nonviolent action by Gene Sharp (1973). Based on our research and given the technological leap that has been ongoing since the 1970s, we have been able to identify more than fifty new methods from recent experiences, such as digital and online activism.

Peaceful protests are a fundamental aspect of a vibrant democracy. Historically, protests have been a means to achieve fundamental rights at the national and international level (Tilly, 1978; United Nations, 2012). However, protesters confront repression in many countries. The link between protests and repression, or how governments react violently or with legal actions to quell protests, is well documented (see for instance, Davenport & Armstrong, 2004; INCLO, 2013). Governments, as the legitimate policy-making institutions responsible to their citizens, are the most frequent target for protesters. Governments react in diverse ways, sometimes repressing protests and sometimes conceding fully or partially to protestors’ demands. The book examines both repression by governments, as well as protestors’ successful achievement of policy goals from governments during the period 2006–2020.

2 METHODOLOGY

The study investigates protests in 101 countries and territories representing 93% of world population⁵ (Fig. 1), setting each event in time and place and identifying a number of other properties, including: main grievances/demands, who is protesting, what protest methods they use,

⁵ Based on 2020 data contained in United Nations (2019).

Algeria	Democratic Republic of	Israel	Nepal	Spain
Angola	Congo	Italy	Nicaragua	Sri Lanka
Argentina	Denmark	Ivory Coast	Niger	Sudan
Australia	Dominican Republic	Jamaica	Nigeria	Syria
Bangladesh	Ecuador	Japan	Oman	Tanzania
Belarus	Egypt	Jordan	Pakistan	Thailand
Bolivia	El Salvador	Kazakhstan	Palestine, Occupied Territory	Tunisia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ethiopia	Kenya	Peru	Turkey
Brazil	France	Kosovo	Philippines	Uganda
Bulgaria	Germany	Kyrgyzstan	Poland	Ukraine
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Lebanon	Portugal	United Arab Emirates
Cameroon	Greece	Libya	Romania	United Kingdom
Canada	Haiti	Macedonia	Russia	United States of America
Chad	Honduras	Madagascar	Saudi Arabia	Uzbekistan
Chile	Hungary	Malaysia	Senegal	Vietnam
China	Iceland	Mali	Serbia	Western Sahara
Colombia	India	Mauritania	Singapore	Yemen
Global	Indonesia	Mexico	Slovenia	Zambia
Croatia	Iran	Montenegro	Somalia	Zimbabwe
Czech Republic	Ireland	Morocco	South Africa	
		Mozambique	South Korea	
		Myanmar		

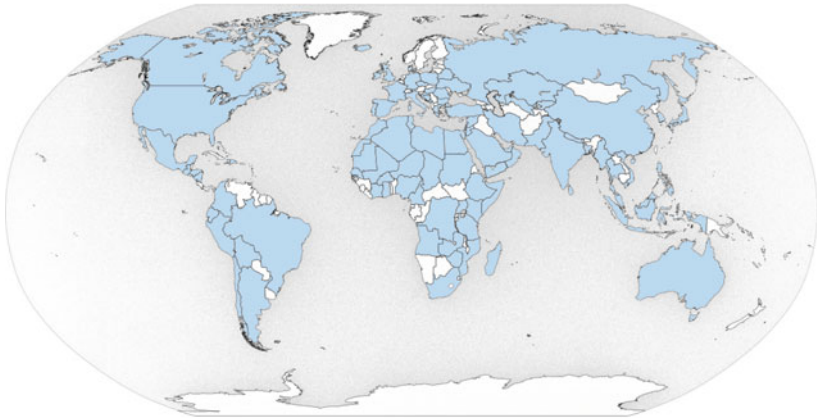


Fig. 1 List and map of countries covered in the study, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/> [Covered countries are darkened])

who their opponents/targets are, and what were the results of the protests, including achievements and repression. The objective of the study is to document and characterize major protests from two years prior to the onset of the 2008 global financial crisis to the end of 2020, to examine protest trends globally, regionally and according to country-income levels, and to present the main grievances and demands of protesters in order to better understand the drivers of social unrest.

The study references the media sources and data presented in the interactive World Protests website (<https://worldprotests.org/>), developed by the authors with support from the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and Global Social Justice/Initiative for Policy Dialogue. In order to control for bias in the selection of news sources, a widely recognized challenge within the protest-event analysis framework, this study includes at least one internationally or regionally recognized media source per protest (e.g., *BBC News*, *CNN*, *Al Jazeera*, *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, *The New York Times*, and similar sources in the six main languages used for research: Arabic, English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish), augmented by at least one local or independent news, academic, or organizational source. This strategy for overcoming selectivity bias nevertheless does not fully represent all protests taking place, nor can the strategy compensate for the fact that international sources are more readily available online for the whole period, while national and especially local sources are less accessible via the Internet the older they are (Klandermans & Staggenborn, 2002).

The representation of protest movements in our database is weighed by their duration in time. We follow 906 protest movements or episodes⁶ around the globe, which are responsible for thousands of protest events. To simplify, we have marked each active year of an episode as one event: this leads to 2809 protests events overall, which places this database and its results at a mid-point between the automated, big-data query databases such as the GDELT project⁷ and the analytical movement analysis method that can be found in projects such as the Global Nonviolent

⁶ We use the word episode when referring to an entire period to avoid confusion with the usual understanding of movement as one organized group, an episode can have multiple movements fighting towards the same goal, that is especially relevant in the case of omnibus protests.

⁷ The GDELT Project. <https://www.gdeltproject.org/> (last accessed on 3.8.2021).

Action Database.⁸ Our approach has enabled us to track movements in meaningful detail while at the same time presenting general statistics as to why, how, who and where people protest at the aggregate level. Please refer to the Annex A for further notes on the methodology and statistical methods used.

3 ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

For ease of comprehension, this book has a straightforward structure in which two central chapters are distinguished. The main core of the book is the analysis of data to understand who protests, why and how they protest, as well as documenting achievements and fallbacks. The last part of the book looks at selected key issues, such as the rise of populism and radical right protests; protests and inequality, women and corruption; the main protests by region and understanding how protestors' demands link to Human Rights and development policies. A summary concluding chapter closes the book.

This introductory chapter has focused on a brief review of the literature and methodology and outlines the rest of the book. Chapter 2 presents the analysis of world protests 2006–2020. Section 1 in Chapter 2 starts by an overview, the aggregated numbers of protests by year and world regions.

Sections 2 to 6 in Chapter 2 analyze the main grievances and demands of protesters in the period 2006–2020, and how they evolve over time. Section 3 focuses on the most numerous cluster of protests, those due to failures of political representation and political systems, such as grievances related to a lack of real democracy; corruption; a failure to receive justice from the legal system; sovereignty and patriotic issues; transparency and accountability; the perceived power of a deep government or oligarchy; preventing war and restraining the military industrial complex; the surveillance of citizens, as well as anti-socialism and anti-communism.

Section 4 in Chapter 2 centers on grievances against economic injustice and austerity reforms; this second most numerous cluster includes protests caused by inadequate jobs, wages and/or labor conditions; reforms of public services; corporate influence, deregulation and privatization; inequality; tax and fiscal justice; low living standards; agrarian/land

⁸ *The Global Nonviolent Action Database*. See <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu> (last accessed on 3.8.2021).

reform; high fuel and energy prices; pension reform; housing and high food prices.

Section 5 in Chapter 2 presents the third most numerous cluster, civil rights' demands in areas such as ethnic/indigenous/racial rights; a right to the commons (digital, land, cultural, atmospheric); freedom of assembly, speech and press; women and girls' rights; labor rights; the rights of lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered people (LGBT); immigrant rights; personal freedoms; prisoners rights and religious issues. This cluster also includes protests that sought to deny rights or reject equal rights for a group (e.g., against minorities such as migrants), generally linked to radical right protests.

Section 6 in Chapter 2 concentrates on demands for global justice, such as for environmental and climate justice; also grievances against the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the European Union and the European Central Bank (ECB) and other International Financial Institutions (IFIs), against imperialism; against free trade; in defense of the global commons; and against the Group of 20 (G20).

After the presentation of the main grievances and demands of protestors, each of the central sections of the book examines key aspects of world protests in the period 2006–2020. Section 7 in Chapter 2 analyzes who the main groups leading protests are, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or civil society organizations (CSOs), grassroots, political parties/movements, workers' unions, students/youth, indigenous/racial groups, unorganized workers, religious groups, women/feminist groups, hackers, employers' organizations and prisoners.

Section 8 in Chapter 2 centers on the numbers of protestors in events, noting the problem of crowd estimates that are very different depending on the source. The protests included in this study have involved numbers ranging from a few hundred protestors to millions of demonstrators—more than 50 protests events in the period involved millions of people. The chapter also analyzes whether the increasing number of protestors and protests is enabled by improved civic space, civic conditions and political freedoms.

Section 9 presents the wide range of methods to protest commonly used in the period 2006–2020, such as marches and protest assemblies, blockades, occupations and other kinds of civil disobedience/direct action; internet activism and whistleblowing/leaks; vandalism and looting; strikes and walkouts; pot-banging/noisemaking, street music,

educational events; boycotts and legal/paralegal methods; hunger strikes and self-inflicted violence. Examples of each method are provided in the chapter. Additionally, Annex B presents a systematic list of 250 non-violent protest methods.

Section 10 in Chapter 2 looks at who protestors oppose. Just as key objectives of this research are to find out who is protesting (and how and why), it is also important to identify the main targets, or opponents, of the protests. The most frequent target for protestors, by a wide margin, is their own national government; other targets include institutions unaccountable to people such as corporations, the military, the financial sector, the European Union/ECB, the IMF and World Bank, as well as the United States of America's and China's imperialism.

Section 11 in Chapter 2 analyzes the achievements of protests, and the conditions for successful outcomes. Section 12 documents both violence by protestors as well as state-organized violence and repression in the form of arrests, injuries, and deaths. These two sections close Chapter 2 of the book.

Chapter 3 of the volume focuses on selected key issues. Section 1 in Chapter 3 brings attention to the rise of populism and radical right protests, looking at the shift from anti-authoritarian left-wing populist protests to authoritarian, far-right populist protests. The chapter reviews the traits of radical right protests across the world.

Section 2 in Chapter 3 looks at the relation between inequality and protests, examining inequality Gini coefficients (after tax and benefits) and protests, with trend lines showing that there are more protests in countries with increasing inequality, and vice versa, fewer protests in countries where inequality is being reduced. The chapter also analyzes data on democratic perceptions and looks at the correlation between the percentage of people who believe that governments serve the few, and the number of protests per country.

Section 3 in Chapter 3 presents a deeper look at corruption and protests, and Section 4 at protests for women's rights. The subsequent Section 5 takes a regional perspective, reviewing protests from the Arab Spring to the recent "Latin America Spring" and showing how ignored economic demands lead to political dissent.

Finally, Section 6 in Chapter 3 evidences how the large majority of demands that protestors put to policymakers are in full accordance

with Human Rights and internationally-agreed United Nations development goals. The book closes with summary conclusions, calling on governments to listen and act on the messages coming from protesters.

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An Analysis of World Protests 2006–2020

Abstract This section of the book “World Protests: A Study of Key Protest Issues in the 21st Century” analyzes in-depth 2809 protests that occurred between 2006 and 2020 in 101 countries covering over 93% of the world population. This section focuses on: (i) major grievances and demands driving world protests, such as the failure of political representation/systems, anti-austerity, and for civil rights and global justice; (ii) who was demonstrating; (iii) what protest methods they used; (iv) who the protestors opposed; (v) what was achieved; and (vi) violence and repression in terms of arrests, injuries, and deaths.

Keywords Protests · Social movements · Riots · Democracy · Austerity · Civil rights · Social justice · Human rights · Repression

1 THE WORLD AWAKENS: PROTESTS INCREASE 2006–2020

There are times in history when large numbers of people protest about the way things are, demanding change. It happened in 1830–1848, in 1917–1924, in the 1960s, and it is happening again today (Schiffrin & Kircher-Allen, 2012). Since 2010, the world has been shaken by protests.

Our analysis of 2809 events reflects an increasing number of protests from 2006 to 2020. Protests occur in all world regions (Table 1) and

Table 1 Number of protests in 2006–2020

	2006–2010	2011–2015	2016–2020	Total
East Asia and Pacific	98	144	136	378
Europe and Central Asia	119	319	368	806
Latin America and the Caribbean	92	164	171	427
Middle East and North Africa	53	85	70	208
North America	44	111	126	281
South Asia	26	37	38	101
Sub-Saharan Africa	76	138	155	369
Global Protests	68	83	88	239
Total	576	1081	1152	2809

Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

across all country income levels¹ (Table 2). The study found a greater prevalence of protests in middle-income countries (1327 events) and high-income countries (1122 protests) than in low-income countries (121 events).² There are also a number of international and global protests³ that happened in multiple countries simultaneously, and their number also keeps increasing steadily over the years (239 protests).

With regards to the regional distribution of protests (Tables 1 and 3), Europe and Central Asia is the most active area (806 protests) in the period 2006–2020, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (427 protests), East Asia/Pacific (378 protests), Sub-Saharan Africa (369

¹ Country income group and regional classifications are taken from World Bank data sets, which use gross national income (GNI) per capita to classify every economy as either low-income, middle-income (subdivided into lower middle and upper middle), or high-income.

² The lower numbers in low income countries may be due to lesser civic participation because of hardship and more difficult living conditions or perhaps due to there being fewer international reports of protests in low income countries, and the fact that local sources are less accessible via the Internet the older they are (Klandermans & Staggernborn, 2002), as discussed in the methodology section.

³ Since not all protests occur in a single country, income group, or region, the category “Global” has been added to the analysis of protests by country-income and region to reflect rising numbers of internationally-organized protests (239) which are due to both the increased ease of organizing across borders, growing awareness of the impact of undemocratic international organizations such as the G20 or the IMF, and the need for coordinated global action to solve issues such as climate change.

Table 2 Number of protests by country income groups, 2006–2020

	<i>High-income</i>	<i>Upper middle income</i>	<i>Lower middle income</i>	<i>Low income</i>	<i>Global protests</i>	<i>Total</i>
2006	15	26	20	1	11	73
2007	28	26	33	2	12	101
2008	29	38	32	6	14	119
2009	46	33	24	5	16	124
2010	56	48	35	5	15	159
2011	80	61	49	8	18	216
2012	95	69	50	9	20	243
2013	103	60	46	10	18	237
2014	89	44	35	10	14	192
2015	88	47	34	11	13	193
2016	86	54	39	10	13	202
2017	93	52	45	11	17	218
2018	101	60	46	12	19	238
2019	106	59	51	9	18	243
2020	107	60	51	12	21	251
Total	1122	737	590	121	239	2809

Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

protests), North America (281 protests), the Middle East and North Africa (208 protests) and South Asia (101 protests). Because this study collected and organized information primarily by country, those regions with more countries tend to have a greater number of protests, and those regions with fewer countries (e.g., North America comprises only three countries; South Asia, seven) show a slightly lesser number of protests, although researchers tried to offset this by greater sensitivity to recording more within-country protests in world-geographical regions with fewer countries.

2 MAIN GRIEVANCES/DEMANDS

The 2809 protest events analyzed in this study can be classified into four different main categories related to the grievances and demands raised, and therefore to the issues that generated them: (i) failure of the political system; (ii) economic justice and anti-austerity; (iii) civil rights; (iv) global justice. These are summarized below and in Fig. 1, and are presented in

Table 3 Number of protests by region, 2006–2020

	<i>East Asia Pacific</i>	<i>Europe Central Asia</i>	<i>Latin America & Caribbean</i>	<i>Middle East & N. Africa</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>South Asia</i>	<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	<i>Global Protests</i>	<i>Total</i>
2006	11	11	13	6	6	5	10	11	73
2007	17	18	15	12	7	5	15	12	101
2008	21	21	19	12	7	4	21	14	119
2009	22	29	19	9	11	4	14	16	124
2010	27	40	26	14	13	8	16	15	159
2011	34	55	35	23	16	7	28	18	216
2012	31	68	37	23	23	9	32	20	243
2013	32	76	34	14	24	10	29	18	237
2014	24	62	27	14	22	5	24	14	192
2015	23	58	31	11	26	6	25	13	193
2016	27	64	32	12	20	7	27	13	202
2017	26	70	32	10	24	9	30	17	218
2018	26	79	36	15	26	6	31	19	238
2019	29	78	37	16	27	7	31	18	243
2020	28	77	34	17	29	9	36	21	251
Total	378	806	427	208	281	101	369	239	2809

Source: Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

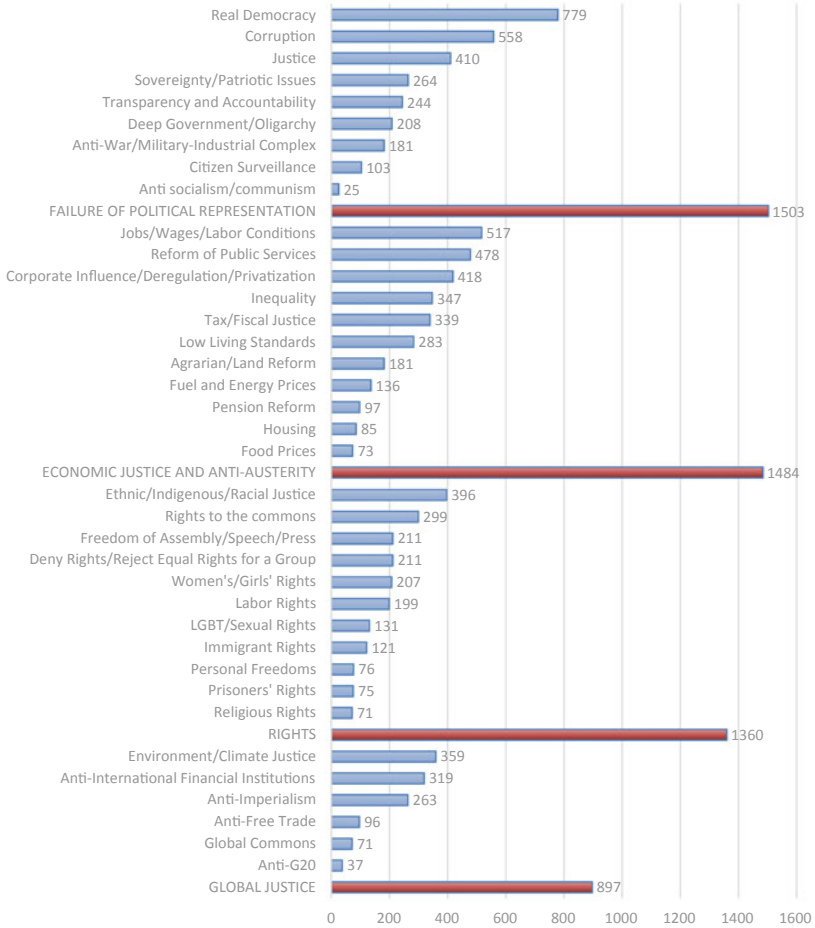


Fig. 1 Number of protests by grievance/demand topics, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

more detail in the following sections. Note that for most protests, more than one grievance and more than one demand are involved. This means the categories of grievances and demands are not mutually exclusive: each protest event was “tagged” with the full set of grievances/demands found to have contributed to it.

- Failure of Political Representation and Political Systems: 1503 protests were on focused on a lack of real democracy; corruption; a failure to receive justice from the legal system; sovereignty and patriotic issues; transparency and accountability; the perceived power of a deep government or oligarchy; preventing war and restraining the military industrial complex; the surveillance of citizens, as well as anti-socialism and anti-communism.
- Economic Justice and Anti-Austerity: 1484 protests were focused on issues related to jobs, wages and/or labor conditions; reform of public services; corporate influence, deregulation and privatization; inequality; tax and fiscal justice; low living standards; agrarian/land reform; high fuel and energy prices; pension reform; housing and high food prices.
- Civil Rights: 1360 protests were for ethnic/indigenous/racial rights; a right to the commons (digital, land, cultural, atmospheric); freedom of assembly, speech and press; women and girls’ rights; labor rights; the LGBT rights; immigrant rights; personal freedoms; prisonersrights and religious issues. This category also includes protests that sought to deny rights or reject equal rights for a group (e.g., against minorities).
- Global Justice: 897 protests were for environmental and climate justice; against the IMF, the World Bank, the European Union/ECB, and other IFIs, against imperialism (United States, China); against free trade; in defense of the global commons; and against the G20.

How did these grievances evolve over time? Fig. 2 presents the number of protests by main grievance/demand. Beginning in 2006, there is a steady rise in overall protests each year up to 2020. Though generalizing is difficult, as the global financial crisis begins to unfold in 2007–2008, we observe an initial jump in the number of protests. Protests intensified with the end of fiscal stimulus and the adoption of austerity cuts

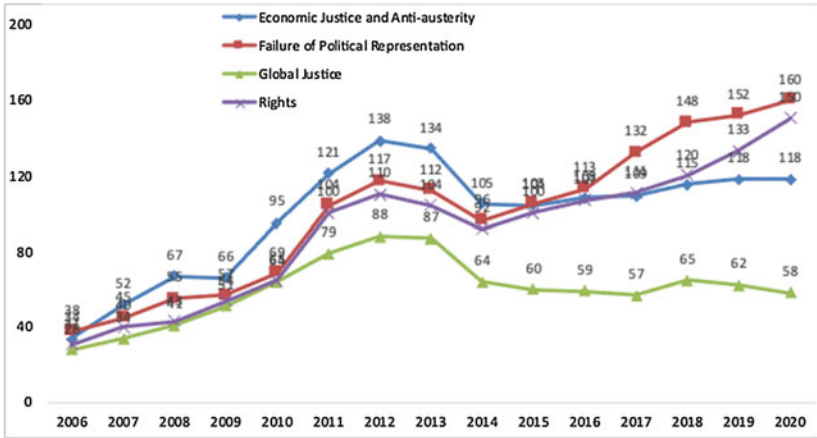


Fig. 2 Number of protests by main grievance/demand from year 2006 to 2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

and cost-saving reforms worldwide after 2010, and they then peaked in 2012–2013. Protestors were primarily demonstrating for economic justice and anti-austerity reforms in the 2010–2014 period. Unresolved grievances, few decent jobs, poor social protection and public services, and failures of agrarian and tax justice, caused protests to become more political, sparking a new wave of protests starting in 2016, catalyzed by failures of democracies. Since 2016, protests have escalated, often becoming “omnibus protests” (protesting on multiple issues) against the political and economic system. Decades of neoliberal policies have generated more inequality, eroded incomes and welfare to both the lower and the middle classes, fueling frustration and feelings of injustice, disappointment with malfunctioning democracies and failures of economic and social development, and a lack of trust in governments. In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic has accentuated social unrest.

Protests linked to civil rights also show a sharp rise throughout the covered period as well, mainly due to the presence of large demonstrations for indigenous and racial rights, women’s rights, freedom of press/speech, and the right to the commons. In recent years, a number of radical right groups have also protested against minorities, for patriotic matters, and for personal freedoms (e.g., refusing to stay home or to wear

masks during the COVID-19 pandemic). Global-justice related protests increase in the period, but at a more moderate rate than the other categories, with a slowdown after the peak was reached in 2012–2013. The following sections of the book present details on each of these main areas of grievances/demands.

3 GRIEVANCES/DEMANDS ON FAILURE OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Our study shows the most consistent reason for people around the world to protest is the perceived failure of democracies. About 54% of all protests considered between 2006 and 2020 (a total of 1503 protest events overall) relate to a failure of political representation and of political systems. This is the case not only in countries with autocratic governments, or in low-income countries, where 53% of protests were due to a failure of government to provide needed services, justice, and accountability, but also in high-income countries, where more than 48% of protests were related to a failure of political representation, as well as in over 61% of the protests in upper-middle-income countries (Fig. 3).

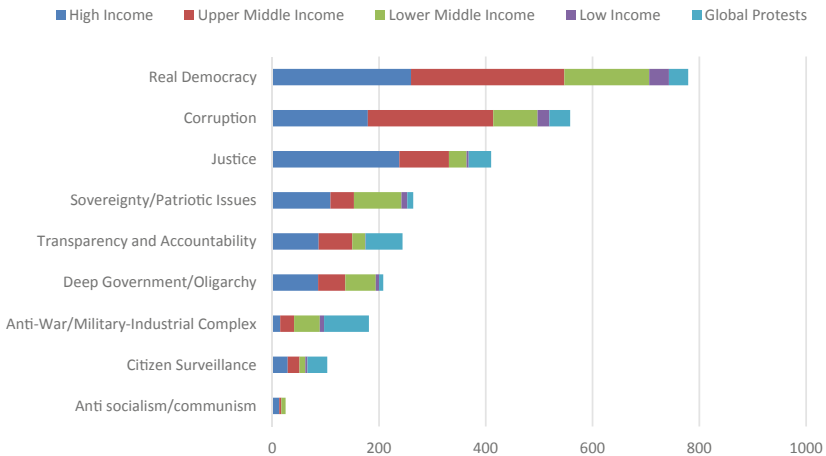


Fig. 3 Protests failures of political representation/political systems by income group 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

Formal representative democracies are perceived around the world as having served the elites instead of the people. A deep crisis in political representation is felt and articulated even by average citizens (e.g., the middle classes) who do not consider themselves social or political activists (Puschra & Burke, 2013).

Table 4, Figs. 4 and 5 present key issues in the category of failure of political representation and political systems.⁴ According to our analysis, such protests were more prevalent in Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, and North America.

The main reasons why people protest about a failure of political representation and political systems are:

3.1 *Real Democracy*

This is the largest demand from around the world, present in nearly 28% of all protests counted and the single most prevalent protest issue to emerge from the study, as it is an issue in 779 protests. This kind of protest is understood to be based on the desire for a democratic society that responds to the needs of people, in which people participate directly in the decisions affecting their lives, as counterposed to a formal, representative democracy, that is perceived as often not respecting the “one person, one vote” rule, but instead to have been distorted to serve the interests of the elites and the powerful (Ranci re, 2006). A typical example was the call for United States democracy to respond to Main Street instead of Wall Street after the 2008 financial crisis. Protests for real democracy exist in all regions and country-income groups. The regions with a higher prevalence of this category of protest are Europe and Central Asia (e.g., Belarus, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom), Latin America and the Caribbean (e.g., Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile,

⁴ Note that this table includes all instances of a demand or grievance. A protest may have more than one grievance/demand, given that demonstrators often focus on several issues (e.g., they may demonstrate against corruption and lack of transparency, while also calling for real democracy) for this reason the number of demands and grievances is larger than the total number of protests presented in earlier tables counting protest events. Therefore when this study asserts, for example, that corruption is a causal factor in 20% of all protest events, this does not mean that all other causes are to be found in the remaining 80%.

Table 4 Protests against the failure of political representation/political systems by region, 2006–2020

<i>Grievance/demand</i>	<i>East Asia & Pacific</i>	<i>Europe Central Asia</i>	<i>Latin America Caribbean</i>	<i>Middle East & N. Africa</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>South Asia</i>	<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Total</i>
Real democracy	111	238	108	75	67	14	130	36	779
Corruption	118	161	62	45	60	15	58	39	558
Justice	55	115	57	10	108	3	20	42	410
Sovereignty/patriotic issues	23	95	35	19	21	11	49	11	264
Transparency and accountability	40	41	22	3	47	3	19	69	244
Deep government /oligarchy	11	76	48	11	21	1	32	8	208
Anti-war/military-industrial complex	19	8	20	21	8	3	18	84	181
Citizen surveillance	5	30	14	2	7	0	8	37	103
Anti-socialism/anti-communism	0	7	10	0	6	2	0	0	25
Total	382	771	376	186	345	52	334	326	1503

Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

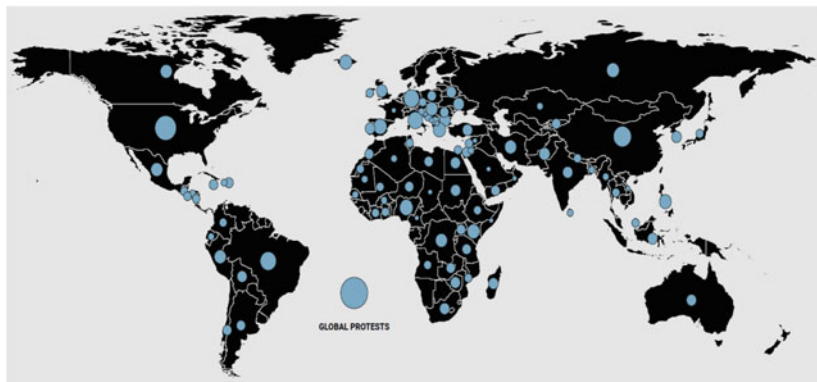


Fig. 4 Map of protests on failure of political representation and political systems, 2006–2020 (Source <https://worldprotests.org/>)

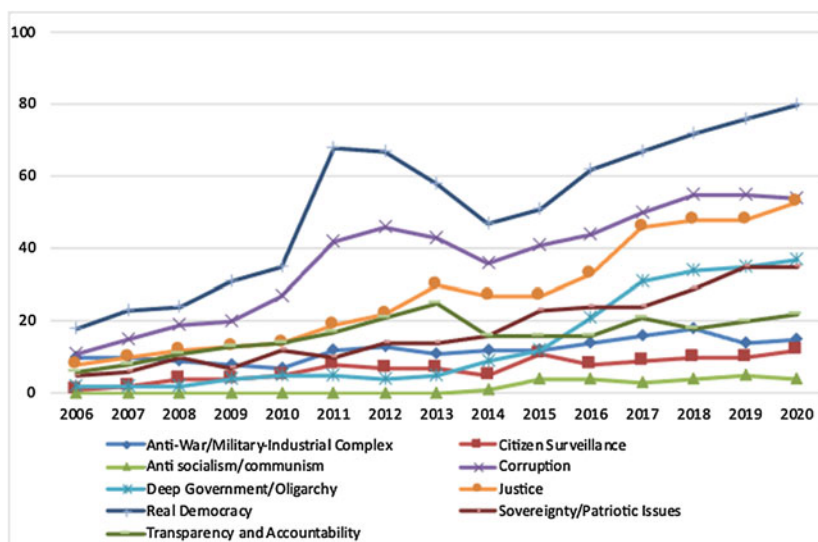


Fig. 5 Grievances/demands arising from the failure of political representation/systems by year, 2006–2020 (Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Peru), East Asia and the Pacific (e.g., Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand), North America (Canada, Mexico, and the United States), and Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe). This issue was particularly relevant in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region at the time of the Arab Spring (e.g., Egypt and Tunisia) and later (e.g., in Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco).

3.2 *Corruption*

Opposition to corruption is behind 20% of protests globally, with 558 events counted. Protests against corruption are often sparked by prior complaints over poorly delivered public services in health, transportation, education, and security, as exemplified by the massive 2013 anti-corruption protests in Brazil, which began as protests against rising bus fares. Similar protests are to be found in many other countries (e.g., also Egypt, Haiti, Iran, Tunisia, Turkey, and Yemen). A large number of protests are led by outraged citizens denouncing private-sector payouts to politicians, tax fraud, manipulation of policies in the interests of the privileged (e.g., Algeria, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, United States, and Zimbabwe). Contrary to public perceptions, corruption is not an issue of lower-income countries alone. Corruption is behind 16% of protests in high-income countries, 24% in middle-income countries and 18% in low-income countries. More on protests against corruption can be found in Section 3 in Chapter 3.

3.3 *Justice*

Justice, or failure to receive justice from the legal system (not conceptual kinds of justice, such as “environmental justice” or “economic justice”), is a cause of 14% of all protests, with 410 protests counted overall. An example can be found in the actions by “hacktivists” (digital activists) affiliated with Anonymous challenging unwilling state authorities to uphold laws against rape, child pornography and police violence or face public

exposure of the perpetrators' identities (e.g., in Canada and the United States). Other examples are finance activists asking for reparations for people who lost their savings due to banking crises (e.g., Italy and Spain) and solidarity marches with victims wanting justice from the legal system in case of house evictions, rape and others (e.g., Chad, Mexico, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom).

3.4 *Sovereignty and Patriotic Issues*

Sovereignty and patriotic issues appear in 9% (264) of protests at both extremes of the political spectrum. In recent years, patriotic matters have been elevated by right-wing parties and groups (e.g., in Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Serbia, the United Kingdom, and the United States); in Germany and Italy, for example, far-right nationalist groups demonstrated against an “open door” policy for Muslim immigrants and refugees. Sovereignty is also an ongoing issue for progressive protestors demanding that big powers stop interfering in national policy-making in developing countries (e.g., Ecuador, Ghana, Philippines, and Vietnam) and in indigenous peoples' matters (e.g., Brazil, Canada, Peru, and the United States). Finally, sovereignty is a main claim of territories/areas demanding independence (e.g., Catalonia, Hong Kong, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Tibet, and Western Sahara). This is further developed in Section 1 in Chapter 3.

3.5 *Transparency and Accountability*

Transparency and accountability are demands that lie behind nearly 9% of protest events worldwide, in 244 protests. This demand often focuses on policies perceived as not serving the majority of citizens (e.g., Australia, Greece, Iceland, Israel, and Spain). There are also many protests against failed transparency and accountability in developing countries when governments adopt regressive tax policies and public service reforms (e.g., Brazil, Colombia, Kenya, Philippines, and Thailand). This demand also appears in protests about election results perceived as fraud (e.g., Bolivia, Indonesia, South Korea, and the United States). Protests on transparency and accountability are frequently linked to corruption claims.

3.6 *A “Deep Government”/Oligarchy*

A “deep government” or oligarchy that manipulates policy-making is a cause of more than 7% of all protests (208 protests counted). Claims of an oligarchy secretly dominating the government is common among both left-wing and radical right-wing groups. Examples include progressive protests against the policies of autocratic leaders (e.g., in Belarus, Brazil, Italy, Lebanon, Russia, Turkey, and Uganda) as well as radical right protests against a supposed “deep government” that impedes advancement of the far right agenda (e.g. in Germany, Poland, and the United States).

3.7 *Anti-war Protests/Anti Military-Industrial Complex*

Anti-war protests and those against the military-industrial complex are a factor in more than 6% of protests, with 181 episodes counted overall. Protests by global networks working against war make most of the demonstrations, with most protests focusing on the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. Other protests focused on denouncing military/police abuses (e.g., Democratic Republic of Congo, Mexico, Sudan, and the United States), national military influence on governments (e.g. Bolivia and Brazil), foreign powers’ military intervention (e.g., Mali and Niger), and against United States military bases (e.g., Ghana and Japan). A number of nationally-coordinated anti-war/military protests also occurred in the South Asia/Pacific region (e.g., Myanmar and Philippines).

3.8 *Citizen Surveillance*

Surveillance of citizens by governments and of workers by corporations is a cause of 3% of all protests, with 103 episodes counted. Many protests—especially since the Manning/Wikileaks 2011 leak of United States diplomatic cables and intensifying with the 2013 case of surveillance whistleblower Edward Snowden—have focused on the actions of the United States. In other countries there have been protests against surveillance by national governments (e.g., Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Morocco, Netherlands, Philippines, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam) for spying on citizens and restricting the Internet. Germany, for instance, has experienced giant protests against regulation of social media and the Internet.

3.9 *Anti-socialism and Anti-communism*

This appears in less than 1% of protests (25) in the period 2006–2020. In recent times, anti-socialism and anti-communism have been linked to radical right protests in high-income countries (e.g., Germany and the United States), to opposition movements against Latin American left-leaning governments (e.g., in Bolivia and Ecuador) and to some conservative Muslim protests (e.g., Bangladesh).

4 GRIEVANCES/DEMANDS ON ECONOMIC JUSTICE/ANTI-AUSTERITY

The cluster of issues related broadly to demands for economic justice, including anti-austerity grievances, are the second most common reason why people around the world protest. Overall, 1484 protests in the period 2006–2020, or nearly 53% of total protests counted in the study, reflect people’s outrage at economic and social public policy failures and a perceived lack of broad-based development. Protestors have evinced strong demands for jobs and better living and working conditions, quality public services for all, tax and fiscal justice, equitable land and pension reforms, as well as affordable food, fuel and other goods (Fig. 6). Protests have accelerated because of the contraction of decent jobs as a result of the global crisis and the extension of austerity measures worldwide since 2010, affecting nearly four billion people—half of the world population—in 2017. Recently, the jobs crisis has been accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in more protests despite lockdowns. The majority of global protests for economic justice and against austerity have manifested people’s indignation at the gross inequalities between ordinary communities and rich individuals/corporations. The idea of the “1% versus the 99%,” which emerged a decade earlier during the United States protests over the 2008 financial and economic crisis, have quickly spread around the world, feeding earlier grievances against elites writing of the rules and manipulating public policies in their favor, while the majority of citizens continue to endure low living standards.

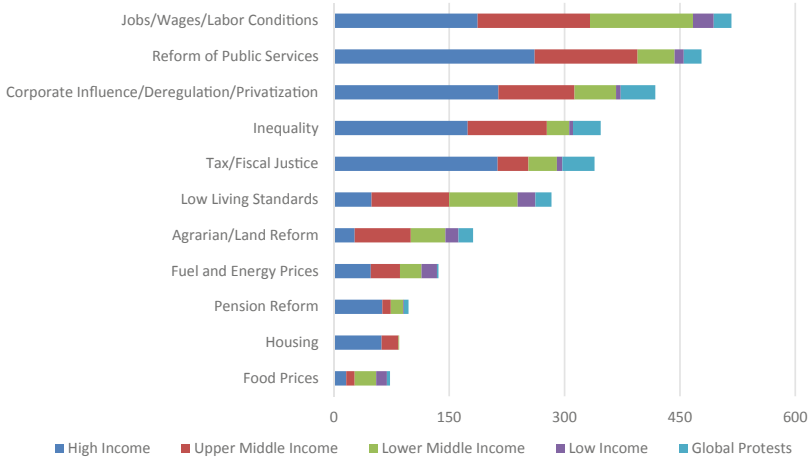


Fig. 6 Protests for economic justice/against austerity by income group, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

Table 5, Figs. 7 and 8 present key issues in the category of protests for economic justice and against austerity cuts.⁵ In general, such protests are more prevalent in Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, and North America. Contrary to public perceptions, austerity measures are not limited to Europe: since 2010, many of the principal adjustment cuts/reforms have featured most prominently in developing countries (Ortiz & Cummins, 2019) and this is well reflected in our mapping of global protests.

The main reasons why people protest about economic justice, including anti-austerity demands, are:

⁵ Note that this table includes all instances of a demand or grievance. appears in a protest. A protest may have more than one grievance/demand given that demonstrators often focus on several issues (e.g., they may be demonstrating against the reform of public services, denouncing corporate influence, and complaining about low incomes). For this reason the number of demands and grievances is larger than the total number of protests presented in earlier tables counting protests as separate events. Therefore when this study asserts, for example, that reform of public services is a causal factor in 17% of all protest events, this does not mean that all other causes are to be found in the remaining 83%.

Table 5 Protests for economic justice/against austerity by country region, 2006–2020

<i>Grievance/demand</i>	<i>East Asia & Pacific</i>	<i>Europe Central Asia</i>	<i>Latin America Caribbean</i>	<i>Middle East & N. Africa</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>South Asia</i>	<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Total</i>
Jobs/wages/labor conditions	61	120	73	67	43	16	114	23	517
Reform of public services	62	184	76	13	62	4	54	23	478
Corporate influence/ deregulation/privatization	51	151	93	4	54	4	16	45	418
Inequality	31	154	34	30	32	4	26	36	347
Tax/fiscal justice	13	186	30	7	28	3	30	42	339
Low living standards	31	45	82	28	6	6	64	21	283
Agrarian/land reform	29	8	63	6	17	15	24	19	181
Fuel and energy prices	11	26	24	16	23	6	28	2	136
Pension reform	2	39	29	0	17	2	2	6	97
Housing	19	43	5	0	16	0	2	0	85
Food prices	1	10	13	5	6	3	31	4	73
Total	188	662	373	96	199	43	223	175	1484

Source: Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

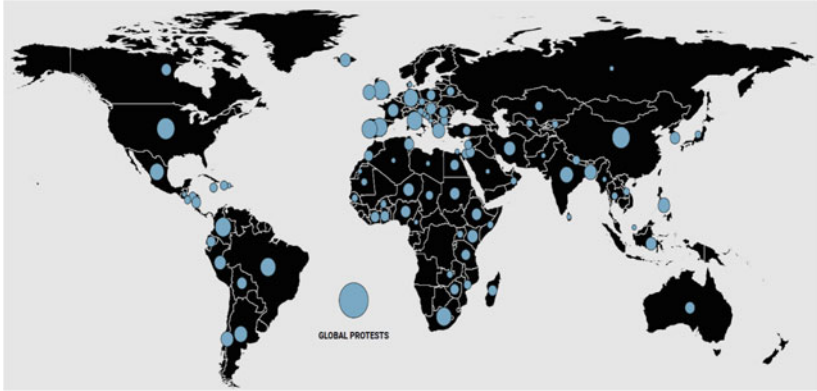


Fig. 7 Map of protests on economic justice and anti-austerity, 2006–2020 (Source <https://worldprotests.org/>)

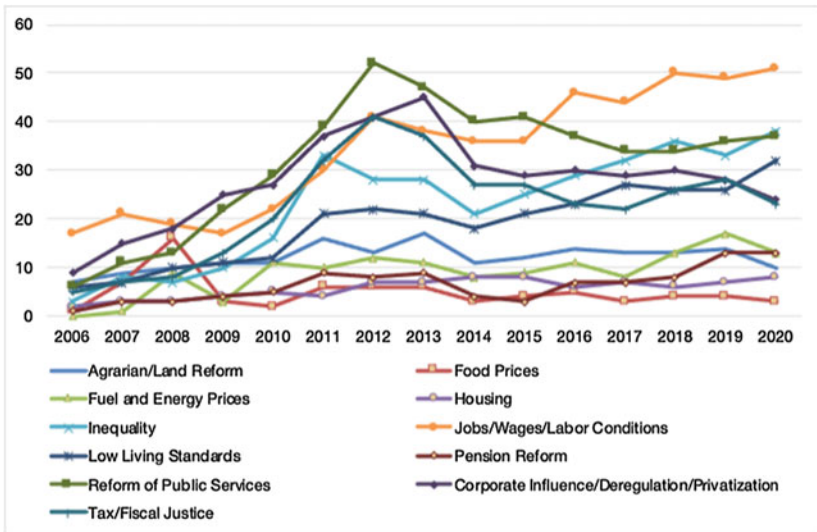


Fig. 8 Grievances/demands on economic justice/against austerity by year, 2006–2020 (Source Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

4.1 *Jobs, Higher Wages and Labor Conditions*

This is the most prevalent cause of economic and social-justice-related protests, appearing in 517 protest events in all regions, or in 18.4% of the total number of protests in the world, and reflecting the major jobs crisis that occurred before, during, and after the world financial and economic crisis of 2008, as well as the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Protests demanding decent jobs occur virtually in all countries. Many national protests also have a specific focus on wages and better working conditions, as exemplified by the protests in Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Egypt, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Jordan, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

4.2 *Reform of Public Services*

Reform of public services is a causal factor in 17% of all protest events counted—a total of 478 protests refer to reforms of education, health, water, and public transport, among others. Citizens marched against full and partial privatization, rationalization of services, budget cuts, cost-recovery measures, and other reforms that were perceived as reducing the quality and quantity of public services. Protests existed before the 2008 global financial crisis (e.g., in Australia, Chile, Egypt, Malaysia, and South Africa) but spiraled after 2010 with the adoption of austerity measures not only in Europe (e.g. France, Greece, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom) but in a majority of developing countries (e.g., Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Sudan, Thailand and Turkey).

4.3 *Corporate Influence/Deregulation/Privatization*

Corporate influence, deregulation, and privatization are issues present in 15% of protests worldwide (418 events) in the period 2006–2020. Protestors opposed policies that put the private interests of corporations and financial and other elites ahead of the rest of the population. In some developing countries, decades-long pressure from IFIs like the IMF and

the World Bank has resulted in deregulation and privatization in countries that are not able to deliver adequate services for their own people. For example, privatization was a key grievance in protests in Chile in the decade 2010–2020, as well as in Brazil, France, Greece, and Iceland. Protests against the privatization of electricity drew thousands into the streets in Australia in 2008 and in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. In 2013 in Delhi, India, 100,000 farmers and activists protested against land acquisition for private profit. In recent years, protestors have demanded the regulation of platform services (e.g., UBER, food delivery, etc.) in many countries, such as Colombia, Spain and the United States.

4.4 *Inequality*

More than 12% of the world’s protests (347 protests) denounced inequalities in income, wealth and influence on policy-making and questioned democratic systems that were allowing rent-seeking by elites and corporations. The Occupy movement powerfully mobilized citizens with slogans such as “we are the 99%” and middle classes around the world demonstrated actively against government policy decisions that benefit the elites instead of the majority. In the Arab Spring, as well as in the more recent Latin American Spring, inequality ranked high amongst the grievances of demonstrators. People protested against inequality in countries like Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Egypt, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and the United States. More on inequality and protests can be found in Section 2 in Chapter 3.

4.5 *Tax/Fiscal Justice*

Tax/Fiscal justice claims are also found in 12% of events worldwide, specifically in 339 protests. Protests’ typical issues were focused on inadequate national taxation as well as a lack of international tax cooperation, both of which allow for limited wealth taxation and tax evasion that benefits the wealthy instead of the majority of citizens. Protests demanded: more income and wealth taxation (e.g., Argentina, Brazil, Kenya); that governments fight tax evasion and illicit financial flows (e.g. Czech Republic, Germany, Philippines, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the

United States); lower taxes/VAT on basic products that people consume (e.g., Iran, Portugal, and Uganda); that governments stop transfers to the financial and corporate sectors (e.g., Indonesia, Malaysia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States); improvement in inter-regional transfers (e.g. Greece, Italy, and Mexico); and adequate taxation of extractive resources (e.g. Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tanzania). The strength of the citizens' movements calling for governments to audit sovereign debts (e.g., Brazil, Ireland, Philippines, and Spain) and to repudiate nationalized private-sector debts must also be noted.

4.6 *Low Living Standards*

The issue of low living standards is raised in 10% of world protests (286 protests), and this is often linked to: protests against inequalities (e.g., Philippines, Tunisia, and the United States); demands for decent wages (e.g., Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, and the Philippines); demonstrations against austerity cuts (e.g., Bulgaria, Israel, Spain, United Kingdom); and protests against the rising prices of goods and services (e.g., Brazil, Burkina Faso, Haiti, India, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territory, and Romania). Low living standards are a grievance behind nearly all protests for social protection reforms, pension reforms (e.g., Egypt and Nicaragua) and the protests to demand higher social benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., Bulgaria, Chile, Lebanon, South Africa, and Spain).

4.7 *Agrarian/Land Reform*

Grievances/demands regarding agrarian or land reforms appear in 181 protest episodes (more than 6% of the world total) in the period 2006–2020. In most countries, protestors contested changes to land laws and other reforms resulting in the loss of livelihoods to farmers (e.g., Brazil, Colombia, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Mozambique, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, and Sudan). Examples include: India, where landless farmers staged a 600-km march for land rights; China, where protesters demanded the end of land-grabbing and the protection of grasslands; and Sudan, where there have been violent police backlashes against protests that denounced land-grabbing—selling public land to foreign investors. In Colombia and Mexico, small farmers are protesting

the withdrawal of agricultural subsidies and/or competition of agricultural imports because of free-trade agreements or conditions set for loans from the IFIs.

4.8 *Fuel and Energy Prices*

The removal or phasing out of fuel and energy subsidies—an element of fiscal austerity—and the resulting unaffordable energy prices have sparked 5% of protests in 136 countries (e.g., Algeria, Cameroon, Chile, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Peru, Sudan, and Uganda). While the removal of fuel subsidies can have positive environmental externalities when polluters are no longer subsidized,⁶ a main problem is the inadequate compensation to the population. Energy and transport prices increase, resulting in higher prices for food and other basic needs of the population, normally living on low incomes in developing countries (Ortiz & Cummins, 2019). Often the IFIs recommend a small safety net targeted to the poorest—but this policy is insufficient, as it leaves the majority of the population worse off. Consider the cases of Nigeria, Kyrgyzstan, and Ecuador. With the majority of Nigeria’s population living on less than 2 dollars per day, cheap petrol is viewed by many as the only tangible benefit they receive from the state, hence the massive protests since 2012 when Minister of Finance Okonjo Iweala removed a fuel subsidy that kept food and transportation costs low. In Kyrgyzstan in 2010, the price of heating rose by 400% and electricity by 170%: subsequent demonstrations ended in violent riots and the resignation of President Bakiyev. In Ecuador in 2019, after large riots, the government fled from the capital and had to stop a loan with the IMF that had proposed the cuts to energy subsidies and other reforms with negative social impacts.

4.9 *Pension Reforms*

Opposition to pension reforms is behind 3.5% of protests globally, with 97 events counted in the period 2006–2020. The reform of social security and pension systems for cost-saving purposes is a main austerity measure

⁶ See for example Oosterhuis, F. and Umpfenbach, K. 2014. “Energy Subsidies”, in: Oosterhuis and ten Brink (eds.): *Paying The Polluter—Environmentally Harmful Subsidies and their Reform*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

(e.g., raising contribution rates, increasing eligibility periods, prolonging the retirement age, and/or lowering benefits). These reforms have increased since 2010 in many European countries due to austerity pressures, resulting in widespread protests (e.g., France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and the United Kingdom). A number of these protests were successful—in Latvia, Portugal and Romania, the national justice courts determined that the austerity adjustments were unlawful and pensioners were given back their earlier pensions. Developing countries have also experienced important protests against pension reforms, as the IFIs have generally proposed reforms more radical in nature, involving the privatization of pension systems despite the lack of evidence that private pension systems work better than public systems (e.g., Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, and Ukraine); in fact, a majority of countries have reversed pension privatization (ILO, 2017).

4.10 *Housing*

The right to an affordable decent home has been at the center of 85 protests around the world (in 3% of the protests studied), particularly after the housing bubble and the subsequent eviction of families unable to pay mortgages (e.g., Canada, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States). In Germany, protestors complained about rising prices resulting from the gentrification of city centers. Demands for public support for affordable housing have also profiled high in protests in Brazil, Chile, China, Philippines, and South Africa.

4.11 *Food Prices*

Since 2007–2008, as international food prices have spiked to historic highs, with local food prices at near record levels in many countries, food-prices-related protests have represented more than 1% of world protests (73 protests). Food protests have an inverse relation with income levels, as they are virtually absent from high-income countries and frequent in developing countries such as Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon,

Egypt, Ethiopia, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Peru, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Uzbekistan. Many of these food protests have ended in riots and revolts.

5 GRIEVANCES/DEMANDS ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Civil rights are a central issue in protest movements. Protests asserting peoples' rights occur in 1360 protests or 48% of all protests in the period 2006–2020, in issues such as ethnic and racial justice, rights to the commons, freedom of assembly and speech, women's rights, labor rights, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered (LGBT) and sexual rights, immigrants' rights, personal freedoms, prisoners' rights, and freedom of religion (Fig. 9). A small number (7% of total protests) have sought to deny rights or to reject the enjoyment of rights by specific groups of people, for example immigrants or racial minorities; this is linked to the rise of the radical right, as will be explained later in this study. Note that people's rights include also economic and social rights included in other

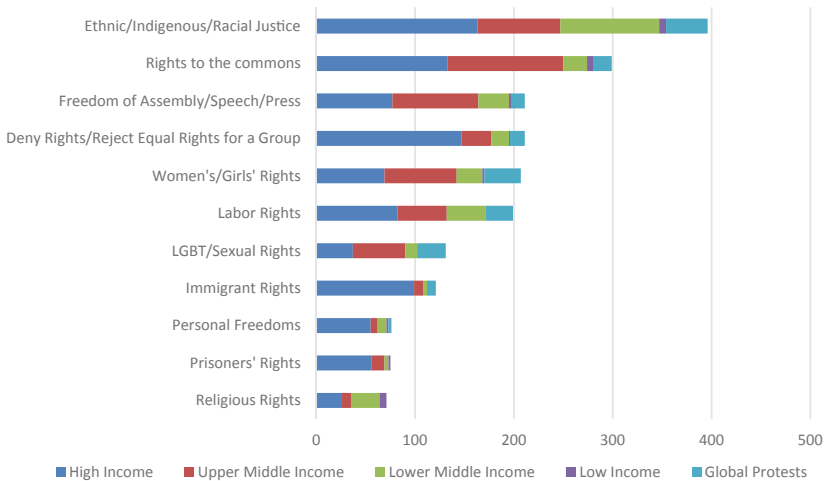


Fig. 9 Protest for civil rights by country income group, 2006–2020 (Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

sections (e.g., the right to education, the right to health, the rights to social security, the right to housing etc.).

Table 6, Figs. 10 and 11 present key issues in this category of protests civil rights.⁷ Generally, these protests are more prevalent in Europe and Central Asia, as well as in North America. While the rights agenda appears more developed in higher-income countries, it is also evolving fast in Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, and other world regions.

The main reasons why people protest about civil rights are:

5.1 *Ethnic/Indigenous/Racial Justice*

The greatest number of protests in the category of rights (396 protests, or 14% of the total) relate to issues of ethnic, indigenous, or racial justice. Perhaps the most widespread protests are against racism and demanding racial justice, like the #BlackLivesMatter movement started in the United States and spread internationally (e.g., Australia, Canada, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Jamaica, Portugal, and the United Kingdom). Protestors also demonstrate for indigenous rights and racial equality (e.g., Canada, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, India, Kosovo, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mexico, Nepal, the United States, and Yemen). Sometimes indigenous peoples stand up against infrastructure projects or extractive industries in their native areas that would destroy their environment (e.g., Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, and Tanzania). But indigenous peoples do not only demonstrate for specific issues affecting their territories, they also stand up for macropolicies, such as for the legitimate election results in Bolivia, for reforming the justice system in Cameroon, for agrarian/land reform in Colombia, against a loan with the IMF in Ecuador, for federalism in Nepal and, importantly, opposing

⁷ Note that this table includes all instances in which a demand or grievance appears in a protest. A protest may have more than one grievance/demand given that demonstrators often focus on several issues (e.g., may be demonstrating for women's rights or LGBT and sexual rights). For this reason the number of demands and grievances is larger than the total number of protests presented in earlier tables counting protests as separate events.. Therefore when this study asserts, for example, that women's and girls' rights constitute a causal factor in 7% of all protest events, this does not mean that all other causes are to be found in the remaining 93%.

Table 6 Protests for civil rights by region, 2006–2020

<i>Grievance/demand</i>	<i>East Asia & Pacific</i>	<i>Europe Central Asia</i>	<i>Latin America Caribbean</i>	<i>Middle East & N. Africa</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>South Asia</i>	<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Total</i>
Ethnic/indigenous/racial justice	26	56	64	38	103	14	53	42	396
Right to the commons	4	64	112	9	67	0	24	19	299
Deny rights to groups	14	120	9	7	36	8	2	15	211
Freedom of assembly/speech/press	47	66	25	22	25	1	11	14	211
Women's/girls' rights	29	33	19	58	14	6	11	37	207
Labor rights	50	43	20	7	41	1	9	28	199
LGBT/sexual rights	35	19	20	13	13	0	2	29	131
Immigrant rights	22	46	0	1	40	2	1	9	121
Personal freedoms	12	33	8	0	16	1	3	3	76
Prisoners' rights	8	22	14	19	10	0	2	0	75
Religious rights	5	10	0	28	9	9	10	0	71
Total	212	336	218	157	235	20	73	139	1360

Source: Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

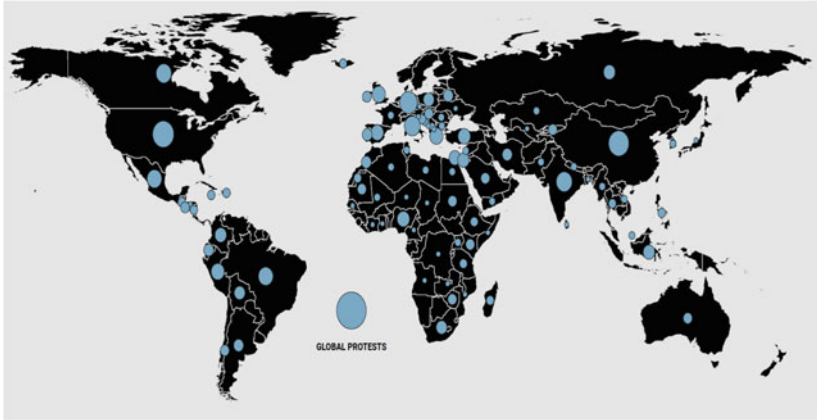


Fig. 10 Map of protests on civil rights, 2006–2020 (Source <https://worldprotests.org/>)

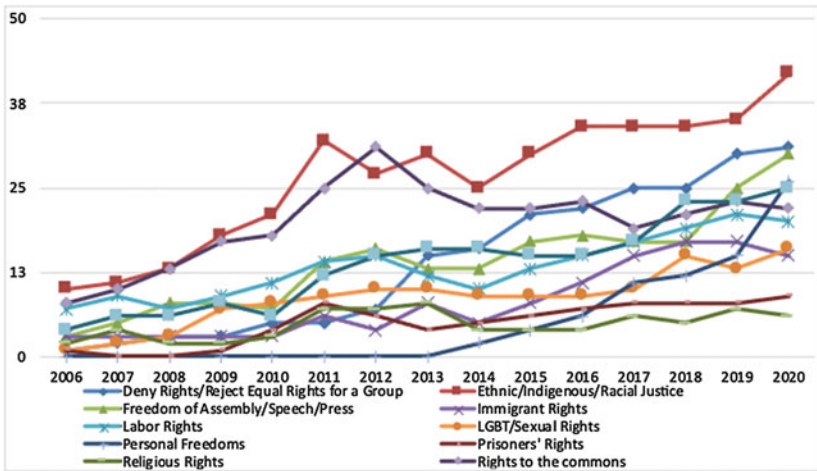


Fig. 11 Grievances/demands on civil rights by Year, 2006–2020 (Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

genocide against indigenous populations resulting from the lack of health support during the COVID-19 pandemic such as in Brazil. Sometimes protests are for short/medium-term issues, but more often are part of long-term struggles, such as in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, or in Tibet.

5.2 *Right to the Commons*

Assertion of rights to the commons⁸ (digital, land/water, cultural, or atmospheric) is behind 10% of surveyed protests (299 protests) (e.g., Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Demonstrations for the commons—from Occupy Wall Street in the United States to the “water wars” in Bolivia and Brazil—are against private management of public goods and generally demand that shared resources be managed at the local level. There are also protests to preserve and access the global commons, which is the driver of 19% of global protests, especially those regarding the Internet and protection of the climate and atmosphere. Examples include the Anonymous (a global hacktivist collective/movement) actions against censorship and anti-citizen surveillance.

5.3 *Deny Rights to Groups*

Linked to the rise of the radical right, a recent development is the increase in demonstrations against the rights of women, minorities and ethnic groups. Our study detected 211 such protests (7.5% of the total number of protests). For instance, anti-immigrant white-supremacist protests in Australia, Canada, Germany, and the United States; against gays or same-sex marriage in France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain; or against indigenous peoples rights in Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and El Salvador. In Bulgaria and Hungary, people took to the streets against refugees and against the Roma; in Mali, against women’s rights; in Singapore, against immigrants; in Turkey, against Christians. In India, “cow vigilantes” and sympathizers

⁸ According to Wikipedia (accessed January 2021), the commons are the cultural and natural resources accessible to all members of a society, including natural materials such as air, water, and a habitable earth; these resources are held in common, not owned privately. As part of culture, many consider Internet/digital issues a common.

have been protesting the spread of Muslims and communists. This is further developed in Section 1 in Chapter 3.

5.4 *Freedom of Assembly/Speech/Press*

Freedom of assembly, speech, and the press is a concern in 7.5% of protests (in 211 protests). Key examples are Belarus and China, where the extension of these freedoms has been a main cause of demonstrations. The right to assemble has also been central in countries like Uganda, where demonstrations are not allowed, so people had to “walk to work” and “walk to pray” as a proxy for an explicit demonstration. People have also rallied for the freedom of expression, for instance in France after the Charlie Hebdo attack. Freedom of speech and teaching has also been an important concern in countries such as Hungary, India, Iran, Madagascar, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Turkey, and Zimbabwe. A notable case involving freedom of speech/media has been the arrest of Julian Assange in the United Kingdom. Given the large number of journalists killed when reporting hot issues, there have been demonstrations for freedom of press and against the harassment of reporters in Greece, Guatemala, Italy, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, and the Philippines.

5.5 *Women’s/Girls’ Rights*

Women’s and girls’ rights were core to 207 protests or 7.4% of the world’s protests. A key protest for women’s rights was the #MeToo movement with multiple rallies and action days around the world, that included large protests against femicide (homicide against women) and rape, from Chad to the United States. In Latin America, the #NiUnaMenos equivalent also rallied against machismo, against patriarchal societies, and against the impunity of violence against women. Prior to #MeToo, there were also large demonstrations for gender equality, such as in Chile, China, India, Iraq, Israel, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Tunisia, and at World Social Forums (WSF). The case of FEMEN must be noted: FEMEN is an international women’s movement of topless female activists whose breasts are painted with slogans to attract people’s attention. A number of protests were for and against abortion, a heated topic (e.g., Argentina and Poland). More on protests for women’s/girls’ rights can be found in Section 4 in Chapter 3.

5.6 *Labor Rights*

Beyond the protests regarding economic justice, protests on specific labor rights were a concern in 7.1% of protests (199 protests). Protests for labor rights had a higher occurrence in the East Asia Pacific region (e.g., China, Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam) where economic growth in recent years has not been synonymous with the extension of labor rights or even the right to unionize/to free associate. Labor rights protests are also prevalent in Europe and Central Asia and in North America; other countries have also experienced protests for labor rights (e.g., Colombia, Mexico, and Pakistan).

5.7 *LGBT/Sexual Rights*

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered and sexual rights protests made up 4.7% of the world's protests in the period 2006–2020. These rallies have been prevalent in most world regions, often to protest the discrimination against and oppression of LGBT people in specific countries, as well as having been a key component of global protests.

5.8 *Immigrants' Rights*

Demonstrations supporting immigrants' rights appear in 4.3% of the surveyed episodes, in 121 protests mostly in the countries receiving migrants in Europe, North America, and East Asia. Note that this study does not discriminate between protests regarding internal migrants (e.g., China) or international migrants (e.g., Australia, Europe, and the United States).

5.9 *Personal Freedoms*

Protests on personal freedoms are a new, emerging category, mentioned in 3% of protests (76 events). It has become especially prevalent in rallies against the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, with demonstrators objecting to stay at home orders (lockdowns) or to wearing masks, for example such as in Argentina, Australia, Chile, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. A rise in this type of protest in recent years is linked to the rise of populism and the radical right. In some cases, such as in Bolivia and the United States, demonstrators

linked alleged fraud in election results with a perceived attack on their personal freedoms. However, in some other countries people protested because of more direct attacks, for instance, when street food vendors in Hong Kong were removed from the street by force, or when people in El Salvador demonstrated against gang violence making their lives unlivable. This is further developed in Section 1 in Chapter 3.

5.10 *Prisoners' Rights*

Protests and demonstrations regarding prisoners' rights and the fair treatment of prisoners represent just over nearly 3% of the world's protests (75 protests). Inhumane conditions have been denounced by prisoners in countries such as Bolivia and Brazil. These protests are often disturbingly graphic, as prisoners resort to extreme means such as hunger strikes (e.g., Occupied Palestinian Territory) or sewing their own lips (e.g., Kyrgyzstan) in order to attract media attention and to publicize their cause.

5.11 *Religious Rights*

Protests related to religion account for less than 3% of all protests (71 events), but this issue has been a driver of protests in the Middle East/North Africa region, reflecting the demands of the Arab Spring. Multiple groups dedicated to this issue are found in countries with an official religion (e.g., Egypt, Morocco, and Turkey). Religious rights influenced protests that were also held in other countries (e.g., Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, France, India, Indonesia, Israel, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Turkey, and Vietnam).

6 GRIEVANCES/DEMANDS FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE

Protests for global justice have demanded internationally concerted action on issues such as climate change, globalization, and sustainable development. Demonstrators have denounced the role of powerful countries and international institutions (such as the IFIs and the G20) in setting global norms and policies undemocratically, resulting in detrimental impacts on people and on the planet. Demonstrators have also denounced how the global economic system is unfair and keeps developing countries poor and underdeveloped. Protestors have stood up against globalization and free

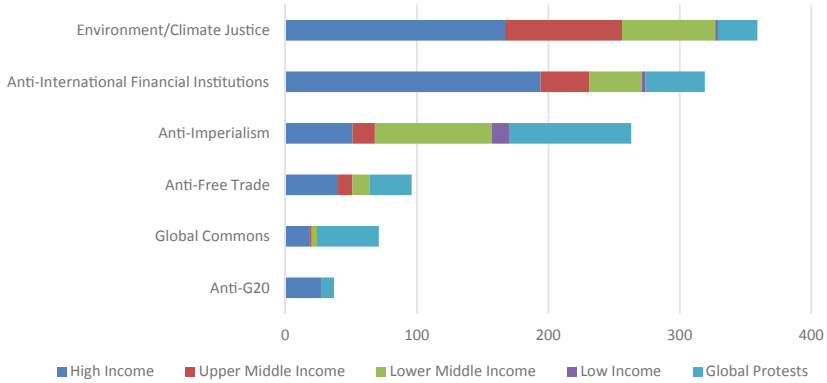


Fig. 12 Protest for global justice by country income group, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

trade, and against the World Bank, the IMF and other major institutions that are perceived to put corporate interests ahead of developing nations, leading to rampant inequality (Stiglitz, 2017). While most protests tend to focus on domestic issues (Brancati, 2016), protests for global justice often rely on a global network, for example like the Occupy demonstrations held on 15 October 2011 in 950 cities in 82 countries under the title “United for #GlobalChange.” Protestors have proposed new policy agendas for a more fair global order. “A better world is possible” is the motto of the annual WSF, an alternative to the meetings of powerful CEOs and personalities at the annual World Economic Forum in Davos. More than 30% of all the protests considered in the study (897 events) in the period 2006–2020 include the global justice component as one of their main issues (Fig. 12).

Table 7 and Figs. 13 and 14 present the key issues in the category of protests on global justice and their occurrence in world regions.⁹ This

⁹ Note that this table includes all instances in which a demand or grievance appears in a protest. A protest may have more than one grievance/demand given that demonstrators often focus on several issues (e.g., they may be demonstrating against the IFIs and also against imperialism). For this reason the number of demands and grievances is larger than the total number of protests presented in earlier tables counting protests as separate events. Therefore when this study asserts, for example, that anti-imperialism is a causal

Table 7 Protests for global justice by region, 2006–2020

<i>Grievance/demand</i>	<i>East Asia & Pacific</i>	<i>Europe Central Asia</i>	<i>Latin America Caribbean</i>	<i>Middle East & N. Africa</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>South Asia</i>	<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Total</i>
Environment/climate justice	51	97	96	0	55	11	19	30	359
Anti-international financial institutions	2	185	39	22	11	3	12	45	319
Anti-imperialism	50	28	20	25	8	2	37	93	263
Anti-free trade	8	26	23	0	6	1	0	32	96
Global commons	2	0	4	0	18	0	0	47	71
Anti-G20	0	21	0	0	6	0	0	10	37
Total	323	532	362	184	334	34	129	363	897

Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

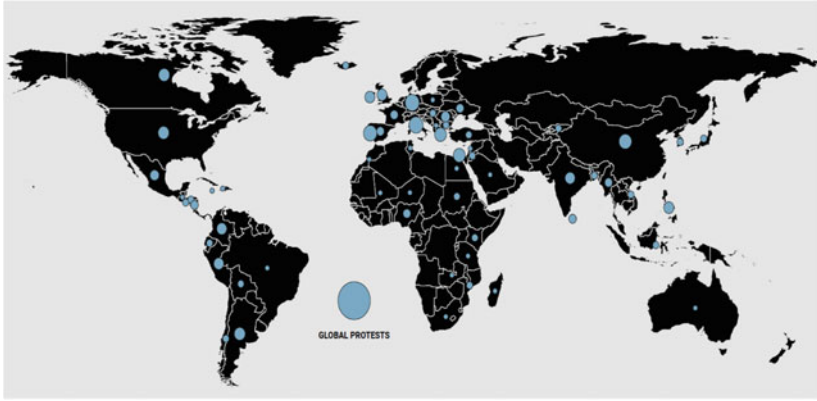


Fig. 13 Map of protests on global justice, 2006–2020 (Source <https://worldprotests.org/>)

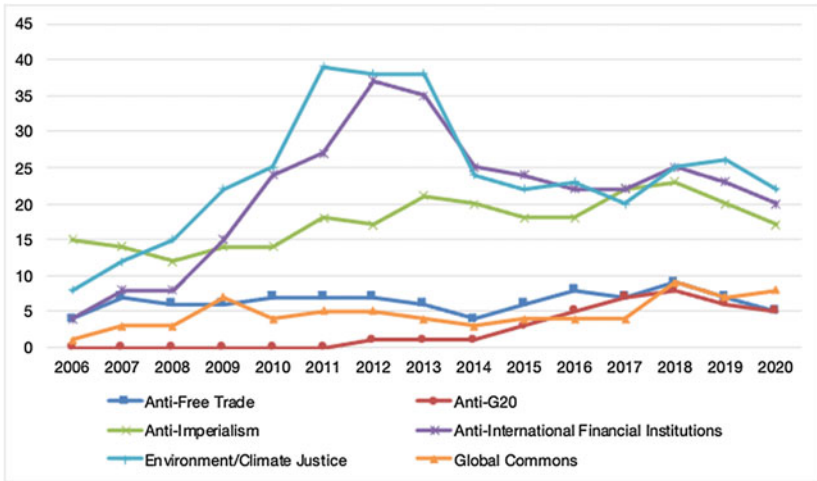


Fig. 14 Grievances/demands on global justice by year, 2006–2020 (Source Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

category of protests is more prevalent in Europe and Central Asia, North America, East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and of course in global protests.

The main reasons why people protest about global justice are:

6.1 *Environment/Climate Justice*

Environmental and climate justice, based on the historical responsibilities for climate change and calling for urgent action to redress climate change and protect the environment, is a cause of nearly 13% of all protests, with 359 protests counted overall. Demands for environmental justice come often from indigenous communities and countries in the Global South (e.g., Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, India, Mexico, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania), as well as from people living in Northern countries (e.g., France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Poland, Romania, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and at the global level (e.g., United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or UNFCCC, the WSFs). The WSFs frequently emphasize anti-nuclear protests, natural resource exploitation conflicts and the environmental impacts of infrastructure projects. Key examples are the protests organized by Extinction Rebellion, a decentralized, international and politically nonpartisan movement using nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience to persuade governments to act justly on the global climate and ecological emergency, as well as the School Strike for Climate movement led by youth activists such as Greta Thunberg.

6.2 *Anti-international Financial Institutions*

These are protests against the IMF, the World Bank, the European Central Bank, and other IFIs such as the regional development banks, representing 11.4% of all protests, with 319 events counted. These institutions are not democratic but take decisions behind closed doors that affect the lives of all citizens in a country, for instance, cutting wages, jobs, subsidies, and social benefits, or imposing labor and pension reforms with detrimental impacts on people, often abolishing democratically negotiated laws. As will be explained later in Section 11 (*Who Do Protesters*

factor in 9% of all protest events, this does not mean that all other causes are to be found in the remaining 91%.

Oppose?), the large majority of protests are against the IMF, followed by those against the European Central Bank—because of all of the European anti-austerity protests—and the World Bank. Protestors have decried policies and programs by the IFIs at the national level, and at the global level they demand the closure or reform of the IFIs.

6.3 *Anti-imperialism*

Anti-imperialism appears 263 times in the protests analyzed, representing 9.4% of total protests in the period 2006–2020. In this category are included protests that denounce the negative/oppressive influence of hegemonic states over less powerful countries and social groups. Most common are protests against foreign and economic policies of the United States of America (e.g., in Australia, Japan, Mexico, Philippines, South Africa, and also in the United States), protests against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Eastern Europe (e.g., Ukraine), as well as protests denouncing either Chinese (e.g., in Vietnam) or Israeli (e.g., in the Middle East) foreign policy.

6.4 *Anti-free Trade*

Opposition to free trade agreements is behind 3% of protests globally, with 96 events counted. Free trade deals are feared to undermine democracy and lower food safety, environmental, and labor standards. “People over profits” has been a motto of protests against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), against the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and against African countries ‘economic partnerships with the European Union. The effects of free trade agreements are at the core of protests involving food issues in Latin America and Asia (e.g., Mexico, Peru, and South Korea), as often local small businesses cannot compete with large international corporations; for example, the protests in India against the authorization given to Walmart and Tesco to conduct business in that country, or the protests by farmers and indigenous communities in Mexico and Peru because of the low prices paid for their corn and potatoes due to imported cheaper agrobusiness crops because of free trade agreements.

6.5 *Global Commons*

Protesting the lack of good governance of the global commons, global public goods that exceed the bounds of national governments and to which all countries and peoples have rights, is an emerging cause of protest, representing 2.5% of all protests, with 71 events counted. Demonstrations related to Internet governance occur at both the national (e.g., Argentina, Germany, and Poland) and global levels, in which movements such as Anonymous, the various national Pirate Parties and organized opposition to the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement have a pivotal role in campaigning for an open Internet as part of the global commons. Protests relating to governance of the climate and biodiversity (e.g., the People’s Summit on Climate Change, the 2009 *Klimaforum*, held during the UN Conference of the Parties in Copenhagen, and the *Cúpula dos Povos* in the UN Rio+20 Conference of the various WSFs) are also a significant factor in advocacy for the global commons.

6.6 *Anti-G20*

Although the G20 was created in 1999 as a forum for finance ministers and central bankers, it was turned into a summit for heads of state with the financial crisis in 2008, when President Bush called the first G20 summit in Washington DC. From then on it has been a target of global protests whenever its meetings take place. There have been 15 Summits since 2008. Anti-G20 protests represent 1.3% of the total protests, with 37 events counted. Demonstrators complain about the lack of transparency and openness, limited disclosure of processes and policy documents, all prepared behind closed doors, to be implemented later by countries with little say when impacts are detrimental to their citizens.

7 WHO PROTESTS?

7.1 *Main Groups Leading Protests 2006–2020: From NGOs and Trade Unions to Hackers*

Traditionally, a number of activists have been the main agents for change. These include political parties, workers’ unions, NGOs/CSOs, faith groups, and social service agencies. These “traditional agents” remain key organizers and participants in many campaigns, demonstrations, strikes, occupations, marches, and rallies. They are the most well-prepared and

Table 8 Main groups leading protests 2006–2020

	2006–2010	2011–2015	2016–2020	Total
Non-governmental organizations/civil society organizations (NGOs/CSOs)	250	457	383	1090
Grassroots	132	331	497	960
Political parties/movements	159	289	388	836
Trade unions	145	259	273	677
Social movements	16	117	414	547
Students/youth	53	144	179	376
Indigenous groups	62	100	109	271
Unorganized workers	62	77	117	256
Religious groups	42	82	104	228
Ethnic/racial groups	9	43	123	175
Women/feminist groups	0	13	90	103
Hackers	11	30	23	64
Government officials	5	24	25	54
Employers organizations	4	4	26	34
Police/military/militia	1	8	23	32
Prisoners	1	3	5	9

Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

organized; for example, trade unions are democratically elected, federated at national and international levels, and are still the main force behind some of the largest protests.

Table 8 presents the main groups leading protests in the period 2006–2020. The increase of political parties appears to be a normal result of the growing politicization of protests. However, it must be noted that there has been a significant increase in the role of “grassroots” and social movements in protests over the years, as well as that of students/youth, indigenous/racial groups, unorganized workers, religious groups, women, hackers, prisoners and even policemen/military.

7.2 *Greater Grassroots Participation*

Figure 15 shows the distribution of the main groups leading protests by region. Grassroots groups (in blue) appear in large numbers in Europe and North America, even though these regions also have the best organized (and best financed) NGOs/CSOs, political parties, and trade

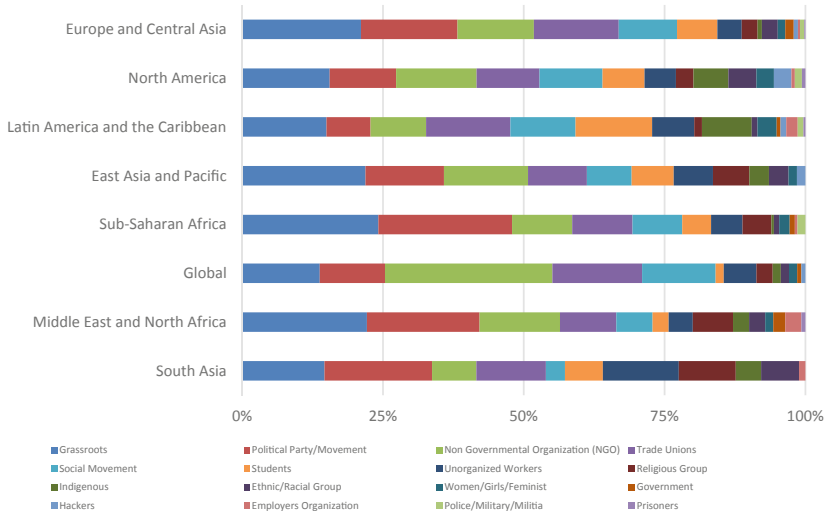


Fig. 15 Main groups leading protests by region, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

unions. The impact of grassroots groups is also large in East Asia and the Pacific, Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.

The increasing involvement of unorganized citizens, grassroots, middle-class people, young and old persons, and the relative decrease in the role of political parties/movements, is meaningful. Citizens have taken to the streets in the Arab Spring, in Europe (e.g. the *Indignados* and “yellow vests”) or in Latin America’s *Estallido Social* (Social Uprising). These citizens do not consider themselves activists and yet they protest because they are disillusioned with official processes, political parties, and the usual political actors associated with them. Recent research shows the increasing participation of the middle classes in protests, both in high-income and developing countries (Chen & Suen, 2017; della Porta, 2017).

Mass middle-class involvement in protests indicates a new dynamic: a pre-existing solidarity of the middle classes with elites has been replaced in countries around the world by a lack of trust and awareness that neither the prevailing economic system nor the existing political system

is producing positive outcomes for them. Alongside trade unions, civil society organizations and other activists, grassroots citizens have become organizers and participants in many direct actions (e.g., the occupation of public squares and streets, street “teach-ins,” and the blockades of roads and bridges). The fact that 28% of all the protests covered in the study include the demand for real democracy is due in no small measure to the growing ranks of the middle classes in protests.

8 NUMBER OF DEMONSTRATORS

8.1 *Some of the Largest Protests in History*

The protests included in this study have involved numbers ranging from a few hundred protestors to millions of demonstrators. Note that crowd estimates in relation to any protest are a controversial matter. Depending on the news source, estimates frequently diverge by tens of thousands, sometimes even by millions. Some protest event analysis relies upon police reports when a key research variable is the number of protesters (Klandermans & Staggenborn, 2002); however it is far beyond the scope of this research to conduct a fuller analysis utilizing police records in the many countries covered. Nevertheless, media sources report crowd estimates in the majority of protests analyzed in this study, 53 of which had one million or more protesters (Table 9).

During the period 2006–2020, the world has experienced some of the largest protests in its history; the largest protest recorded is India’s 2020 strike against government labor and agriculture reforms, which is estimated to have involved at least 250 million protestors. Table 9 shows the power of well-organized trade unions, as they have mobilized the majority of these protests. The overwhelming majority of the large protests relate to progressive issues/demands, such as: more and better jobs, wages and pensions; investments in health, education and public services; protection of farmers; action on climate change; racial justice; women and civil rights; against austerity cuts, corruption and inequality. However, a number of protests are led by radical right groups such as: QAnon protests in 2020 in the United States and globally; opposition to Muslims, migrants and refugees in Germany (multiple years); demonstrators in France protesting same-sex marriage in 2012; and the large protests against President Dilma Rouseff, Lula and the Workers Party in Brazil in 2013 and 2015.

Table 9 Largest protests 2006–2020. Crowd estimates—more than 1 million demonstrators (selected protests)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>Protest issue</i>	<i>Estimated crowd count</i>
India	2020	The largest coordinated strike in history: 250 million people protest against the government's plan to liberalize farming and labor	250,000,000
India	2013	Indian workers strike over rising prices, low wages, poor implementation of labor laws and privatizations	100,000,000
Global	2017	Calls to regulate social media, against citizens surveillance	87,000,000
United States	2013	Black Lives Matter, multiple years/protests	82,000,000
Brazil	2019	Against President Bolsonaro, education and pension reforms, budget cuts	45,000,000
Egypt	2012	Egyptians protest against President Morsi	15,000,000
Egypt	2011	Arab Spring: Egyptians rebel against President Mubarak	14,000,000
Brazil	2015	Against corruption, against President Dilma Rousseff and Lula	11,000,000
Germany	2017	Opposition to Muslims, migrants and refugees (multiple protests/years)	10,000,000
Global	2006	Protesters worldwide demand an end to the war in Afghanistan	6,000,000
Spain	2018	Spanish demonstrators protest femicides and rape, support women's rights, #Meetoo #NiUnaMas	5,900,000

(continued)

Table 9 (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>Protest issue</i>	<i>Estimated crowd count</i>
Italy	2013	Italian anti-government protesters demonstrate against the European Union and austerity measures	5,000,000
Portugal	2013	Portuguese workers strike over austerity	5,000,000
United States	2017	Me Too movement, women's rights	5,000,000
France	2015	After deadly attack on newspaper, march against terrorist violence and for freedom of expression	4,000,000
Global	2018	Youth activists protest the inaction of government on climate change	4,000,000
Greece	2008	Greeks strike over budget cuts and austerity	3,000,000
Portugal	2012	Portuguese protest austerity	3,000,000
Portugal	2010	Portuguese workers strike over budget cuts and austerity policies	3,000,000
France	2006	French students and citizens protest new labor law	2,600,000
Turkey	2013	Turks demand civil rights	2,500,000
France	2010	French protestors strike over pension reforms	2,375,000
France	2012	French demonstrators protest legalization of same-sex marriage	2,200,000
France	2009	French workers strike for economic justice against high cost of living, public jobs cuts, anti-austerity, in defense of employment and wages	2,100,000

(continued)

Table 9 (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>Protest issue</i>	<i>Estimated crowd count</i>
Brazil	2013	Protestors call for free transport and an end to Workers Party rule	2,000,000
Global	2013	Activists protest Monsanto and genetically modified crops	2,000,000
Indonesia	2012	Indonesian workers protest for better conditions and benefits	2,000,000
Italy	2009	Italians hold “No Berlusconi Day” in protest against Premier Berlusconi	2,000,000
Spain	2010	Spaniards protest cutbacks and austerity	2,000,000
Global	Yearly	1st May Labor Day each year	Millions
Global	2011	People around the world protest economic and social inequality	1,800,000
Kenya	2013	Kenyans demand justice for gang rape victim	1,800,000
Spain	2017	Catalonians demand independence from Spain	1,800,000
Italy	2007	Italians demonstrate against same-sex marriage	1,700,000
Spain	2012	Catalonians demand independence from Spain	1,700,000
Brazil	2011	Brazilians decry corruption, poor public services and lack of investment in education and health	1,500,000
Brazil	2005	Brazil’s Landless Workers Movement demands reforms and social justice	1,500,000
United States	2006	Americans demand immigrant rights	1,500,000

(continued)

Table 9 (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>Protest issue</i>	<i>Estimated crowd count</i>
Portugal	2007	Portuguese workers strike over government policies	1,400,000
China	2006	Hong Kong protests central government interference (multiple years)	1,300,000
United States, Global	2020	Q-Anon protests	1,280,000
Argentina	2012	Argentiniens protest President Fernández	1,000,000
Canada	2018	Canadians rally across country to call for bolder action on climate change	1,000,000
Chile	2016	Eliminate private pensions and demand a public pension system	1,000,000
Chile	2019	“Estallido social” Social outbreak demand public pensions, public services, new constitution	1,000,000
Colombia	2008	Colombian workers strike for better pay	1,000,000
France	2019	Protestors demonstrate against pension reforms	1,000,000
Global	2013	Bolivian president organizes People’s summit to protest imperialism and improve people’s lives	1,000,000
Italy	2011	Italian women protest against Berlusconi	1,000,000
Portugal	2012	Portuguese unions call strikes against austerity measures	1,000,000
Turkey	2007	Turks demand secularism	1,000,000
Yemen	2011	Yemenis demand democratic rule	1,000,000

Source Media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

8.2 *Protests and Civic Space*

Are the increasing number of protests and protestors caused by improved civic conditions and political freedoms, or—to the contrary, do they have a tendency to increase when there is repressed civic space? To answer

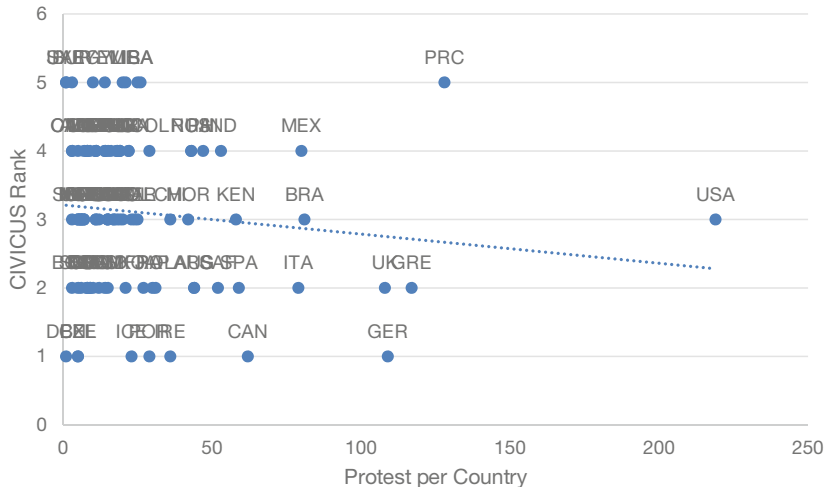


Fig. 16 Number of protests and civic space (Legend: CIVICUS Rank is 1: Open freer society; 2: Narrowed; 3: Obstructed; 4: Repressed; 5: Closed (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and CIVICUS 2020b))

this, Fig. 16 presents the relationship between the number of protests and civic space. The latter is based on the global citizens’ organization, CIVICUS’s’ (2020a and 2020b) rank of countries’ civic space, based on the obligation of states to protect civil society, freedom of association, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of expression, and classifying countries into five categories, from open, free societies to closed societies. While protestors demonstrate in countries in all CIVICUS categories (in open freer societies, narrowed, obstructed, repressed, as well as in closed societies), the trendline shows a tendency towards more protests when civic conditions are freer. As expected, repression works: countries where civic space is repressed or closed have fewer protests.

9 METHODS OF PROTEST

Protestors used a wide range of methods to protest in the period 2006–2020. This study has identified 250 methods of protest, presented in Annex B, updating Gene Sharp’s 198 methods of nonviolent action

(Sharp, 1973). Our research finds that marches and protest assemblies (or rallies), blockades, occupations and other kinds of civil disobedience/direct action, as well as Internet activism, are the most common methods of protest in the period 2006–2020, presented in Fig. 17.

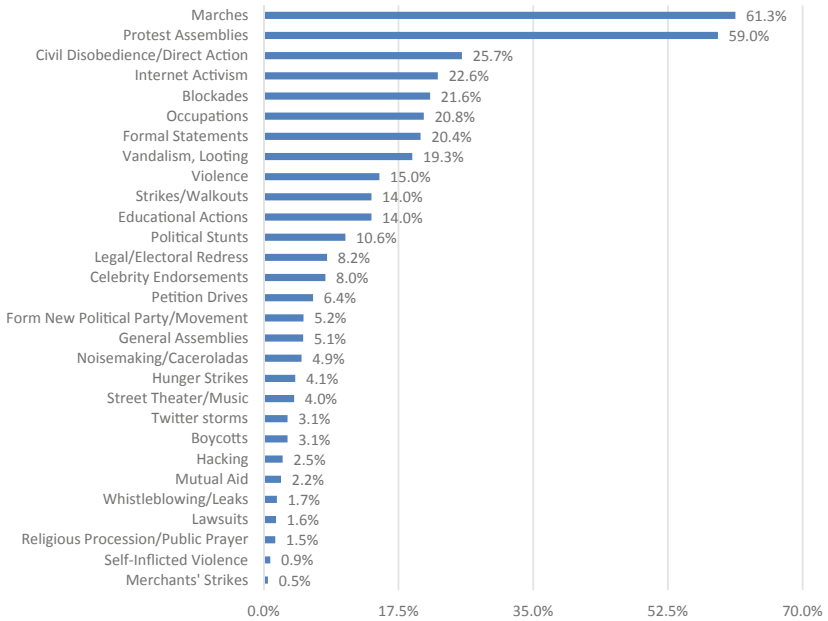


Fig. 17 Methods of protests 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

9.1 *Marches and Protest Assemblies/Rallies*

Demonstrations usually take the form of a public gathering of people in a rally or walking in a march. Together, marches, protest assemblies, and rallies are by far the most common methods of protest encountered in the study. They occurred in 1056 protests, in almost every country covered.

9.2 *Blockades, Occupations and Civil Disobedience/Direct Action*

Blockades are another common method of protest, identified in 21% of protests. Civil disobedience involving the occupation of a public square, street, government building, or factory—a tactic made notorious by the occupations of Tahrir Square in Egypt, Syntagma Square in Greece, Puerta del Sol in Spain, Zuccotti Park in New York and Gezi Park in Istanbul—is the next most common method of protest, present in 20.9% of the protests. Other kinds of civil disobedience and direct action appear in 177 events. These two methods—to occupy and to commit civil disobedience—while against the law in most instances, are nevertheless becoming established as acceptable tactics to the middle classes acting in new social movements in all regions, for instance, women in Saudi Arabia who defy laws against their right to drive cars, or the “Walk to Work” and “Walk to Pray” protests in Uganda, when the government declared gatherings of more than two people to be illegal: these are examples of civil disobedience.

9.3 *Strikes and Walkouts*

Strikes and walkouts have been traditional protest methods used by trade unions to request better working conditions for workers at the company level or—less often—at the national level (general strike). We recorded more than 148 strikes of different types in the period 2006–2020. Most common are strikes by sectoral groups of workers and trade unions, including those by: Bangladeshi garment workers and by Chinese manufacturing workers demanding better working conditions and wages; miners in Colombia; truckers in the Ivory Coast; oil workers in Kazakhstan and Libya; merchants in Iran; electricity workers in Mexico; jeepney drivers in Philippines; metal workers in Turkey; and health workers in Kenya and South Africa demanding adequate equipment and support to fight COVID-19. For the purposes of analysis, we

have recorded even strikes by police and the military requesting better working conditions in Ecuador and Somalia, as well as global strikes like the ones organized by Amazon workers. National general strikes were organized in countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, France, Greece, India, Portugal, and Spain. Today, strikes are also used by protest groups other than trade unions: there are examples of strikes to press governments to fight corruption and to improve democracy, as in Angola, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria; in Nepal, to end the rule of the king; in Pakistan, to denounce land grabs; in Yemen, to demand secession of the South of the country. People have also: struck for better pensions in Italy and the United States; protested low incomes in Egypt and Indonesia; and against privatization in Chile and Jamaica. Students and teachers also went to strike in many countries against education budget cuts, tuition fees, and curricula changes, for example in Canada, Chad, China, Denmark, Hungary, Japan, and Peru.

9.4 *Vandalism/Looting*

Vandalism and looting were used in about 20% of the protests recorded in this study. This is a method condemned by defenders of nonviolent protests given the large arsenal of peaceful methods available for use in people's struggles (250 such methods are presented in Annex B). Of the cases recorded in the period 2006–2020, some examples are: radical right protests for a return to monarchy, against LGBT and corruption in Brazil; “we are hungry” protests against the COVID-19 lockdown, lack of jobs and social services in Chile and Senegal; against electoral fraud in Bolivia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Honduras and the United States; against austerity budget cuts imposed by the IMF in Ecuador and Greece; Oromia protests in Ethiopia; “yellow vests” protests in France and Ireland; anti G20 protests in Germany; violence by “cow vigilantes” in India; radical right protests against immigrants in Germany and Israel; and riots on rising fuel/food prices and low living standards in Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Mauritania, Mexico, and Zimbabwe. More on violent protests can be found in Section 12.

9.5 *Internet Activism and Whistleblowing/Leaks*

Online activism and digital campaigning have become main protest methods employed by social movements, using electronic communication technologies such as social media, email, and podcasts for message dissemination, organizing, and fundraising. For example, during the Arab Spring in 2011, millions of Egyptians rebelled against President Mubarak; for 18 days, Egyptians were able to broadcast videos and images of their struggle for the whole world to see using Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, challenging the official government narrative issued by state media. Examples abound, for instance Nigeria’s youth began spreading tweets with the hashtag #EndSARS¹⁰ to call for an end to police brutality, weeks later demonstrations took place in major cities and the hashtag #EndSARS had by then become a movement for social justice. The period covered by this study also captures the advent of a new era of civil disobedience/direct action carried out by computer hackers and whistleblowers who “leak” massive amounts of government and corporate data, from the publishing of Wikileaks “Iraq and Afghan War Diaries,” a set of 391,000 classified United States State Department cables and reports made public in October 2010 and linked by Amnesty International to the igniting of protests in Tunisia at the beginning of the Arab Spring.

9.6 *Pot-Banging/Noisemaking, Street Music, Educational Events*

Noisemaking has been a traditional method of protest. In most of the Latin countries, this takes the form of banging pots and casseroles (“*cacerolada*”), signifying the protest of ordinary women and men against the powerful. Drums have been used by protestors in several countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India, Iraq, Israel, Romania, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, and the United States. Street music, theater, and educational events have been utilized in many peaceful protests. Protest songs have been strongly associated with social change movements. For instance, the Chilean anti-rapist song “A rapist in your path” has become a feminist anthem performed by women at mass protests all over the world.

¹⁰ Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a notorious unit of the Nigerian Police.

9.7 *Boycotts and Legal/Paralegal Methods*

Boycotts are an old method of protest, consisting of abstaining from using, buying, or dealing with a good, person, organization or country. For example, Palestinians have boycotted products made in the settlements, and Arabs have boycotted products from Israel. More than 20 boycotts were recorded in the period 2006–2020. Increasingly, activists and ordinary citizens are pushing groundbreaking legal action to force governments into action. Lawsuits are effective when a case is raised through legal channels, for instance, as it was pursued in the #MeToo movement in which many women went forward to sue male harassers; or by black New Yorkers launching a class-action lawsuit in 2013 to tackle discrimination by the police; or indigenous leaders in Brazil suing President Bolsonaro for crimes against humanity by targeting tribes and the Amazon rainforest; or the M-15 (the Spanish Occupy) suing Rodrigo Rato, former head of the IMF and of the Spanish private bank Bankia, recruiting pro bono lawyers and identifying more than 50 plaintiffs—people who lost their savings during the financial crisis because they had been defrauded by Bankia. In the face of the slow politics of climate change, activists and lawyers have also increased climate change litigation to advance progress. Another method is enacting People’s Popular Tribunals, or People’s Courts: while these hold no official power of jurisdiction, they represent an attempt to achieve symbolic justice for crimes against humanity. For example, there was a People’s Tribunal to judge free trade, violence, impunity, and peoples’ rights in Mexico (2011–2014); a People’s Tribunal Hearing took place in Brussels in 2014 to judge austerity measures imposed by the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the IMF, designed to make governments adhere to strict fiscal policies, to restructure labor markets and social policies, resulting in violations of Human Rights and a rollback of democratic achievements.

9.8 *Hunger Strikes and Self-Inflicted Violence*

Hunger strikes were identified in 30 protests in the period 2006–2020. Prisoners in Kyrgyzstan went on hunger strike to denounce demeaning living conditions, demanding mattresses and better food; and prisoners in the Occupied Palestinian Territory struck to end administrative detention. In Hong Kong, people went on hunger strike to protest against

an extradition law and police violence; in India, demonstrators went on strike to save the Ganges from a hydroelectric project. Though more rarely employed, desperate methods such as self-immolation or protesters sewing their own lips together are also among the methods used, particularly for those in prison (e.g., Bolivia, Kyrgyzstan, and Malaysia). There are also those who do not see any method of protest other than suicide (e.g., Bulgarian protests against Borisov in 2013) or those whose dignity has been destroyed by deprivation and the brutality of the authorities (e.g., in Hungary, India, and Tunisia). Finally, there is Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian street vendor who set himself on fire in 2010 because of the confiscation of his wares and the harassment and humiliation inflicted on him by a municipal officials, which became the catalyst for the Tunisian Revolution and the wider Arab Spring.

For the list of 250 available non-violent methods of protest, see Annex B.

10 WHO DO PROTESTERS OPPOSE?

Just as key objectives of this research are to find out who is protesting (and how and why), it is also important to identify the main targets, or opponents, of the protests. Figure 18 reflects the main targets of world protests in the period 2006–2020.

10.1 *Governments*

The most frequent target for protesters, by a wide margin, is their own national government—as the legitimate policy-making institution responsible to citizens. Nearly 80% of all protests demand that governments take responsibility for economic, social, and environmental policies so that they benefit all, instead of the few. This is further developed in Section 2 in Chapter 3 (“Protests and the Perception that Governments Serve a Few”).

10.2 *Political/Economic System*

The next most frequent target for protesters is the inadequate political and economic system, which comprises 30.5% of all protests, reflecting significant discontent with the working of current democracies. Examples include: Australians protesting against the APEC trade agreement

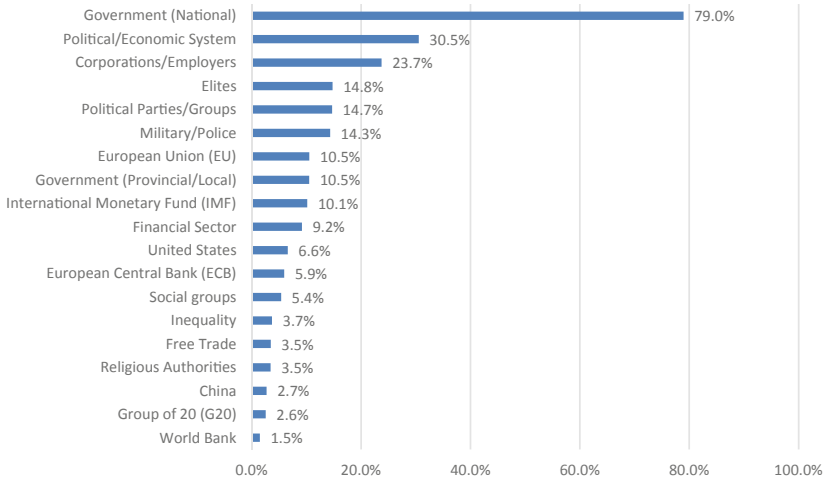


Fig. 18 Main targets of world protests, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

in 2012: Brazilians protesting corruption during the Rousseff, Temer and Bolsonaro presidencies (2015–2019); Canadian, French and German “yellow vests” protests; Chileans protesting during the *Estallido Social* in 2018; Congolese protesting corruption in 2012; and Egyptians and Tunisians uprisings during the Arab Spring.

10.3 Corporations/Employers

Together, corporations and employers are the third most common adversary of protests, appearing in 23.7% of total protests, relating to: (i) opposition to corporate vested interests influencing policy-making (e.g., Australia, Egypt, Germany, Greece, India, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States), (ii) labor disputes and requests to employers for better wages and working conditions (e.g., Bangladesh, Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Ireland, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, South Korea, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam), (iii) confronting private interests in natural resource extraction (e.g., Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Greece, Madagascar, Myanmar, Romania, and Vietnam), (iv) construction of infrastructure by corporations with negative environmental and social impacts (e.g., Argentina, Brazil, China,

India, Mexico, Myanmar, Peru, South Africa, and the United States), and (v) local businesses' inability to compete with large foreign corporations (e.g., Colombia, India, Mexico, Spain, and the United Kingdom).

10.4 *Elites*

Protests against the privilege of elites drive nearly 15% of total protests. For example, the global and United States Occupy movement against the richest 1%; the protest in El Salvador against the elite's power abuse, including the killing of Father Romero; Germany's Blockupy and Greek protests against bankers; protests against abusive landowners in India; demonstrations against the Mafia in Italy; protests against the new oil elites in Kazakhstan and Nigeria; protests against the drug cartels in Mexico; protests against feudal landlords in Pakistan; and against corrupt elites in Peru and the Philippines.

10.5 *Political Parties*

About 14.7% of protests target specific political parties or groups (e.g., Canada, Egypt, Italy, Libya, Philippines, Russia, Tunisia, Turkey, and in the United States). More than 4% of protests target local governments.

10.6 *Military/Police*

Taken together, these armed forces are the target of 14.3% of the world's protests. Protests against police brutality have been increasing over the years in all continents; an example can be found in the recent protests first in the United States and then globally against police brutality and for #BlackLivesMatter. Military intervention is another focus of protests, denouncing military abuses (e.g., Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sudan), and military presence (e.g., Mali, Niger, Japan, and the Philippines).

10.7 *The European Union and European Central Bank (ECB)*

The European Union is a target in 10.5% of all protests, mostly against the imposition of measures not decided on democratically by citizens of a country, such as the imposition of austerity cuts and reforms in European countries. Closely linked are protests against the European Central

Bank (5.9% of all protests) for its role in inflicting adjustment policies in the region. Demonstrations focused upon the European Union have also occurred in countries where governments are entering into free-trade agreements with the European Union (e.g., Colombia, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, South Korea, and Vietnam).

10.8 The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank

The IMF is a target of 10.1% of total protests, which are generally associated with policy conditions with negative social impacts linked to austerity cuts, such as the removal of subsidies, pension and labor reforms, wage bill cuts/caps, the rationalization of safety nets, privatizations, raising VAT rates, and others. By comparison, the World Bank is the target of only 1.5% of worldwide protests. Protests against the IMF at global level include virtually all of the 1st of May Labor Day events and all WSFs—the latter sometimes also at the time of the Annual Meetings of the IMF and World Bank, and of the World Economic Forum; at national level, protests generally occur when the government and the IMF sign a program loan, as this typically contains cuts in social services, for example, in Argentina, Bangladesh, Greece, Haiti, Iceland, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Tunisia. In 2019 in Ecuador, riots against budget cuts and reforms agreed between the Moreno Administration and the IMF lasted for days until the government fled from the capital and postponed the IMF program loan.

10.9 Financial Sector

Protests against the financial sector represent more than 9.2% of protests. For example, in countries where pensions were privatized or there are discussions about possible privatization that would benefit the financial sector and insurance companies (e.g., Brazil, Chile, and France). Protests against the financial sector were prevalent during the global financial crisis (e.g., Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States); for example, the Occupy Wall Street occupation of Zuccotti Park in the middle of the financial district in New York.

10.10 *The United States of America*

Protests against the United States represent 6.6% of all protests, and relate to anti-imperialism protests alleging the abuse of economic, political, and military power. These are particularly prevalent at the global level and in Latin America as well as in the Middle East and North Africa. They have often been linked to protests against military intervention or the presence of United States military bases (e.g., Afghanistan, Iraq, Japan, Philippines, and Ukraine). In Asia anti-imperialist protests frequently target China.

11 WHAT DO PROTESTS ACHIEVE?

In this study, “achievements” are understood as the set of direct and indirect responses from opponents or by society to a protest episode, responding in some measure to the grievances and demands raised by protestors. In this sense, our research shows that 42% of protests resulted in some kind of demonstrable achievement (Fig. 19). For example, in the period 2006–2020 there were many protests against GMOs and Monsanto. In 2013, one of the biggest global protests had a clear demand: stop GMOs Eventually, the objective of this protest movement

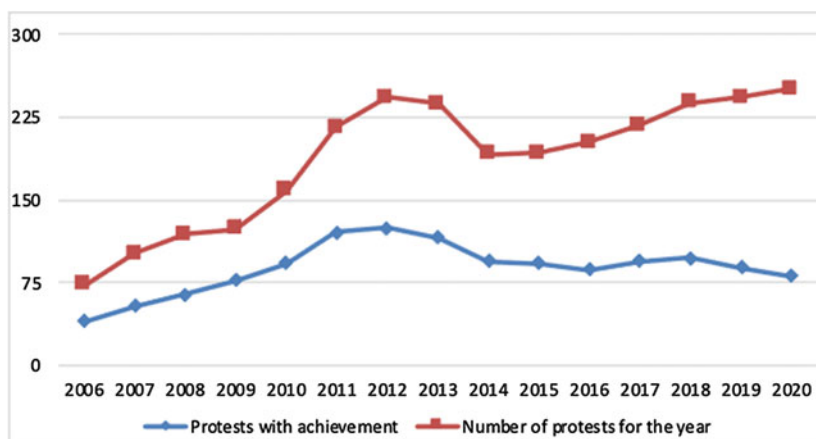


Fig. 19 Number of protests and achievements by year, 2006–2020 (Source Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

was achieved in Mexico, although not in other countries. In this study, that partial success is counted as an achievement, even though it was not fully accomplished. It must also be noted that success is rarely the result of one protest event alone, but rather of what we designate as a protest episode—this is, many years of protests insisting on the same grievance/demand.

Looking at the differences in achievement between the regions examined in this study, our analysis shows that in South Asia 61% of protest episodes (protests on the same topic over many years) achieved some demonstrable success, whereas global protest episodes have only had a 21% success rate. The rate of success is 50% for East and Asia and the Pacific, 48% for the Middle East and North Africa, 46% for North America, 45% for Sub-Saharan Africa, 39% for Europe and Central Asia, and 38% for Latin America and the Caribbean. In terms of country-income groups, it is in the lower-middle income countries where 50% of protest episodes have resulted in some kind of achievement, compared to 43% in upper-middle income countries, 42% in low-income countries, and 40% in high-income countries.

Focusing on the demands/grievances, the data shows that all the main areas have a similar rate of achievement. The achievement rate of the category “failure of political representation and political systems” is 42%; achievements include, for example, the adoption of a new constitution (e.g., in Chile, Iceland, and Morocco), changes to laws, the resignation of presidents/ministers (e.g., in Algeria, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Iceland, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mali, Niger, Peru, Romania, South Korea, Sudan, Tunisia, Jordan, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe), the exposure of government secrets (e.g., Manning/Wikileaks in the United States), or the holding of a dialogue on politically difficult issues (e.g., in China, Colombia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, and Poland).

Economic justice and anti-austerity protests also have an achievement rate of 42%. Achievements include labor victories (e.g., wage rises in Bangladesh, Chad or the United Arab Emirates in 2007–2008, the banning of UBER in Colombia in 2020); demands related to subsidies (e.g., Bolivia in 2010, Ecuador in 2019, and Nigeria in 2010, all these countries had subsidies reinstated after protests); land reforms (e.g., In Brazil in 2020 and India in 2012); taxes (e.g., Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Ivory Coast lowered taxes on basic goods after protests in 2008; a

tax on the Internet was cancelled in Hungary in 2014; a new tax bill was cancelled in Japan in 2018); pension reforms (e.g., attempts to reform pensions without adequate social dialogue were stopped in France in 2010, Nicaragua in 2013, Portugal in 2010, and Russia in 2018); reforms of public services (e.g., protesters in Ireland rebelled against austerity-induced water charges in 2016; in South Africa, students achieved the cancellation of fee increases in 2016); mining (e.g., El Salvador, Indonesia, and Peru); or labor market reforms (e.g., in France in 2006), among many others. There are also many protestor achievements linked to stopping or stalling urban development and infrastructure projects (e.g., after multiple protests, construction was stopped in Bulgaria, Chile, China, Guatemala, India, Mexico, Myanmar, Peru, and Poland; Germany agreed to close all its nuclear power plants by 2022).

Civil rights also have an achievement rate of 42%; for example, after years of activism, in 2019 in Iran a law was passed stipulating hard penalties for acid attacks; in Saudi Arabia women were officially allowed to vote in 2015 and to drive in 2018; in Senegal, women could vote in the 2015 elections; in Pakistan in a 2006 law, protestors achieved the removal of *zina* (fornication crime) and the end of rape victims being prosecuted for adultery; in India education quotas for lower castes were preserved in 2006; in Indonesia freedom of religion was enforced in 2017 after protests against and for the Governor of Jakarta who was accused of committing blasphemy of the Quran; in Mauritania in 2020 the arrest of slave owners was an achievements against modern slavery.

The global justice achievement rate is 41%, defined as some success, for example, after years of Africans protesting Economic Partnership Agreements with Europe, in 2020 seven countries (Botswana, Namibia, Cameroun, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, and Swaziland) have still not ratified the agreements.

Numbers may appear pessimistic in terms of the rate of success of protestors. However, these outcomes are not necessarily negative, since many of the protests are engaged with long-term structural issues that may yield results over a long period of time; incremental or short-term achievements may prove to be precursors to more comprehensive change.

The analysis of achievements leads us to differentiate between two types of protests. First, there are protests that could be identified as having “concrete” demands. This is the case for protests demanding a rise in wages (Bangladesh 2007), a reinstatement of subsidies (Bolivia 2010), or the halt of the construction of a dam (India 2010). Such demands can be

more achievable due to their concreteness and the fact that they usually do not challenge the status quo. A second category includes protests that are designed to achieve structural change, a complete change of power relations, in order to replace them with other systems based on different views of social justice (Izquierdo-Brichs & Etherington, 2017). Success in these types of protests is more complicated to achieve, as it would require a regime change. However, a number of cases can be identified in 2006–2020, such as the Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt (2011), Iceland during the 2008 financial crisis, or the *October Revolution* in Lebanon. Although in such cases the system was not deeply transformed (some interpret changes as “concessions” by the political elites), these events can have a lasting impact that should not be underestimated.

This point is illustrated in Fig. 20. The more structural and distant the opponents are, the more difficult they are to fight, as we can see in the case of groups like the G20, the financial sector in a country, the IMF, or the ECB. When it comes to structural issues like free-trade, inequality, imperialism, distant elites, and the military, all protests against

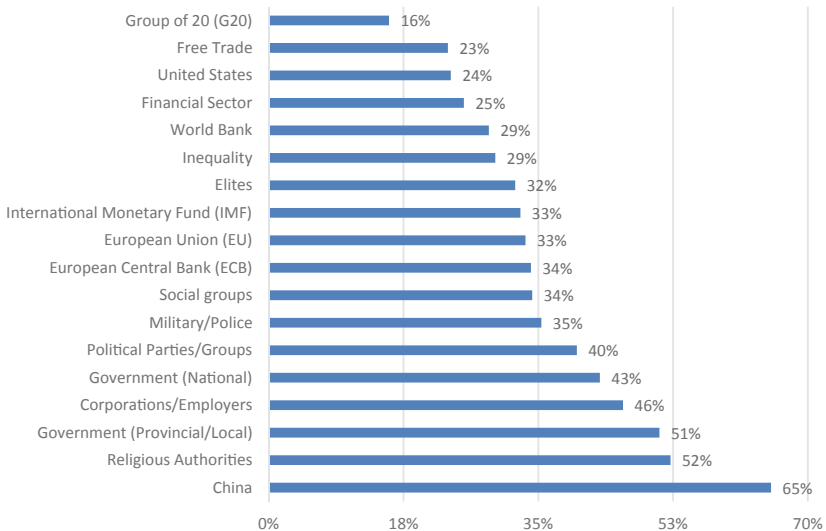


Fig. 20 Achievements by targeted opponent, 2006–2020 (Source Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

them have relatively low achievement rates. Protests against governments (both national and local), religious authorities, employers and corporations, have higher rates of success. Interestingly, a majority of protests against the Chinese government, normally on concrete issues, have a greater chance of achieving some result (65%), than those against the United States, which have only a 23% chance of success.

In terms of the methods of protest, the most successful—although not the most frequent—are merchant’s strikes, with a 75% achievement rate (e.g., Iran’s merchants achieving a reduction in the gold tax) followed by whistleblowing and leaks (71%), hacking (64%), and boycotts (63%). On the other hand, the less successful methods are general assemblies (23%), street theater (30%), noise making/pot banging (31%), educational actions (34%) and Twitter storms (36%). Vandalism/looting and violence only show a 43% success rate; note that self-inflicted violence is in a separate category, with a 50% success rate.

Regarding which groups of protesters have more success with their demands, those with the highest achievement rates unsurprisingly are employers/organizations (80% achievement rate), followed by the military/police (50%). The least successful are women (33%), then ethnic/racial groups (31%) and finally prisoners (25%).

It is also important to highlight that several of the achievements identified in the research relate to changes in public debates. This is an intangible success that however can have a significant impact in reframing debates and bringing issues into the global political agenda. This type of achievement should not be overlooked. Three examples illustrate this. The first one is Occupy Wall Street (2011), in which citizens protested against Wall Street bailouts, denounced inequality and the privileges of the financial sector in shaping the political agenda. The famous motto “We are the 99%” became a slogan heard in many parts of the world, pushing the inequality agenda to center stage. The second one is the UK Uncut (2011) movement, which also emerged during the 2008 financial crisis, denouncing austerity cuts and unfair tax practices of multinational corporations. This movement gave a push to the tax justice agenda. Lastly the #MeToo and #NiUnaMenos movements linked to women’s rights have set the agenda on gender justice and have encouraged girls and women all over the world to stand up for their rights.

12 VIOLENCE, REPRESSION, AND SURVEILLANCE

This chapter will address the issue of violence, both by protestors and against protestors. These two are highly asymmetrical. As presented, the levels of repression of protestors in terms of injuries and deaths are completely unjustified. Protests and other diverse forms of public participation are an essential part of democratic societies. A State's prerogative to use force with a view to maintaining law and order is guided under the norms established in international law. Universal and regional Human Rights agreements protect the right to protest, recognizing the rights to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and opinion, and freedom of association, including trade union rights (United Nations, 2012, 2013; INCLO, 2013).

12.1 *Limited but Increasing Protestors' Violence*

We first examine violence by protestors. Despite the large movements committed to non-violent protest, violence has occurred.¹¹ Figure 21 shows protests with violence by the crowd, vandalism, and looting. On average, about 20% of protests included some crowd violence, vandalism, or looting. The trend shows a minor but steady increase in violent protests.

The spike in 2008 is caused by the large number of so-called “food riots.” Most food- and fuel-price protests were directly related to the removal of subsidies and the implementation of regressive taxes, often advised by the IMF and other IFIs. Many of these subsistence protests—which have spiked to historic levels since 2008—were labelled “riots” in the press coverage. Beginning in January 2007, “tortilla riots” were reported in Mexico, as farmers protested price rises upon implementation of the final stages of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In the ensuing months commodity prices continued to climb, setting off miners' strikes and food price protests in Peru (Schneider, 2008: 41–47). In July, as commodity prices reached a worldwide peak,

¹¹ Note that protests taking place in countries experiencing armed conflict with external forces, civil war, or both (e.g., Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria) make counting protests by our research method impractical, in part because international news reports do not cover civil protests, and archives containing local sources in conflict zones are particularly difficult to access.

food riots were reported in India (in August), Morocco and Uzbekistan (in September), China, Mauritania, and Senegal (in November). By the end of 2008, more riots and violent protests to demand affordable food had been reported in at least 22 countries. In the run-up to the 2020–2021 Arab Spring, food protests were the dominant way to demand government accountability, especially in commodity-dependent developing countries. Food “riots” were not as violent as portrayed, and the violence often came not from protesters but from the police crackdown. Reports with rabid headlines then appeared, and governments took note of them, frequently implementing modest rollbacks and other concessions in the ensuing weeks or months. A good example is when Al Jazeera reported in September 2007 “Morocco rolls back bread price hike: violent protests force government to withdraw 30 per cent hike in bread prices.” The headline failed to accurately characterize the protest, which had been organized by the Moroccan Association for Human Rights as a peaceful sit-in. Nevertheless, the specter of violence gave the government the necessary cover to retract an unpopular policy.

Violence by crowds has also occurred in large “omnibus” demonstrations protesting hardship and many compounded issues, untenable systems, and lack of change (e.g., Bosnia Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Germany, Greece, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Montenegro, Nepal, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Spain, Sudan, Syria, and the global protests against the G20), also when there is popular anger on a specific issue (e.g., the Dominican Republic’s suspension of elections, the killing of an ethnic singer in Ethiopia, election irregularities in Mali, the killing of 43 students in Mexico, and Israel’s intifada). It must be noted that far right or radical right protests tend to be more violent (e.g., in Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, India, Indonesia, Poland, Serbia, the United Kingdom, and the United States).

Vandalism/looting usually involves violence against property and/or symbolic places, for example, when French farmers vandalized the office of Macron’s party lawmaker protesting the European Union-Canada trade deal, or when they dumped several tons of manure and rotten vegetables in protest at falling food prices. Vandalism/looting has been an increasing method of protest, reported in countries such as Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Congo, Ecuador,

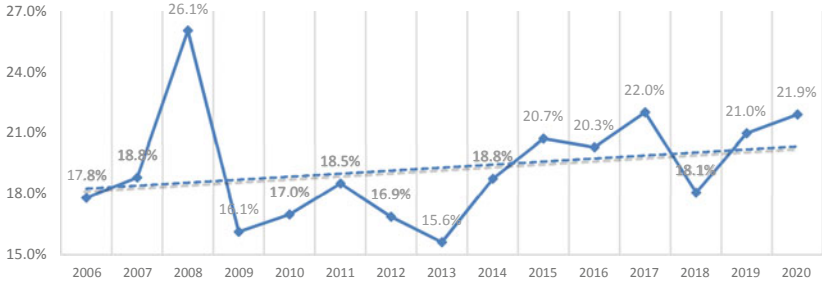


Fig. 21 Riots and violent protests, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

Ethiopia, Germany, Greece, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

12.2 Increasing Repression and Surveillance of Protestors: Arrests, Injuries, and Deaths

Repression of some kind—resulting in arrests, surveillance, injuries and deaths due to state-organized violence—is documented in 62% of the protests analyzed in this study. This is a soft figure, as reliable data on repression can be difficult to secure from news sources alone, and—as with the determination of protest size—it is beyond the scope of this research to conduct a special analysis of repression based on an examination of police reports and other such materials. However, an examination of repression as documented in journalistic sources suggests that more research needs to be done on what appears to be a wide disparity between the Global North and South in terms of the repression of protest by authorities and the coverage of protests in the news media. Many protests in countries of the Global South have a secondary presence in the international news media, often even when the number of protesters killed, injured, or arrested is very large and is therefore only reflected in local and alternative media sources.

Table 10 presents the evolution of reported repression of protestors since 2006. With the number of protests increasing, in the period 2006–2020 there was a rapid increase of protestors’ repression, visualized in Fig. 22. The most common methods of repression are arrests, police violence, injuries, and deaths. Arrests occur in 45% of protests in 2006–2020 and close to half of all protests in more recent years (2016–2020). Police violence appears in about 27% of protests. While injuries and deaths have been decreasing slightly, they are very high, recorded in 19 and 17% of all protests respectively. It must be noted that arrests are directly linked to repression, but a number of the injuries and deaths may be a result of widespread violent clashes between opposing protest groups rather than between protesters and the authorities.

Other reported methods of repression in the period 2006–2020 include teargas, retaliatory laws, harassment, lawsuits, missing people, displaced people, gunshots, torture, Internet restrictions, expulsion, and deportation. Our research has also documented rising concern with some modes of repression which do not involve the use of physical violence.

Table 10 Reported repression of protests, 2006–2020

	2006–2010 (%)	2011–2015 (%)	2016–2020 (%)	Overall (%)
Arrests	41.1	45.1	47.7	45.4
Violence (Police)	27.8	26.5	27.3	27.1
Injuries	23.8	18.5	18.6	19.6
Deaths	18.9	17.9	17.0	17.7
Violence (crowd)	3.5	5.7	10.4	7.2
Teargas	3.3	4.5	10.2	6.6
Retaliatory laws	4.2	5.4	7.1	5.8
Harassment	4.7	3.5	5.5	4.6
Lawsuits	1.9	3.1	4.5	3.4
Missing people	4.9	2.4	1.9	2.7
Displaced people	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.5
Gunshots	1.4	1.6	2.1	1.7
Torture	1.4	0.7	1.7	1.3
Internet restrictions	0.0	0.5	1.6	0.9
Expulsion	0.0	0.1	1.6	0.7
Deportation	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.6

Source Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

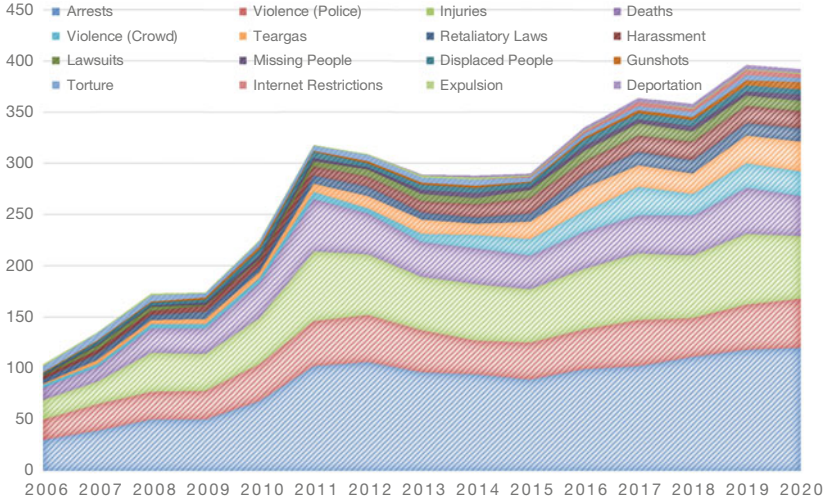


Fig. 22 Reported repression of protests, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

These new forms of control are enabled by new laws and arrangements between governments, private companies, and national security agencies, and are reported in a number of countries such as Australia, Canada, China, India, Iran, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam.

According to media reports, the protests that generated the most arrests in the period 2006–2020 were—in order of largest number of people affected—in Hong Kong, Egypt, France, Iran, the United Kingdom, Russia, Sudan, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, the United States, Canada, and Cameroon, with 10,000–1000 arrests per protest (Table 11). The protests that resulted in the largest numbers of reported injuries were in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, followed by Egypt, Chile, Thailand, Ecuador, Lebanon, Algeria, Hungary, and Indonesia. In terms of deaths, the worst outcomes were Kyrgyzstan, Egypt, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Kenya and Iran; these countries reported thousands of casualties among protestors.

Table 11 Protests with high numbers of reported arrests, injuries and deaths 2006–2020

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Protest grievance/demand</i>	<i>Estimated No.</i>
<i>Reported arrests</i>			
Hong Kong	2019–2020	Protesting extradition law and subsequent police violence	10,000
Egypt	2020	Protest demanding resignation of President Al Sisi and release of political prisoners	4300
France	2018–2020	Yellow vests anti-system movement	4000
Iran	2009–2010	Iran election protests	4000
United Kingdom	2011	London ++ riots after a man was killed by the police in the context of recession and austerity	3200
Russia	2011	Electoral fraud, against President Putin	3000
Russia	2019	Rejection of independent candidate in the Moscow Duma election	3000
Sudan	2011–2019	Sudanese protest leading to ousting of president Omar Al Bashir	2000
Chile	2011	Student movement against proposed education reforms	2000
Malaysia	2011	Against the privatization of water management	1700
Mexico	2017	Mexicans against hike in energy prices	1400
United States of America	2006	1st May Labor Day demonstrations demanding better jobs, justice for immigrants	1200
Canada	2010	Anti G20 demonstrations	1118
Cameroon	2008	Food and fuel price riots, low living standards	1000
United Kingdom	2018–2020	Extinction Rebellion	1000
<i>Reported injured</i>			

(continued)

Table 11 (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Protest grievance/demand</i>	<i>Estimated No.</i>
Occupied Territory of Palestine	2018–2019	The Israeli blockade of Gaza	9000
Egypt	2011	End of the 31-year-old state of emergency, departure of president Mubarak, lack of democracy	6460
Chile	2019–2020	“Estallido social” social outbreak demand public social services, public pensions, new constitution	5400
Thailand	2010	Prime Minister Abhisit to stand down as he did not come to power legitimately, call for elections	2000
Ecuador	2019–2020	Against austerity cuts, reforms agreed with the IMF, and President Moreno	1500
Lebanon	2019–2020	October Revolution against corruption, lack of jobs, and calling for more public services	1200
Algeria	2010–2011	Democracy, state of emergency state, high food and oil prices	826
Hungary	2006	Protests in Hungary demanding the Prime Minister’s resignation after he was recorded admitting lies about the economic situation during the electoral campaign	800
Indonesia	2019	Presidential challenger Subianto claimed cheating on elections and refused to accept defeat	600
<i>Reported deaths</i> Kyrgyzstan	2010	Against President Bakiyev’s government corruption, high heating costs and living expenses, ethnic violence	2600

(continued)

Table 11 (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Protest grievance/demand</i>	<i>Estimated No.</i>
Egypt	2013	Military coup of July 3, 2013	2000
Occupied Territory of Palestine	2013–2014	Protesting Israel's imperialism and conflict	2000
Kenya	2007–2008	Outrage at election results declaring President Kibabi winner, other grievances	1500
Iran	2019–2020	Sparked by Increase in fuel prices, then expanded to include corruption and regime change reinforced in January 2020 by the shooting down of a Ukrainian airliner by Iran	1500
Egypt	2011	End of the 31-year-old state of emergency, departure of President Mubarak, lack of democracy	840
Ethiopia	2015–2018	Human rights abuses, distribution of wealth, political marginalization	500
Sudan	2011–2019	Sudanese protest leading to ousting of president Omar Al Bashir	200

Source Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>

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Selected Key Issues in World Protests

Abstract This section of the book “World Protests: A Study of Key Protest Issues in the 21st-Century” analyzes: (i) trends such as the rise of populism and radical right protests; (ii) anti-corruption and women’s protests; (iii) the link between inequality and protests, as well as the link between protests and perceptions that governments serve only the few; (iv) the Arab and the Latin American Springs; and (v) the link between protestors’ policy demands, Human Rights and internationally agreed UN development goals, calling on governments to act on them.

Keywords Protests · Populism · Inequality · Women · Corruption · Human rights

1 RISING POPULISM AND RADICAL RIGHT PROTESTS

1.1 From Left-Wing to Far-Right Populist Protests

In the fifteen years covered by this study, we saw an increasing number of protests driven by two different versions of populism, some considered left-wing and others right-wing. Moreover, this rising populism came in two distinct phases characterized by political orientation, the first of which was anti-authoritarian, and the second of which has been supportive of more authoritarian leaders.

The first populist wave (2008–2012) was anti-authoritarian and driven by left-wing economic ideas. It was led by groups angry with the corruption of elites and stirred into action by hardships brought on by the commodity price spikes and financial crisis of 2008–2009. The 2010–2011 revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, the social protests throughout Europe, especially southern Europe, that they inspired, and the Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Hong Kong movements of 2011–2013, are prime examples of this economic populism, which changed the debate about globalization and who gets to determine peoples’ economic destiny (Ortiz et al., 2013). While left-wing protests were reduced somewhat by 2013–2014, their political benefits continued to accrue to left-wing parties, the most notable of which were *Syriza* in Greece, *Podemos* in Spain, and *Morena* in Mexico. New political movements also emerged, such as *Our Revolution*, led by democratic socialist Bernie Sanders in the United States.

The second populist wave (2013–present) was fueled even more than the first wave by the corruption of elites, but also by failed migration policies, especially in northern Europe, and by worsening inequalities. This second wave is marked by both nationalism and the condemnation of political systems, as well as allegations that dark forces in a “deep state” (or a “deep European/foreign powers” in the case of Hungary, Poland, the United Kingdom, and Turkey) conspire to deny economic security to middle classes in the face of globalization. While the anger of these populists may be a rational response to political systems that have failed for years to deliver on their economic needs (Bello, 2019; Bröning, 2016), the most unsettling characteristic of this populist wave is how many protesters demand not only their own rights, but to *deny* rights and equal status to groups they think threaten their jobs or status, such as immigrants.

This emphasis on denying rights reveals that populist uprisings became vulnerable to authoritarian influencers and right-wing propagandists, who have effectively instrumentalized populist energy. Anti-Muslim movements such as PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident) in Germany, the “Leave” (the European Union) movement in Britain, rampant nationalism against foreign powers in Turkey, the “war on drugs” in the Philippines, or the cow “vigilantes” in India are prime examples of right-wing populist movements which have—in turn—energized the growth of right-wing nationalist political parties like *Alternative für Deutschland* in Germany, UKIP (Independence Party) in the United

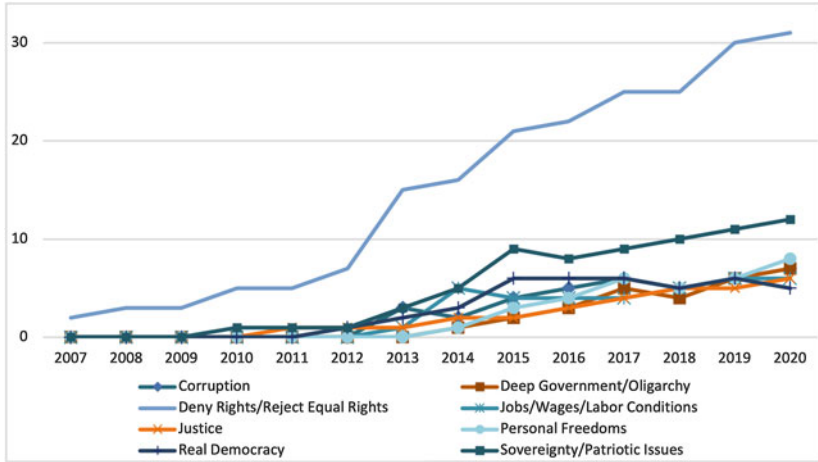


Fig. 1 Radical right protests: demands/grievances correlated with the denying of rights, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020, see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

Kingdom, *Ak Parti* in Turkey, and the BJP (*Bharatiya Janata Party*) in India.

It is instructive to look at the other demands and grievances found in protests alongside demands to deny rights. Figure 1 shows the set of demands most commonly associated with the denial of rights and/or the rejection of equal rights for a group.¹ Chief among them are demands relating to sovereignty, nationalism, and patriotism, which are the most strongly correlated with rights-denial, as well as a cluster relating to personal freedoms, deep government/oligarchy, corruption, and real democracy. Slightly less numerous but still present are demands for jobs and justice.

In the first populist wave, when anti-authoritarianism and economic populism was in the ascendant, there were significantly fewer instances of protests to deny rights. Those instances came along most often with sovereignty and patriotic issues. Examples include dueling Serbian and

¹ Chapter 2, Fig. 21 lists only the number of times the included demands/grievances are found to contain denial of rights demands; other instances of these demands may be found in protests that do not demand rights-denial.

Croatian nationalists protesting war crimes charges in 2011 and the harassment of Roma people in Hungary by nationalist Jobbik party patriots in 2012.

It is striking in the second populist wave that protests to deny rights almost doubled, raising patriotic and nationalist demands in their wake. Cries for personal freedoms (to carry a gun, not to wear a mask, not to be quarantined) went along almost as often as patriotism with demands to deny rights, and conspiratorial beliefs in a “deep state”/“deep foreign powers” as well as grudges against oligarchies and elites were also a strong part of this ethos. Examples can be seen in Erdogan’s Muslim nationalism in Turkey; the calls for order and national conservatism by Bolsonaro in Brazil and Orban in Hungary; the “Revolution of the Pititas” movement in Bolivia against the re-election of President Morales; in the Italian “Orange Vests” movements, whose demands for jobs and affordable fuel have been replaced by protests against pandemic restrictions; and in the QAnon movement that embraces widespread conspiracy theories linked to the January 6, 2021 storming of the United States Capitol.

Anti-corruption protests increased sevenfold during the second wave. A key anti-corruption demand linked to demands for a denial of rights, and seen as early as mid-2013, implicates Brazil’s neo-Pentecostal movement, which advanced their religious rights in alliance with the “Bullets, Bible and Beef” caucus in Congress to overturn the democratically-elected Workers Party government by infiltrating and co-opting Brazil’s burgeoning anti-corruption social movement.² Another demand linked to rights denial that rose in importance was the demand for real democracy, which tripled. Examples include white nationalists in Australia³ and the United States who seek to block social participation by Muslim and non-white immigrants: these white nationalists cited their own democratic rights to have immigration law enforced (Rohac et al., 2018). Also, Canada’s 2015 anti-terrorism law limiting citizens’ rights to protest and peacefully assemble was championed by some rights-deniers as a “defense of democracy.” Demands for better jobs, wages, and labor conditions in the context of calls to deny rights also rose. Examples include Germany’s

² Bevins, V. 2018. “The Brazilian Spring that never arrived: How the hopeful protests of June 2013 were co-opted by forces intent on bringing down the left.” *The Atlantic*, June 20, 2018.

³ See: Australian Associated Press (AAP) 2015. “Five arrested as reclaim Australia and anti-racism protesters face off in Sydney.” *The Guardian*, July 19, 2015.

PEGIDA movement, Britain’s “leave” (the European Union) movement, Kyrgyzstan’s anti-Chinese movement and “yellowvests” movements in France, Ireland, and Canada: all claimed immigrant labor would destroy domestic labor markets.

1.2 *Weaponizing Protests*

Now that we have taken note of the various demands and grievances that accompany rights denial, further context is needed to more fully understand what caused the dramatic shift from anti-authoritarian economic populism to generally authoritarian, denial-of-rights based populism. The sort of economic populism that propelled movements like Occupy Wall Street, with its demand to shatter the economic inequality between the 1% and the 99%, went hand in hand with the movement’s call for real democracy. Exuberant optimism and clever messaging spread the battle of the 99% against the 1% around the globe, and “occupies,” where people assembled in streets and squares to debate how to build communities where everyone’s voice could be heard, could be found from New York to Buenos Aires to Hong Kong.

The importance of this economic populism was a focus by the 99% on charting its own economic destiny by rooting out corruption, corporate influence, and the privilege of elites. They wanted to achieve “economic justice” with an inclusive vision of striving for the common needs of all the 99%. This is the sort of populism that economic historian Thomas Frank says originated in the United States People’s Party of the 1890s, which coined the term “populism” to describe its cross-racial and cross-ethnic organizing first principle: building an economy and society that tries to provide for the common needs of all groups (Frank, 2020).

However, by mid-2013, although the Occupy movement had changed the public debate regarding inequality, its energy had faded, and financial reform to address inequalities had been stymied by financial lobbyists and other forms of political capture (Cortés Saenz & Itriago, 2018). At the same time, Egypt’s democratically-elected successor to the revolution’s overthrown autocrat had himself been overthrown in a military coup, and Tunisia’s mostly nonviolent revolution was in crisis. Furthermore, the shipwreck of the fishing boat Lampedusa and the subsequent deaths of hundreds of Libyan, Somali, and Sudanese refugees and migrants in the Mediterranean off the Italian coast in mid-2013 set the stage for a rising migration crisis and calls to seal borders. With lingering economic

pain due to rising living costs, poor wages, austerity cuts, and corruption, people around the world increasingly lost trust in elites, experts, globalization, and faceless institutions, a situation that was quickly exploited by authoritarian influencers.

There are many examples in history where the fears of lower and middle classes are manipulated by far right movements (Bello, 2019). Hardship makes people susceptible to race-baiting, ethnic or religious slurs, and misogyny. Today, these were the tactics employed as right-wing propaganda became “weaponized” by social media’s algorithm-driven “rabbit holes,” in which people seek out more and more conspiracy theories and extreme information the longer they stay engaged. The result, according to scholars like Tim Wu and Miguel Schor, has been the undermining of advantages that a commitment to free speech once gave democracies over authoritarianism.⁴ The cumulative effect is that people around the world are increasingly isolated in narrow “information bubbles,” ensnared by social media business models developed within a United States legal landscape that does not hold Internet platforms responsible for what is published on them. The Internet influencers and autocrats who benefit from the climate of moral hazard caused by the lack of regulation of new media have also weaponized protests themselves, as demonstrated by the storming of the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021. These charismatic leaders are not populists; they are cynical anti-populists who seek to prevail through the peddling of lies (Frank, 2020). They take advantage of the fact that the problems caused by the 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent migration/refugee crisis, which set the stage for the present situation, have not been corrected, and have even been compounded in intensity since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Thus in the period 2006–2020 we have seen protests being used by political factions to reach power, often encouraging violence. Foreign and national groups are increasingly meddling in national politics through the use of misinformation and disinformation. For example, Brannen et al. (2020) document Russian interference in other countries’ internal affairs and elections by fomenting dissent through fake news and internet hate content, often through “troll farms.” Other groups are also fostering animosity and weakening democracies to advance their interests, by weaponizing misinformation in social media, including but not limited

⁴ Edsall, T.B. 2021. “Have Trump’s lies wrecked free speech?” *New York Times*, January 6, 2021.

to radical right groups. For example, in 2020 multiple United States media outlets reported on white supremacist groups weaponizing protests against police brutality, inciting protesters to start violence.⁵

According to the 2020 Global Satisfaction with Democracy Report, almost 60% of people worldwide are dissatisfied with democracy; this means 1.4 billion people live in countries where democracy is in crisis or malaise (Foa et al., 2020). Sadly, the fracturing of information norms (“facts”), exemplified by the United States’ Trump presidency, has eroded even further the common ground of agreement necessary for democracies to function. The underlying factors driving people into radical right movements—corruption, precarious employment, constrained social mobility and violated rights—are not improving fast enough to stop populism’s authoritarian drift.

To counter radical right populism, societies will need to expose the contradictions of far-right politics, so that people can become aware of them, and they will also need to pursue a radically inclusive form of politics, open but not identitarian, with fair economic policies to reduce inequalities and offer opportunity and better living standards to all citizens. The world will not see a reversal of the trend towards authoritarian nationalist movements unless significant efforts are mounted to fight polarization, inequality, and disinformation. Such efforts would address many of the underlying grievances and yearnings of protesters, which—if ignored—will continue to draw the attention of radical right leaders who seek to divide and conquer.

2 INEQUALITY

2.1 *Inequality and Protests*

Across history, inequality has been considered the ultimate driver of protests. From Marx to Tocqueville, authors have written about inequality, injustice, rebellion, and protests. Today, inequality is staggering, estimated to be the highest in history (United Nations, 2020). As calculated by Oxfam (2020), the world’s richest 1% have more than twice as much wealth as the remaining 6.9 billion people. In the United States,

⁵ *Business Insider*, June 2, 2020: “A white supremacist channel on Telegram encouraged followers to incite violence during police brutality protests by ‘shooting in a crowd,’ according to internal Department of Home Security memo.”

the three richest people have the same amount of wealth as the bottom 160 million. The middle classes have been shrinking in a majority of high-income countries (OECD, 2019), the result of four decades of neoliberal policies and a decade of austerity cuts (della Porta, 2017; Ortiz & Cummins, 2019). Further, inequalities are increasing with the COVID-19 pandemic; while millions of people are being forced into poverty, the richest individuals and corporations returned to their pre-pandemic highs in just nine months (Oxfam, 2021).

Looking at the number of protest and inequality Gini coefficients (after tax and benefits), our research corroborates a positive relation between higher levels of inequality and protests in high-income and middle-income countries (Figs. 2 and 3). However, this is not the case in low-income countries (Fig. 4).

Analyses of the relationship between inequality and political instability have produced a diverse and contradictory array of findings. While the impact of inequality on conflict is still being debated, this study evidences

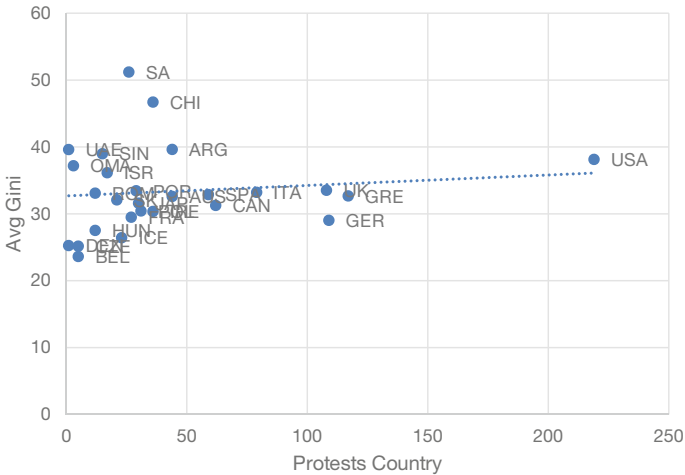


Fig. 2 Inequality and protests in high-income countries (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)

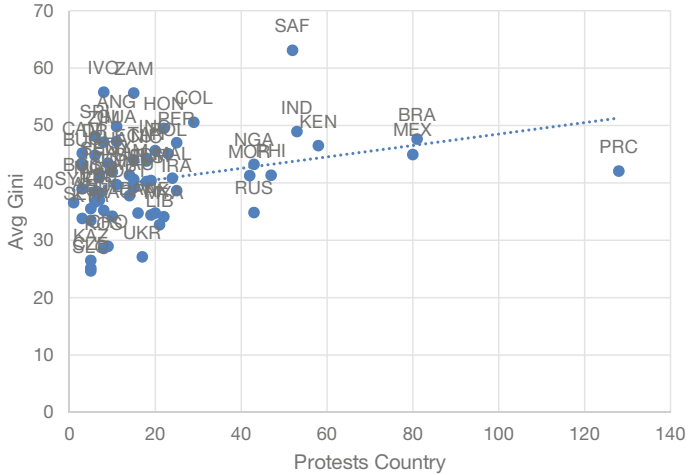


Fig. 3 Inequality and protests in middle-income countries, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)

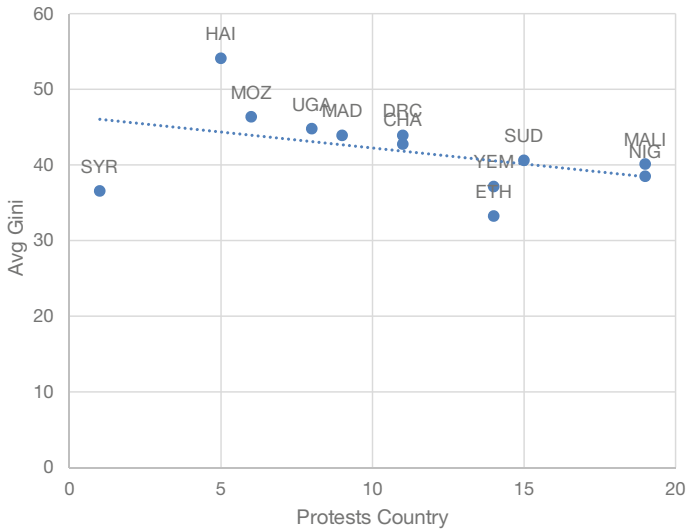


Fig. 4 Inequality and protests in low-income countries, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)

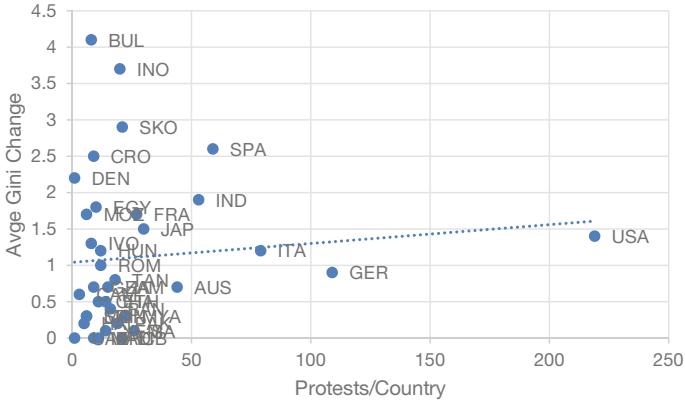


Fig. 5 Protests in countries with increasing inequality, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)

a link between inequality and protests in high- and middle-income countries by looking at Gini coefficients (after tax and benefits) and numbers of protests, updating earlier research (Dubrow et al., 2008).⁶

To further explore the issue, we look at the relationship between protests and increases in inequality. Many commentators have pointed out that changes in inequality are just as important as levels of inequality—Tocqueville’s argument that people rebel more when they perceive declines in their standards of living. Figures 5 and 6 show the relationship between protests and changes in inequality, measured by Gini coefficients (after tax and benefits). The trend lines show that there are more protests in countries with increasing inequality, and vice versa, fewer protests in countries in which inequality is being reduced.

⁶ Other studies use other variables, for example, Collier and Hoeffler (2004) look at the relationship between gini coefficients on income inequality/land inequality and civil wars; MacCulloch (2005) examines Gini indices and the “preference for revolt” taken from surveys.

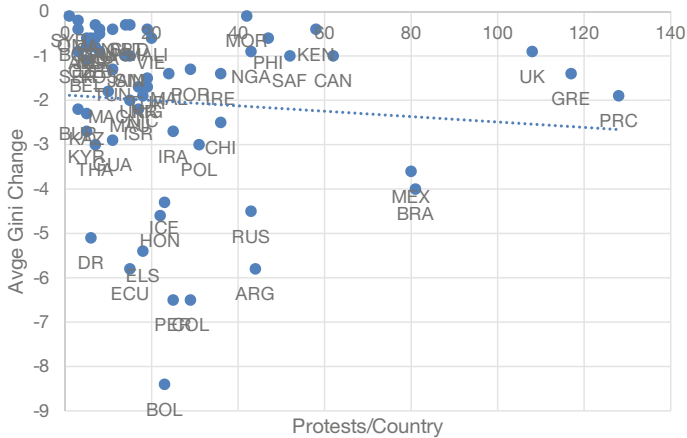


Fig. 6 Protests in countries with decreasing inequality, 2006–2020 (Source: Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Solt, 2020)

2.2 *Protests and the Perception That Governments Serve a Few*

Protestors target governments because they are the legitimate institutions that should respond to citizens. The extension of representative democracy as a form of government in the second part of the twentieth century meant that, for the first time in history, people around the world could choose the persons and policies in government. One result is that even in the very few countries without a liberal democratic regime, like the People’s Republic of China, nonelected governments have been compelled to respond to the socio-economic needs of citizens.

Nevertheless, protestors have been dissatisfied with the results of democratic governments. The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Democracy Index 2020 reveals a disjuncture between still-high levels of public support for democracy across the globe and deep popular disappointment with the functioning of democracy. In their view, there is a stagnation/recession of democracy—particularly in high-income countries— including: (i) an increasing emphasis on elite/expert governance rather than popular participatory democracy; (ii) a growing influence of unelected, unaccountable institutions and expert bodies; (iii) the removal of substantive issues of national importance from the political arena to be decided by politicians, experts, or supranational bodies behind closed

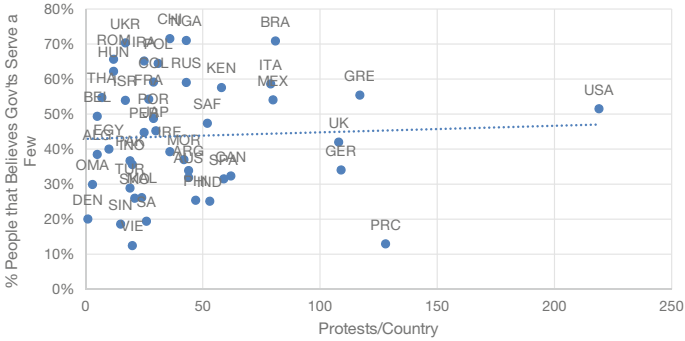


Fig. 7 Protests and the perception that governments serve the few (*Source* Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 and Alliance of Democracies & Dalia Research, 2020)

doors; (iv) a widening gap between political elites and parties on the one hand and national electorates on the other; and (v) a decline in civil liberties, including media freedom and freedom of speech (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020: 6). This is much in accordance with our analysis, with the rise of protests for real democracy and against decisions taken behind closed doors by unaccountable bodies such as the European Union, the IMF, and the G20, as well as protests against the influence of elites and corporations on politics.

The perception that governments are coopted and serve the few (the elites, corporations, unaccountable institutions) instead of serving the majority of citizens is also corroborated by data published by the Alliance of Democracies and Dalia Research (2020) for their Democracy Perception Index. Figure 7 shows a correlation between the percentage of people who believe that governments serve the few, and the number of protests per country.

3 PROTESTING AGAINST CORRUPTION

Corruption is present in 558 protest-episodes (19.9% of all protests analyzed), being the second most important tag overall after “Real Democracy” It has thus been one of the defining issues of the international agenda during the last 15 years, as protests against corruption increased over the period 2006–2020 (Fig. 8).

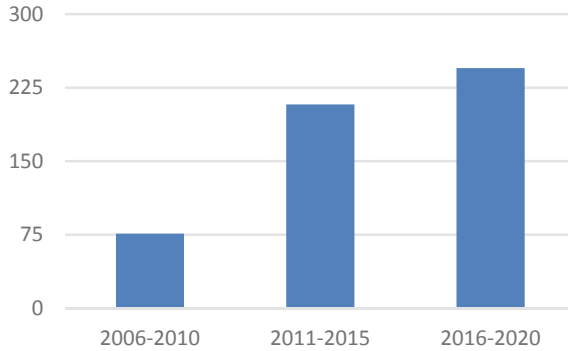


Fig. 8 Protests against corruption, 5-year periods, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

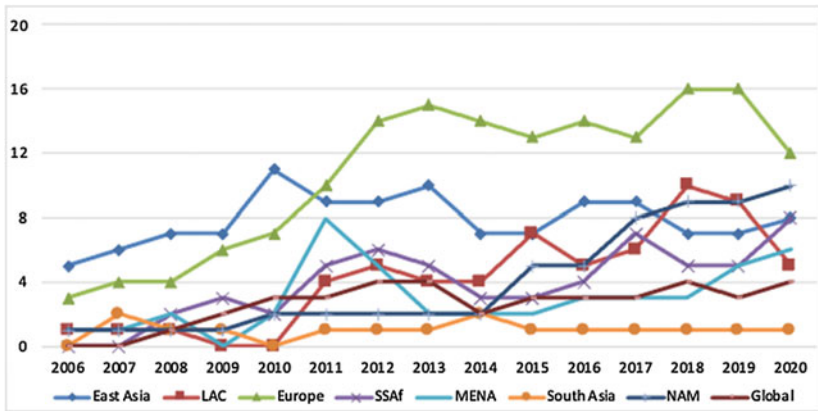


Fig. 9 Protests against corruption per region, 2006–2020 (*Source* Authors' analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

Protests against corruption are present in all world regions (see Fig. 9), although they are more prevalent in Europe and Central Asia. Many emblematic protests happened in this region, such as: those in Iceland (2010 and 2016); in Italy against the Mafia, Berlusconi, or the protests of

the Sardines movement; or in Kyrgyzstan and Russia. Inside this region, it is in the Eastern European subregion where protests against corruption are more numerous. In Bosnia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania corruption and the issues of democracy and deep government are the core of several protests. The issue of corruption is also a key factor in the East Asian and Pacific region. Here there were important protests against corruption such as the ones in South Korea (2019), China—Macao (2006) and Hong Kong (2005).

Corruption is the second most prevalent grievance in protests occurring in middle-income countries—mainly upper-middle-income (318 protests). However, anti-corruption demands are also present in protests in high-income countries.

Both the regional analysis and the country-income analysis demonstrate that corruption is linked not only to developing societies—as it could readily be assumed—but also to high-income countries. The much-assumed causality between democracy and economic development⁷ is thus challenged by the importance attributed to corruption in countries with a high level of development.⁸

Protests analyzed in this study tend to refer to a systemic/structural form of corruption rather than petty crime. This drives the concept towards the idea of political capture, reinforced as high levels of inequality are entrenched in societies and thus power is more and more concentrated in a few hands; this is, the capacity of some elites to influence the political game for their own benefit at the expense of the majority (Cortés Saenz & Itriago, 2018). This grievance has been present in many protests, such as Algeria, Peru, France, and Kyrgyzstan. This perception of the elites (the 1%) rigging the system is also connected to the perception that democracy, or the system, is not serving the 99% of the population. Hence, the importance of “realdemocracy” as the main grievance in many of the protests analyzed (Fig. 10). This is reflected in the perception that the elites abuse their influence in the elaboration of public policies, whether

⁷ See: Friedman, M. with the assistance of Rose D. Friedman. 1962. *Capitalism and Freedom*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press; North, Douglass C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁸ This could lead as well to discussions about how the level of development is measured. See: Costafreda, A., Maruri, E., Cortés Saenz, H. 2020. *The triple challenge of the MICs countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Development in Transition opportunities and the Agenda 2030*. Oxfam Intermon Policy Brief.



Fig. 10 Map of protests against corruption and for real democracy, 2006–2020
(Source <https://worldprotests.org/>)

in the concession of a mine (Bulgaria 2018), rigging elections (Macedonia, 2015), funding universities (Colombia 2019) or enacting energy policies (Nigeria 2012). One of the most paradigmatic examples is the Odebrecht scandal in which a construction company ‘captured’ different governments by financing election campaigns and bribing candidates in exchange for public infrastructure contracts. The revelations of the case sparked protests all over Latin America, especially in Peru (2017) and the Dominican Republic (2018). Finally, even though corruption is clearly linked to public civil servants, the role of transnational corporations, IFIs, and the consulting industry are also relevant and have been targeted in many anti-corruption protests.

4 FIGHTING FOR WOMEN’S RIGHTS

Women’s and girls’ rights are an issue that has increased in importance year by year, with a significant spike from 2018 onwards (Fig. 11), and a cumulative total of 207 protest events for the 2006–2020 period as a whole.

This topic is of particular relevance in the Middle East and North Africa region, where this grievance is the third most numerous—after ‘Real Democracy’ and ‘Jobs/wages’—registering in 58 protest events. There are several examples of protests for women’s rights that have become emblematic—with even global repercussions—and that have achieved



Fig. 11 Protests for women rights, 2006–2020 (Source Authors’ analysis of world protests in media sources 2006–2020 see: <https://worldprotests.org/>)

their objectives after years of protests. Israel is one example with the protests against gender segregation in *mehadrin* bus lines; after many protests—and even diplomatic condemnations—a court ruled against it in 2011. In Saudi Arabia we find two important cases. The first one concerns the protests against the driving ban for women, starting in 2006 and lasting until the ban was removed in 2018. The second one pertains to demands for the right to vote, gained in 2015, when women were legally enabled to vote in local elections and be appointed to the Consultative Assembly.

Another important trend this research shows is the increasing importance of women’s rights protests. Women’s movements have become more visible and powerful, which has transformed the International Women’s Day into a massive global event. Global solidarity around women’s and girls’ rights has become an important element of the current context helping to raise the pressure in favor of their rights everywhere. This has been the case in El Salvador with the abortion protests (2020); #NiUnaMas in Chile (2018); or #BringBackOurGirls after the kidnappings of Nigerian girls (2014). All of them became global protests due to the solidarity and connections between social movements, by which local victories are celebrated as a global victory, as happened with the recent passing of an abortion law in Argentina.

Finally, three more elements are worthy of mention. Firstly, even though women’s rights protests usually use pacifist and traditional

methods, the last years of analysis show the use of alternative methods. This is the case in: the recent protests in Mexico (2020) in which aggressive methods were used; the global #MeToo movement (2017) that denounced sexual harassment and used legal action as an essential method; and FEMEN (2008) activists using their bodies as a protest method. Secondly, as was mentioned above, these protests achieve specific victories but they also demonstrate a broader achievement related to their impact on the social agenda. Lastly, this research differentiates for obvious reasons women's rights protests and LGBT/Sexual rights ones. However, if considered as a single category of protest, their overall importance would rise from 207 protest events to 338 in the period 2006–2020.

5 FROM THE ARAB SPRING TO THE LATIN AMERICA SPRING: IGNORED ECONOMIC DEMANDS LEAD TO POLITICAL DISSENT

On January 4, 2011, Mohamed Bouazizi set himself ablaze in a protest against bad living conditions. That fire took the entire Arab world by surprise. The shock was so strong that some of the regimes with the hardest grip on power fell, notably those of Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, after they saw mass protests sometimes leading to armed insurrection. However, our study reveals that protests were common prior to the Arab Spring. In 2008 in Tunisia there was a massive strike by the miners of Gafsa. For over 15 years, Rabat in Morocco experienced demonstrations by unemployed youth. In Egypt in 2007 and 2008 massive demonstrations by textile workers took place. Even in the United Arab Emirates, which experienced little to no protest during the Arab Spring itself, we find a large strike by construction workers in 2007 demanding higher wages.

By the end of 2019, a slew of demonstrations in Latin America started to be dubbed the “Latin American Spring.” These Latin American protests were not as present in the international media as the Arab Spring had been, in part because of the coronavirus pandemic; however, their impact was significant. In Peru a president was removed, and his replacement stepped down in under a week. In Ecuador and Nicaragua austerity policies were rolled back due to popular pressure. In Chile people demonstrated and voted overwhelmingly in a national plebiscite to establish a

new constitution. Mass movements occurred all over the South America, from Haiti and the Dominican Republic to Brazil and Argentina.

As in the Arab Spring, this was not a sudden change. Our research shows that protestors were as active prior to the Springs in both the Middle East and North Africa and in Latin America. Just a year before, in 2018, farmers in Peru were protesting the very low price at which they had to sell their crops. In 2017 Mexicans were protesting hikes in energy prices. People in Chile had been protesting against education reforms, privatization of pensions, and low incomes, among many other issues.

Our analysis shows that in the 2010–2014 period protestors primarily demonstrated for economic justice and against anti-austerity cuts. However, when their grievances were ignored, frustration set in due to the lack of jobs, inadequate social protection, poor public services, et cetera, such that protests turned more political. These failures of governments led to a new wave of protests starting in 2016–2017. The trend manifests itself in the Middle East and North Africa and in Latin America but is to be found in every region (see Fig. 12a–g).

In the Middle East and North Africa this tendency is even observed twice: there is a first inflection point in 2011 when failure of political representation protests begin to outnumber economic justice protests, then a second one in 2019, during what some observers have called the second Arab Spring. In both these instances protest events related to economic justice were very numerous, right up until protests against political failures exceeded them.

We can observe a global tendency for protest movements to push into the political arena when economic demands are left unanswered. The economic tensions that are voiced through protest should be taken seriously by policymakers, as they tend to evolve into a far less manageable and correctible collection of political demands,⁹ including demands for the potential downfall of governments, as was clearly seen during both the Arab and Latin American Springs.

⁹ See Katz (1999).

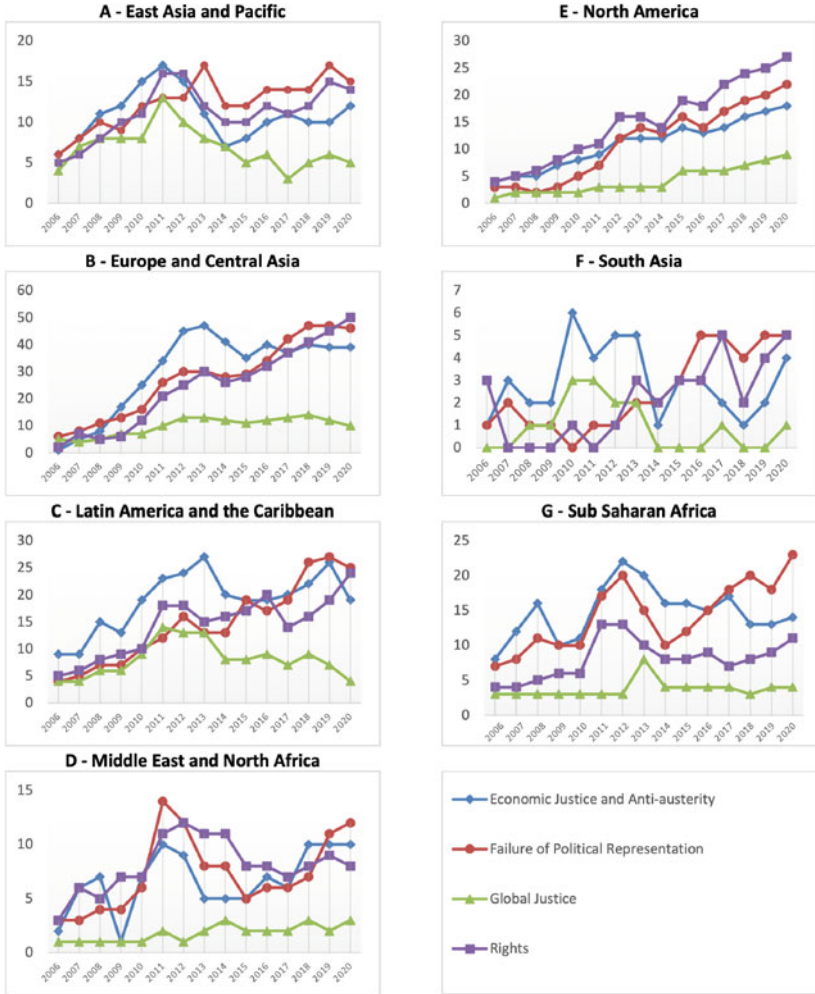


Fig. 12 Main grievances per region 2006–2020

6 PROTESTS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES: WHAT GOVERNMENTS CAN DO

This book has analyzed the main protests that occurred between 2006 and 2020. It described who protests and why, and it looked at the numbers of protestors and their repression in terms of arrests, injuries, and deaths. Further the study has elaborated on methods of protests, presenting 250 methods of nonviolent protest. It also looked at the questions: who do protestors oppose, and what do they achieve? Lastly, it has analyzed a series of key topics such as the rise of radical right protests, inequality, anti-corruption and women rights' protests, and the Arab and Latin American Springs.

This section aims to offer some suggestions regarding what governments can do. Section 10 showed that governments are the most frequent target for protesters, by a wide margin—as the legitimate policy-making institution responsible to citizens. The perception that governments are coopted and serve the few (the elites, corporations, unaccountable institutions such as the G20, the IMF or the European Union) instead of serving the majority of citizens, is corroborated by recent polls and research presented earlier. Nearly 80% of all protests demand that governments take responsibility for economic, social, and environmental policies so that they benefit all, instead of the few.

Ultimately, the story of protests in the period 2006–2020 is one of frustrated citizens taking to the streets because their claims and demands were not met. As detailed in this book, protests are not random unorganized riots: the majority of protests are planned and their grievances are articulated, pointing to the failures of political and economic systems.

The set of policies needed at both national and global levels to address the grievances described in this study cross over into virtually every area of public policy, from jobs, public services, and social protection to good governance, civil rights, fair taxation and resources for national development. Table 1 identifies the main demands that protestors put to policymakers, in the order of their occurrence in world protests. The majority are in full accordance with Human Rights and internationally-agreed United Nations development goals.

States have obligations to respect and fulfill all Human Rights, including the right to protest, the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression established in articles 21 and 19 respectively of

Table 1 Main human rights and development policy demands from world protesters 2006–2020

<i>Demand/grievance</i>	<i>Times raised</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Human rights/developmental policies</i>
Real democracy	779	27.7	As part of good governance, States and policy-makers must serve the interests of all citizens (instead of the few, the elites); participatory/direct democracy
Corruption	558	19.9	The State (the 'duty-bearer' of rights) must be at center of the anti-corruption debate and efforts at all levels, prosecuting corrupt practices and ensuring systems that respond to citizens
Jobs/wages/labor conditions	517	18.4	National and global recovery strategies should focus on employment-generating real-economy growth, raising wages, social protection, and living standards to promote socioeconomic development, in accordance with international labor standards
Reform of public services	478	17.0	Stop reforms based on fiscal cost-savings; the State must guarantee the right to food, water, housing, health, education, social security, and all other Human Rights
Corporate influence/ Deregulation/privatization	418	14.9	As part of good governance, stop rent-seeking practices; promote adequate public services; public institutions must respond to priorities of all citizens instead of prioritizing the private interests of corporations

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Demand/grievance</i>	<i>Times raised</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Human rights/developmental policies</i>
Justice	410	14.6	States and policymakers to ensure that national judicial systems enforce justice for all, without discrimination
Ethnic/indigenous/ racial justice	396	14.1	States must protect the rights of racial minorities and indigenous peoples
Environment/climate Justice	359	12.8	Policymakers to effectively redress climate change and support the environment; to solve conflicts related to infrastructure construction with negative social and environmental externalities; to use environmentally friendly forms of energy; to secure adequate taxation/public revenues from natural resource extraction
Inequality	347	12.4	Policymakers must put an end to gross economic inequalities as well as other inequalities (e.g., ethnicity/race, gender, etc.) as established by Human Rights and other international standards
Tax/fiscal justice	339	12.1	Policy makers to raise fair taxes from wealthy individuals, groups and corporations (e.g., personal and corporate income and wealth taxes, including on the financial sector), fight tax fraud and tax evasion and crack down on tax havens; stop/reverse transfers and bailouts to the financial sector/corporations; stop austerity cuts that negatively affect populations; lower consumption taxes/VAT on products that low-income people consume

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Demand/grievance</i>	<i>Times raised</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Human rights/developmental policies</i>
Anti-international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank, regional banks)	319	11.4	The IFIs should not apply conditionalities, particularly those undermining Human Rights and international labor and environmental standards such as those based on the Washington Consensus, minimizing the public sector, promoting liberalization, deregulation, and privatization; current IFIs should be reformed or new institutions be put in place to promote Human Rights, equitable and sustainable development for all
Rights to the commons	299	10.6	Preserve and ensure universal access to the commons (digital, water, cultural, atmospheric)
Low living standards	283	10.1	States and policymakers to end poverty and raise living standards, including with better jobs, wages, and social protection benefits in accordance with international standards and Human Rights
Sovereignty/patriotic issues	264	9.4	While collaboration on global matters is necessary, policy-making must focus on serving the interest of their citizens first
Anti-imperialism	263	9.4	World/regional powers must stop interference in national policy-making of weaker nations; respect national sovereignty; stop wars and military intervention
Transparency and accountability	244	8.7	As part of good governance, States and policy-makers must enforce transparent and accountable processes and institutions that respond to people

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Demand/grievance</i>	<i>Times raised</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Human rights/developmental policies</i>
Deep government/Oligarchy	211	7.5	As part of good governance, States policy-makers must stop the influence of any vested interest/groups on government and serve the interests of all persons
Freedom of assembly/speech/press	208	7.4	States and policy-makers must ensure the right to assembly, freedom of speech and press
Women's/girls' rights	207	7.4	Women are half of the world population but do not benefit equally from policies; States and policymakers to promote and enforce gender equality
Labor rights	199	7.1	States and policymakers to promote and protect labor rights to allow workers and their families to live in dignity, in accordance with international labor standards
Agrarian/land reform	181	6.4	States and policymakers to redress inequalities in landownership and land use to allow for decent incomes in rural areas
Anti-war/military-industrial complex	181	6.4	States and policymakers to enforce the right to peace, stop wars and military interventions; reduce arms trade; rent-seeking practices by the military-industrial complex must be forbidden
Fuel and energy prices	136	4.8	Policymakers to ensure affordable and sustainable energy to populations
LGBT/Sexual Rights	131	4.7	States to promote and respect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered rights; sexual orientation is a personal choice that must be the sole decision of the person involved without external coercion

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Demand/grievance</i>	<i>Times raised</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Human rights/developmental policies</i>
Immigrant rights	121	4.3	States to promote and fulfill immigrants' rights
Citizen surveillance	103	3.7	Governments to stop surveillance/spying on citizens and restricting the Internet
Pension reform	97	3.5	States and policymakers to stop pension reforms driven by cost-savings and pressures from private insurance lobbies to privatize; focus instead on improving public systems to sustainably and equitably provide old-age income security in accordance with international standards
Anti-free trade	96	3.4	Policymakers to stop the drive to free trade agreements that hinder national productive capacities and employment
Housing	85	3.0	States and policymakers to stop evictions and fulfill the right to housing
Prisoners' rights	75	2.7	States to promote and respect rights of prisoners
Food prices	73	2.6	States and policymakers to fulfill the right to food
Global commons	71	2.5	Ensure good governance/stewardship of the global commons e.g., internet, climate, biodiversity
Religious rights	71	2.5	Religious freedom needs to be guaranteed in its various expressions
Anti-G20	37	1.3	The G20 (or the G8) are non-legitimate and non-democratic organizations that should not set policies that interfere with other nations' development and Human Rights achievements

the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (United Nations, 2013). Peaceful protests are a fundamental aspect of a vibrant democracy. Historically, protests have been a means to achieve fundamental rights at the national and international level (Tilly, 1978; United Nations, 2012).

Governments need to listen to the messages coming from protesters, whether well-articulated or not, and act on them. The demands from protestors are often well-established development policies, agreed by all countries at the United Nations and in their national development strategies. A real transformation is required beyond calls for “policy shifts” and “building back better,” which are by now standard buzzwords of the world’s governments and intergovernmental organizations. Leaders and policymakers will only invite further unrest if they fail to prioritize and act on protestors’ demands.

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Conclusions

Abstract The conclusion of “World Protests: A Study of Key Protest Issues in the 21st-Century” provides a summary of the content of the book: who protests, why and how they protest, as well as achievements and fallbacks. Protests have increased in all world regions, with demands articulated for real democracy, jobs, public services, social protection, civil rights, global justice and against austerity and corruption. The study also identifies 250 methods of protest and discusses selected topics such as inequality, the rise of radical right and women’s protests. The book calls on governments to listen and act on the main demands of protestors.

Keywords Protests · Social movements · Democracy · Austerity · Crisis · Civil rights · Social justice · Human rights

This book analyzes 2809 protests that occurred between 2006 and 2020 in 101 countries covering over 93% of the world population. It focuses on: (i) major grievances driving world protests, (ii) who was demonstrating, (iii) what protest methods they used, (iv) who did the protestors oppose, (v) what was achieved, (vi) repression in terms of arrests, injuries, and deaths, and (vii) trends such as the rise of women’s and radical right protests, and the Arab and the Latin American Springs. An annex presents 250 methods of non-violent protest. Most of the demands of protestors were in full accordance with Human Rights and internationally

agreed UN development goals; the study calls for policy-makers to listen, whether messages are fully articulated or communicated only through frustration and even violence.

In recent years the world has been shaken by protests, from the Arab Spring to the “yellow vests,” from the Occupy movement to the social uprising in Chile and Latin America. There have been periods in history when large numbers of people rebelled against the way things were, demanding change, such as in 1848, 1917, and 1968; today we are experiencing another period of rising outrage and discontent, and some of the largest protests in world history.

Beginning in 2006, there was a steady rise in overall protests each year up to 2020. As the global financial crisis began to unfold in 2007–2008, we observe a first jump in the number of protests. Demonstrations intensified with the adoption of austerity cuts/reforms worldwide after 2010. Discontent with the workings of governments peaked in 2012–2013, when people were protesting against a lack of real democracy and the low accountability of decision-makers to the people. Since 2016, protests have escalated again—often becoming “omnibus protests” (protesting on multiple issues) against the political and economic system. Polls worldwide reflect dissatisfaction with democracies and lack of trust in governments. Decades of neoliberal policies have generated large inequalities and eroded the incomes and the welfare of both lower and middle classes, fueling feelings of injustice, disappointment with malfunctioning democracies, and frustration with failures of economic and social development. In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic accentuated social unrest.

Protests have increased in all world regions. The study found a greater prevalence of protests in middle-income countries (1327 events) and high-income countries (1122 protests) than in low-income countries (121 events). Interestingly, the period 2006–2020 reflects an increasing number of global protests (239 events), organized across regions.

These protests were not random, unorganized riots; the majority of world protests were planned, and their demands were articulated. The main grievances and causes of outrage were:

- **Failure of Political Representation and Political Systems:** 1503 protests were related to the lack of real democracy; corruption; failure to receive justice from the legal system; sovereignty and patriotic issues; transparency and accountability; the perceived power of

a deep government or oligarchy; anti-war or against the military-industrial complex; the surveillance of citizens; and anti-socialism and anti-communism.

- **Economic Justice and Anti-Austerity:** 1484 protests on issues related to jobs, wages and/or labor conditions; the reform of public services; corporate influence, deregulation, and privatization; inequality; tax and fiscal justice; low living standards; agrarian/land reform; high fuel and energy prices; pension reform; housing; and high food prices.
- **Civil Rights:** 1360 protests on ethnic/indigenous/racial rights; right to the commons (digital, land, cultural, atmospheric); freedom of assembly, speech, and press; women's and girls' rights; labor rights; LGBT and sexual rights; immigrants' rights; personal freedoms; prisoners' rights and religious issues. In this category have been added those radical right protests that sought to deny rights or reject equal rights for a group (e.g., against minorities).
- **Global Justice:** 897 protests were for environmental and climate justice; against the IMF, the World Bank, and the European Union/European Central Bank; against imperialism (United States, China); against free trade; in defense of the global commons; and against the G20.

Our analysis of protest movements in 2006–2020 shows that protestors demonstrated for economic justice and anti-austerity reforms primarily during the 2010–2014 period. When grievances remained unacknowledged, frustration grew because of a lack of decent jobs, social protection, public services, agrarian and tax justice, among other concerns. In consequence, protests became more political, sparking a new wave of protests fueled by the failure of democracies, starting in 2016. Protests linked to civil rights also intensified steadily during the period covered. Global-justice related protests increased in the period, but at a more moderate rate than the other categories.

A profile of demonstrators reveals not only traditional protesters (e.g. activists, NGOs/CSOs, trade unions); on the contrary, middle classes, women, students and youth, pensioners, indigenous, ethnic and racial groups, as well as other grassroot citizens were actively protesting in most countries. These citizens do not consider themselves activists and yet they protest because they are disillusioned with official processes, political parties and the other usual political actors associated with them.

Mass middle-class involvement in protests indicates a new dynamic: A pre-existing solidarity of the middle classes with elites has been replaced in many countries by a lack of trust and awareness that the prevailing economic system is not producing positive outcomes for them.

Not only has the number of protests been increasing, but so also has the number of protestors. Crowd estimates suggest that at least 52 events had one million or more protesters. The period 2006–2020 has experienced some of the largest protests in world history; the largest recorded was the 2020 strike in India against the government’s plan to liberalize farming and labor, estimated to have involved 250 million protestors. While the overwhelming majority of large protests were related to progressive issues, such as more and better jobs, wages and pensions; investments in health, education and public services; protection of farmers; action on climate change; racial justice; women and civil rights; against austerity cuts, corruption and inequality; a number of protests were led by radical right groups such as the QAnon protests in 2020 in the United States and globally; opposition to Muslims, migrants, and refugees in Germany; or the protests against the Workers Party in Brazil in 2013 and 2015.

Protestors used a wide range of methods. This study has identified 250 methods of non-violent protest, presented in Annex B, updating Gene Sharp’s “198 methods of nonviolent action” (Sharp, 1973). Our research found that marches and protest assemblies (or rallies), blockades, strikes and occupations, as well as internet activism, were the most common methods of protest. The period 2006–2020 also captures the advent of a new era of civil disobedience/direct action carried out by computer hackers and whistleblowers who “leaked” massive amounts of government and corporate data, and by lawyers who launched lawsuits/litigation to advance social and environmental progress. Contrary to public perceptions, riots and protests involving violence and vandalism/looting represent only 20% of the total. Though only used by a few, 5% of protests record desperate methods such as hunger strikes and self-inflicted violence (e.g. self-immolation, protestors sewing their own lips).

Who do protestors oppose? The most frequent target for protestors, by a wide margin, is their own national government—as the legitimate policy-making institution responsible to citizens. Nearly 80% of all protests demand that governments take responsibility for economic, social, and environmental policies so that they benefit all, instead of the few. Protestors further oppose distant and unaccountable

systems/institutions such as the political and economic system (30%), corporations/employers (23%), the European Union/European Central Bank (16%), elites (14%), political parties/groups (14%), military/police (14%), the IMF (10%—and the World Bank 1%), the financial sector (9%), free trade (3%), the G20 (nearly 3%), as well as the United States of America (6%) and China's imperialism (3%).

What did protesters achieve? Historically, protests have been a means to achieve fundamental rights at the national and international level. Our research shows that 42% of protests resulted in some kind of demonstrable achievement, generally a partial success. Success is rarely the result of one protest event alone, but the result of many years of protests focusing on the same grievance/demand. These outcomes are not necessarily negative, since many of the protests are engaged with long-term structural issues that may yield results in time; incremental or short-term achievements may prove to be precursors to more comprehensive change. Concrete demands (e.g., a rise in wages, the reinstatement of subsidies, such as for food and fuel, or the halting of infrastructure construction) have more chances of success than protests that aim at structural change. The more structural the issue is (e.g., inequality, free trade, imperialism) and the more distant the opponents (e.g. the G20, the financial sector, the IMF, military alliances), the lower the rates of achievements. Protests targeting governments (both national and local), religious authorities, employers, and local corporations have higher rates of success.

Repression is documented in more than 60% of the protest episodes analyzed in the study, taking the form of arrests, injuries and deaths due to state-organized violence. Other reported methods of repression include teargas, surveillance, retaliatory laws, harassment, lawsuits, missing people, displaced people, gunshots, torture, internet restrictions, expulsion, and deportation. According to media reports, the protests that generated the most arrests in the period 2006–2020 were in Hong Kong (China), Egypt, France, Iran, United Kingdom, Russia, Sudan, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, the United States, Canada, and Cameroon, with 10,000 to 1000 arrests per protest. The protests that resulted in the largest numbers of reported injuries were in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as well as in Egypt, Chile, Thailand, Ecuador, Lebanon, Algeria, Hungary, and Indonesia. In terms of deaths, the worst countries are Kyrgyzstan, Egypt, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Kenya, Iran, Ethiopia, and Sudan. It must be noted that while arrests and surveillance

are directly linked to government-led repression, a number of the injuries and deaths may be the result of violent clashes between different groups.

In recent years, there has been a shift from anti-authoritarian left-wing populist protests to generally authoritarian, far right populist protests across the world. Some common traits of radical right protests include the condemnation of political systems with allegations of corruption and insinuations that dark forces in a “deep state” are conspiring to deny economic security to the middle classes. This is the profile that led to the QAnon movement and the assault on the United States Capitol, as well as to “deep European/foreign powers” conspiracies in the case of Hungary, Poland, the United Kingdom and Turkey. While the anger behind these protests may be a rational response to political systems that have failed for years to deliver on people’s economic needs, the most unsettling characteristic of this populist wave is how many protesters demand not only their own rights, but to deny rights and equal status to groups they think threaten their jobs or status, such as immigrants (e.g. Germany’s Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident or PEGIDA; the “leave the European Union” movement in the United Kingdom; and a number of the “yellow vests” protests in France, Ireland, and Canada). Other traits include cries for personal freedoms (to carry a gun, not to wear a mask, not to be quarantined), nationalism, patriotism and the promotion of traditional values. Such is the case with the “cow vigilantes” in Modi’s India, Erdogan’s Muslim nationalism in Turkey, and the “Bullets, Bible and Beef” caucus in Brazil’s Congress which aimed to overturn the democratically-elected Workers Party. Many national and foreign groups are also fostering animosity and weakening democracies to advance their interests, by weaponizing misinformation and disinformation in social media.

Thus, in the period 2006–2020 we have seen protests being used by political factions to reach power, often encouraging violence. To counter radical right populism, societies will need to expose the contradictions of far-right politics, so that people can see for themselves. Societies also will need to pursue fair economic policies to reduce inequalities and offer opportunity and better living standards to all. The world will not see a reversal of the trend towards authoritarian nationalist movements unless significant efforts are mounted to fight polarization, inequality, and dis/misinformation.

Our research corroborates a positive relation between higher levels of inequality and protests in high-income and middle-income countries; however, this is not the case in low-income countries. To further explore the issue, we looked at the relationship between protests and increases/decreases in inequality Gini coefficients (after tax and benefits); showing that there are more protests in countries with increasing inequality, and vice versa, fewer protests in countries in which inequality is being reduced. Data analysis also shows a correlation between the percentage of people who believe that governments serve the few, and the number of protests per country.

Another important trend is the increasing importance of women's and girls' rights protests both at national and global levels. The global #MeToo movement (2017–) that denounced sexual harassment and unequal pay and opportunities in the workplace; #NiUnaMas in Chile (2018–) and Spanish-speaking countries; or more local protests such as Saudi Arabia's to allow women to vote and drive (2006–2017) and #BringBackOurGirls after the kidnappings of Nigerian girls (2014), are recent examples of protests fighting for women's rights.

The set of policies needed at the national and global levels to address the grievances described in this book cross over virtually every area of public policy, from jobs, public services, and social protection to good governance, lack of corruption, fair taxation, and civil rights. Governments need to listen to the messages coming from protesters. Most demands are in full accordance with Human Rights and internationally agreed UN development goals. Leaders and policymakers will only invite further unrest if they fail to listen and act on the main demands of protesters.

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ANNEXES

Annex A: Methodology

The methodology behind the gathering of PEA data on protests around the world in the period 2006–2020 is the result of a collaborative effort that took place in 2013 in New York and then virtually in 2020. The study uses data compiled through the World Protests website (<https://worldprotests.org/>), developed by the authors with support from the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and the Global Social Justice/Initiative for Policy Dialogue. The research compiles data from 16 years of news reports available online in six main languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, as well as selected news in Chinese and Hindi), published between January 2006 and December 2020 in 101 countries, as well as data on a number of protests that cross international boundaries.

In keeping current with new tendencies around the world, the taxonomy that is in use here has been updated from the one used in the 2006–2013 working paper (Ortiz et al., 2013). The refinements that were introduced since 2013 have been vastly informed by the comments of participants—including both researchers and social activists—in events organized around the first paper or the accompanying database on the World Protests website. A full list of the taxonomy of each category can be found in this annex.

Statistical Definitions and Computations

The units of analysis used in this study are (1) the “protest movement” or “protest episode,” defined as an event or sequence of events with a common and identifiable grievance or set of demands, and (2) the “protest event,” comprising protest activities lasting no longer than one year. Since some protests on the same issue and led by the same actors are active throughout multiple years, such episodes have been broken down into their component events for the purposes of statistical analysis. So a protest movement lasting between a few days and less than a year will represent one protest event in our count, as contrasted with a protest movement lasting for 10 years, which would be represented by 10 protest events in our calculations. For example, from January 2006 (the beginning of the period covered by the book) through 2009, unions in the United States have been organizing consistently against attacks on collective bargaining rights. Rather than counting this four-year-long activity as a single event, we have divided it into four protest events, one for each year (2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009, given that there were multiple protest activities by trade unions in each year); otherwise, a four-year protest effort would be equal to a small one-time protest event.

Protests were then classified according to a taxonomy of categories, presented below. The way the categories are defined in the following taxonomy is made so that they are not mutually exclusive, e.g., a protest may be classified under more than one subclassification. For instance, protestors may demonstrate on multiple related issues in the same protest event (e.g., they may be demonstrating against the reform of public services, while also denouncing corporate influence and low incomes). In this case, the protest would be classified as having these three grievances/demands. This multiplicity of categories is very common in demonstrations and rallies. Therefore, if one goes through the statistical tables and recounts the percentages, they will frequently find them summing to above 100%.¹ In most cases the percentage is obtained by dividing the category by the number of protest events. The percentage might also be obtained by dividing the category by the total number of

¹ This is clearly visible in Chapter 2, Fig. 1, in which each cluster total is less than the sum of the issues that comprise it. The totals in Chapter 2, Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 also reflect that method of counting.

protest events in a subcategory. In order to make the number of categories and subcategories clear, Chapter 2, Fig. 2 shows all the numbers of events for each category of grievance.

Taxonomy

Each chapter of the book represents an aspect of protest movements. Each protest is classified according to its demands, methods, groups protesting, target groups, and method of repression, according to the specific taxonomy presented below. The categorization of issues is subsequent to the data-gathering process explained earlier.

The following categories have been used for statistical and analytical purposes in each section:

Main Grievances and Their Subcategories

Economic Justice and Austerity

With the subcategories:

- Jobs, higher wages, labor conditions
- Reform of public services (education/ health/ water)
- Corporate influence/ Deregulation/ Privatization
- Inequality
- Tax/Fiscal justice
- Low living standards
- Agrarian/land reform
- Fuel and energy prices
- Pension reform
- Housing
- Food prices

Failure of Political Representation

With the subcategories:

- Real Democracy
- Corruption
- Justice
- Sovereignty/Patriotic Issues
- Transparency and accountability
- Deep Government/Oligarchy
- Anti-war/Military-Industrial Complex
- Citizen Surveillance
- Anti-socialism/communism

Civil Rights

With the subcategories::

- Ethnic/indigenous/racial justice
- Rights to the commons (digital, land, cultural, atmospheric)
- Freedom of assembly/speech/press
- Deny rights/reject equal rights for others
- Women’s/Girls’ rights
- Labor rights
- LGBT/sexual rights
- Immigrant rights
- Personal freedoms
- Prisoners’ rights
- Religious rights

Global Justice

With the subcategories:

- Environment/Climate Justice
- Anti-International Financial Institutions
- Anti-Imperialism
- Anti-Free Trade
- Global Commons
- Anti G20

Who Protests

We categorize different activists according to their own description when available, and as grassroots if either stated or not found, gathering data from multiple sources to create a realistic account of protests seen in 2006–2020, bearing in mind that there can be more than one category of protesters for the same protest episode:

- Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) /Civil Society Organization (CSO)
- Grassroots
- Political Party/Movement
- Trade Unions
- Social Movements
- Students/Youth
- Indigenous group
- Ethnic/Racial group
- Women/Girls/Feminist
- Hackers
- Government
- Employers organization
- Police/Military/Militia
- Prisoners

Methods of Protest

This study has identified 250 methods of protests (Annex B), updating Sharp’s *198 Methods of Non-Violent Action* (1973). The analysis focused on the most common methods:

- Marches
- Protest assemblies
- Occupations (including factory takeovers)
- Civil disobedience/direct action
- Strikes/walkouts
- Blockades
- Formal statements
- Educational actions
- Violence
- Vandalism/looting
- Internet activism
- General assemblies
- Political stunts
- Hunger strikes
- Hacking
- Whistleblowing/leaks
- Noisemaking/Pot-banging
- Celebrity endorsements
- Form new political party/movement
- Legal/electoral redress
- Petition drives
- Mutual aid
- Street theater and music
- Boycotts
- Lawsuits
- Self-inflicted violence
- Merchant strikes
- Religious processions/public prayer

Opponents

Opponents are the groups or organizations that the protest or movement is targeting. Movements describe their targets in various ways, from very specific, such as individual corporations in the case of localized strikes, to more general, as, for example, in the case of a protest against the entire government or the whole of the financial sector. Some cases have arisen in which the whole political/economic system is the target of a movement, as is the case of the Arab Spring and the Occupy movements.

- Government (National)
- Political/economic system
- Corporations/employers
- Elites
- Political Parties/Groups
- Military/police
- Financial Sector
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- Government (Provincial/local)
- European Union
- United States
- European Central Bank (ECB)
- Free Trade
- Specific Social Groups
- Inequality
- China
- Religious authorities
- G20
- World Bank

Repression

If cited by trusted news sources, repression is documented in the following categories, attention has been given to cases in which violence is reported with no mention of police or government forces, that case is counted separately from specifically-described police violence.

- Arrests
- Violence (Police)
- Injuries
- Deaths
- Violence (Crowd)
- Teargas
- Retaliatory laws
- Harassment
- Lawsuits
- Missing People
- Displaced people
- Gunshots
- Torture
- Internet Restrictions
- Expulsion
- Deportation

Annex B: 250 Methods of Non-Violent Protests

The following is a summary update of the 198 nonviolent methods used in nonviolent struggles from Gene Sharp's *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (1973), adding new methods from recent experiences in this study of World Protests 2006–2020.

METHODS OF NONVIOLENT PROTEST AND PERSUASION

Formal Statements

1. Public Speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public statements
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

Communications with a Wider Audience

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earthwriting
13. Human banners
14. Write hoax/fake news
15. Mockumentaries (mock documentaries)
16. Coded language to overcome repression

Digital and Online Activism

17. Online petitions
18. Email and social media campaigning
19. Social networks
20. Trending hashtags
21. Blogs
22. Mass emails/calls to an official
23. Livestreaming situations
24. Crowdfunding
25. Hacktivism/disrupting websites
26. Trolling (e.g., trading stocks, hashtag flooding)
27. Database leaks
28. Virtual sit-ins
29. Clicktivism
30. Maptivism (maps for activism e.g. climate change)
31. Influencing Internet search engines
32. Faux mocking websites, videos
33. Sousveillance (covert surveillance by citizens)

Group Representations

34. Deputations
35. Mock awards
36. Group lobbying
37. Picketing
38. Mock elections
39. Absurd candidates/parties

Symbolic Public Acts

40. Occupations (buildings, squares...)
41. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
42. Wearing of symbols

43. Prayer and worship
44. Delivering symbolic objects
45. Partial or total nudity (e.g., FEMEN)
46. Flash mobs
47. Destruction of own property
48. Symbolic lights/candles
49. Displays of portraits
50. Paint and graffiti
51. New signs and names
52. Pot-banging/*Caceroladas*
53. Drumming
54. Car horns
55. Symbolic sounds
56. Symbolic reclamations
57. Rude gestures
58. Growing or shaving hair as protest
59. Express dissent/kneel during national anthem

Pressures on Individuals

60. "Haunting" officials
61. Taunting officials
62. Fraternization
63. Mailing symbolic items
64. Vigils

Drama and Music

65. Humorous skits and pranks
66. Performances of plays and music
67. Singing

Processions

68. Marches
69. Parades

- 70. Religious processions
- 71. Pilgrimages
- 72. Motorcades/Car caravans
- 73. Disguised marches (e.g. walk-to-work, walk-to-pray)

Honoring the Dead

- 74. Political mourning
- 75. Mock funerals
- 76. Demonstrative funerals
- 77. Homage at burial places

Public Assemblies

- 78. Assemblies of protest or support
- 79. Protest meetings
- 80. Camouflaged meetings of protest
- 81. Teach-ins
- 82. Human chains
- 83. Coordinated worldwide demonstrations

Withdrawal and Renunciation

- 84. Walkouts
- 85. Silence
- 86. Renouncing honors
- 87. Turning one's back

METHODS OF SOCIAL NONCOOPERATION

Ostracism of Persons

- 88. Social boycott
- 89. Selective social boycott
- 90. Lysistratic nonaction/Sex strike
- 91. Excommunication
- 92. Interdict

Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

- 93. Suspension of social and sports activities
- 94. Boycott of social affairs
- 95. Student strike
- 96. Social disobedience
- 97. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the Social System

- 98. Stay-at-home
- 99. Total personal noncooperation
- 100. "Flight" of workers
- 101. Retreat to sanctuary
- 102. Collective disappearance
- 103. Protest emigration (*hijrat*)

METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: ECONOMIC BOYCOTTS

Actions by Consumers

- 104. Consumers' boycott
- 105. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
- 106. Policy of austerity
- 107. Rent withholding
- 108. Refusal to rent
- 109. National consumers' boycott
- 110. International consumers' boycott

Action by Workers and Producers

- 111. Workmen's boycott
- 112. Producers' boycott

Action by Middlemen

113. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

Action by Owners and Management

114. Traders' boycott

115. Refusal to let or sell property

116. Lockout

117. Refusal of industrial assistance

118. Merchants' "general strike"

119. Action by Holders of Financial Resources

120. Withdrawal of bank deposits/transfer to savings cooperatives

121. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments

122. Refusal to pay debts or interest

123. Severance of funds and credit

124. Revenue refusal

125. Refusal of a government's money

Action by Governments

126. Domestic embargo

127. Blacklisting of traders

128. International sellers' embargo

129. International buyers' embargo

130. International trade embargo/economic sanctions

METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: THE STRIKE

Traditional Strikes

131. Protest strike

132. Walkout

133. Refusal to fulfill the obligations of a job

134. Picket lines

135. Lockout

136. Sector strike

137. National/General strike

138. Sympathetic strike (in solidarity)

139. Reverse strike (overwork)

Agricultural Strikes

140. Peasant strike

141. Farm Workers' strike

142. Disrupting traffic with tractors

143. Tipping produce/manure onto public spaces

Strikes by Special Groups

144. Refusal to work in prison

145. Prisoners' disobedience

146. Wheelchair caravan

147. Inflatable items to obstruct and impede traffic

148. Professional strike

149. Corporate whistleblowing

Restricted Strikes

150. Detailed strike (a carefully planned strike with work stoppages over a period)

151. Bumper strike (unions strike one firm at a time)

152. Slowdown strike/Working-to-rule strike (low productivity by meticulously following all rules)

153. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)

- 154. Strike by resignation (*En masse* resignation)
- 155. Limited strike (workers refuse certain amounts of work)
- 156. Selective strike

Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures

- 157. Hartal (suspended economic activity for a set amount of time)
- 158. Economic shutdown

METHODS OF POLITICAL NONCOOPERATION

Rejection of Authority

- 159. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 160. Refusal of public support
- 161. Literature and speeches advocating resistance
- 162. Citizens' Noncooperation with Government
- 163. Boycott of legislative bodies
- 164. Boycott of elections
- 165. Boycott of government employment and positions
- 166. Boycott of government depts., agencies, and other bodies
- 167. Public filibusters
- 168. Withdrawal from government educational institutions
- 169. Boycott of government-supported organizations
- 170. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents

- 171. Removal of own signs and placemarks
- 172. Refusal to accept appointed officials
- 173. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions
- 174. Mock government documents/forms

Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience

- 175. Reluctant and slow compliance
- 176. Disobedience
- 177. Disguised disobedience
- 178. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 179. Sitdown
- 180. Conscientious objection (e.g. military service)
- 181. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation
- 182. Hiding, escape, and false identities
- 183. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws
- 184. Samizdat (distributing censored materials)

Action by Government Personnel

- 185. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
- 186. Blocking of lines of command and information
- 187. Filibuster delaying tactics
- 188. Stalling and obstruction
- 189. General administrative noncooperation
- 190. Judicial noncooperation

- 191. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
- 192. Whistleblowing/leaks
- 193. Mutiny

Domestic Governmental Action

- 194. Quasi-legal evasions and delays
- 195. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

International Governmental Action

- 196. Changes in diplomatic and other representations
- 197. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
- 198. Withholding of diplomatic recognition
- 199. Severance of diplomatic relations
- 200. Withdrawal from international organizations
- 201. Refusal of membership in international bodies
- 202. Expulsion from international organizations

**METHODS OF
NONVIOLENT
INTERVENTION**

Personal Intervention

- 203. Self-exposure to the elements
- 204. The fast
 - a. Fast of moral pressure
 - b. Hunger strike
 - c. Satyagrahic fast (Gandhi)

- 205. Chaining oneself to buildings
- 206. Taking the hit, not responding to violence by police or others
- 207. Sewing own lips
- 208. Self-immolation (protest suicide)

Occupation Interventions

- 209. Sit-in
- 210. Stand-in
- 211. Wade-in
- 212. Mill-in
- 213. Pray-in
- 214. Nonviolent raids
- 215. Nonviolent invasion
- 216. Nonviolent interjection
- 217. Nonviolent obstruction
- 218. Tunnel digging/stay-in
- 219. Peace camps (e.g. outside military bases)

Social Intervention

- 220. Establishing new social patterns
- 221. Overloading of facilities
- 222. Stall-in
- 223. Speak-in
- 224. Guerrilla theater
- 225. Alternative social institutions
- 226. Alternative communication system
- 227. NIMBY (not in my backyard – neighbors opposing land developments)

Legal and Para-legal Intervention

- 228. Official lawsuits

- 229. Litigation (e.g. climate change litigation)
- 230. Judicial activism
- 231. Consumer courts
- 232. Enacting People's Popular Tribunals or People's Courts
- 233. Mock/reverse trials

Economic Intervention

- 234. Nonviolent land seizure
- 235. Defiance of blockades
- 236. Politically motivated counterfeiting (e.g. use fake money to mock corruption)
- 237. Preclusive purchasing
- 238. Seizure of assets
- 239. Dumping
- 240. Selective patronage
- 241. Alternative markets

- 242. Alternative transportation systems
- 243. Alternative economic institutions

Political Intervention

- 244. Overloading of administrative systems
- 245. Disclosing identities of people serving elites
- 246. Seeking imprisonment
- 247. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
- 248. Work-on without collaboration
- 249. Dual sovereignty and parallel government
- 250. Self-imposed transparency

Annex C: Main World Protest 2006–2020

<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Argentina	Pre 2006	Argentines protest mine contamination
Argentina	Pre 2006	Argentines protest construction of paper mill on Argentina-Uruguay border
Brazil	Pre 2006	Protesters in Brazil demand halt to dam construction
Brazil	Pre 2006	Brazil's Landless Workers Movement demands reforms and justice
Brazil	Pre 2006	Brazilians protest government response to ongoing drought
Brazil	Pre 2006	Workers in Brazil protest conditions
China	Pre 2006	Citizens of Hong Kong protest Beijing's influence and demand full democracy
China	Pre 2006	Chinese residents protest land-grabs
China	Pre 2006	Protesters in Hong Kong mark anniversary of Tiananmen Square massacre
El Salvador	Pre 2006	Salvadorans protest mining
Germany	Pre 2006	Germans protest nuclear power and nuclear waste
Global	Pre 2006	Residents across Asia protest building of dams
Global	Pre 2006	Muslims around the world protest publication of cartoons depicting Mohammed
Global	Pre 2006	Protesters worldwide demand an end to the war in Afghanistan
Global	Pre 2006	Protesters worldwide oppose war in Iraq
Global	Pre 2006	Africans protest Economic Partnership Agreements with Europe
Global	Pre 2006	Protesters boycott Israeli products
India	Pre 2006	Indian farmers protest steel project
Italy	Pre 2006	Italians protest high-speed rail plan
Italy	Pre 2006	Italians protest mafia
Japan	Pre 2006	Japanese protest U.S. military presence in Okinawa
Kenya	Pre 2006	Kenyan medical workers strike over better pay and resources
Kenya	Pre 2006	Kenyan teachers strike over pay

(continued)

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Mexico	Pre 2006	Mexicans protest construction of La Parota dam
Morocco	Pre 2006	Moroccans protest continued unemployment
Nigeria	Pre 2006	Secessionist organizations in Biafra agitate for independence
Nigeria	Pre 2006	Nigerian militant group demands greater share of oil
Pakistan	Pre 2006	Pakistanis protest rape law
Philippines	Pre 2006	Filipinos protest American military presence
Russia	Pre 2006	Russians protest Putin, Kremlin
Saudi Arabia	Pre 2006	Saudi women protest driving ban
South Africa	Pre 2006	South Africans protest incorporation of province
South Africa	Pre 2006	South Africans demand public services
South Korea	Pre 2006	South Koreans protest land seizure for United States bases
United States of America	Pre 2006	American unions demand decent jobs and economic justice
United States of America	Pre 2006	Americans protest hurricane Katrina response
United States of America	Pre 2006	MTA workers of New York strike to defend their labor union contracts
United States of America	Pre 2006	Anti-war militants including former vets demand end to Iraq and Afghanistan wars
Vietnam	Pre 2006	Vietnamese demand workers' rights
Western Sahara	Pre 2006	Western Saharans demand independence
Zambia	Pre 2006	Zambian miners demand decent wages and treatment
Zimbabwe	Pre 2006	Zimbabweans call for Mugabe resignation
Belarus	2006	Lukashenko's third term met with protest and claims of rigged election
Bolivia	2006	Bolivian miners protest nationalization, tax hikes
Bolivia	2006	Bolivian prisoners stage hunger strike over unfair conditions
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2006	Bosnia protests awards to Dutch peacekeepers who watched and did nothing at infamous 1995 massacre of thousands at Srebrenica

(continued)

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Canada	2006	Six Nations members protest over land claims in Canada
China	2006	Macanese workers in China protest corruption and inequality
China	2006	Anti-Japanese protesters demand Chinese authority over Diaoyu island chain
Dominican Republic	2006	Dominicans protest corruption
Egypt	2006	Egyptian judges demand independence
France	2006	French students protest new labor law
Global	2006	Workers protest on May Day 2006
Global	2006	Protesters call for action on Darfur
Global	2006	Protesters denounce Israeli attack on Lebanon
Global	2006	NGOs/CSOs and activists protest 2006 World Bank-IMF meeting
Global	2006	Pirate Parties fight for rights across Europe
Hungary	2006	Hungarians call for PM's resignation
India	2006	Doctors and medical students protest proposed quota system
India	2006	Indian Dalits protest ill-treatment
Iran	2006	Iranian women collect signatures to eliminate gender discrimination
Lebanon	2006	The opposition movement of Lebanon demand and obtain a national unity government
Malaysia	2006	Malaysian "Berish" campaign demands electoral reform
Mexico	2006	Mexican farmers and unionists protest price increases
Mexico	2006	Mexican teachers strike over school quality and pay
Nepal	2006	Nepalese protest rule of king
Niger	2006	Nigerien students demand scholarship disbursements
South Africa	2006	Durbanese protest a new polluting industry in their city
South Korea	2006	South Koreans protest free trade deal
Turkey	2006	Turks demand cancellation of Papal visit
Ukraine	2006	Ukrainians protest NATO action in Crimea

(continued)

(continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
United Kingdom	2006	Brits demand climate change action
United States of America	2006	Americans rally for rights of immigrants
Algeria	2007	Algerians protest Islamic extremists
Argentina	2007	Argentinians demand justice for Carlos Fuentelba
Australia	2007	Australians protest APEC
Bangladesh	2007	Students in Bangladesh protest ongoing state of emergency
Bangladesh	2007	Bangladesh textile workers demand minimum wage hike
Bolivia	2007	Bolivians protest new constitution
Canada	2007	Diverse activist groups organize across borders to stop Keystone XL pipeline project
Chad	2007	Chadian workers strike over wages
China	2007	Chinese protest location of paraxylene plants
Egypt	2007	Egyptians protest lack of water
Egypt	2007	Egyptian textile workers strike over wages
Global	2007	Anti-Islam protesters in Europe call for Immigrant Rights restrictions
Global	2007	Workers protest on May Day 2007
Global	2007	Activists protest the World Economic Forum at 2007 WSF
Global	2007	NGOs/CSOs and activists protest 2007 World Bank-IMF meeting
Greece	2007	Greek journalists protest austerity cuts
Greece	2007	Students clash with authorities on funding and policing of campuses
India	2007	Indian adivasi and dalit march for land rights
Israel	2007	Israelis petition for desegregated bus lines
Italy	2007	Italians demonstrate against same-sex marriage
Japan	2007	Japanese support workers at U.S. bases strike over pay cuts
Kenya	2007	Kenyans protest food and fuel prices
Kenya	2007	Kenyans dispute election results
Kosovo	2007	Vetevendosje protests UN plan for Kosovo

(continued)

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Malaysia	2007	Malaysian Hindus protest discrimination
Mauritania	2007	Mauritanians riot over food prices
Mexico	2007	Indigenous Mexican Communities protest wind farms
Mexico	2007	Mexican street vendors protest policies
Morocco	2007	Moroccans protest food prices
Myanmar	2007	Burmese protest dam project
Myanmar	2007	Burmese protest authoritarian government, removal of fuel subsidies
Nicaragua	2007	Nicaraguan pensioners demand payment
Pakistan	2007	Pakistani lawyers protest dismissal of judges
Poland	2007	Poles march against abortion
Poland	2007	Poles march for gay rights
Portugal	2007	Portuguese workers strike over government policies
Portugal	2007	Portuguese workers demonstrate against economic policies
Senegal	2007	Senegalese protest food prices
Slovenia	2007	Slovenian journalists petition against proposed law
South Africa	2007	South African settlement residents protest eviction order
Turkey	2007	Turks demand secularism
Ukraine	2007	Ukrainians demand new elections
United Arab Emirates (Dubai)	2007	Emiratis demand higher wages
United Kingdom	2007	In 10 years, tax justice has climbed the global agenda
United States of America	2007	Americans protest corporate malfeasance
Uzbekistan	2007	Uzbeks protest food prices
Yemen	2007	Yemenis demand central governance
Argentina	2008	Farmers protest export tax increase
Australia	2008	NSW electric workers protest privatization
Bangladesh	2008	Bangladeshi workers demand wages meet rising food prices
Brazil	2008	Brazilian activists protest paper mill
Brazil	2008	The tender of Brazilian oil to foreign companies has Unions protesting

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Burkina Faso	2008	Food riots in Burkina Faso
Cameroon	2008	Citizens riot in Cameroon over high prices
China	2008	Tibetans protest Chinese rule
China	2008	Residents protest metal plants in China
Colombia	2008	Colombian workers strike for better pay
Egypt	2008	Egyptian workers strike over high prices, low wages
Ethiopia	2008	Ethiopians riot over food shortage
Ghana	2008	Liberian refugees in Ghana protest repatriation plan
Global	2008	Workers protest on May Day 2008
Global	2008	Truckers strike across Eurasia over fuel prices
Global	2008	Southern African transport workers block unloading of weapons headed for Zimbabwe
Global	2008	FEMEN activists protest patriarchy
Global	2008	Anonymous takes action against censorship, corruption
Greece	2008	Greeks riot following teen's death
Greece	2008	Greeks strike over budget
Guatemala	2008	Guatemalans protest lack of consultation over hydroelectric projects
Haiti	2008	Haitians riot over food prices
Iceland	2008	Icelanders protest financial crisis
Iceland	2008	Icelanders refuse to pay off banking debt
India	2008	Indian professor stages hunger strike to save Ganges
Indonesia	2008	Indonesians protest fuel hike
Iran	2008	Iranian vendors strike over tax increase
Ireland	2008	Irish protest illegitimate debts
Italy	2008	Italians strike over government handling of recession
Ivory Coast	2008	Côte Ivoirians riot over food and fuel prices
Kenya	2008	Kenyans demand end to government stalemate

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Mozambique	2008	Mozambicans riot over food and fuel prices
Nicaragua	2008	Nicaraguans protest food prices
Niger	2008	Nigeriens protest food prices
Peru	2008	Peruvians protest rising food prices
Philippines	2008	Filipinos demand resignation of president
Poland	2008	Nationalists Poles demonstrate on Independence Day
Serbia	2008	Serbs protest Kosovo's declaration of independence
Serbia	2008	Serb hardliners protest Karadzic arrest
Somalia	2008	Somalis riot over food prices
South Korea	2008	South Koreans protest lifting beef ban
Spain	2008	Spaniards demand debate on Bolonia Process
Sudan	2008	Sudanese demand respect for Darfuri students
Thailand	2008	Thais call for resignation of government
Tunisia	2008	Tunisians protest nepotistic hiring
Turkey	2008	Turks protest Internet censorship
Ukraine	2008	Ukrainians protest NATO, President Bush
United States of America	2008	American indigenous communities demand environmental protections
Chile	2009	Mapuche communities in Chile demand land rights
China	2009	Ethnic Uyghurs in China protest
China	2009	Hong Kong protesters oppose construction of high-speed rail
China	2009	Chinese LGBTQ + rise for public awareness and recognition
France	2009	French workers strike for economic justice
France	2009	French citizens protest Notre-Dame-Des-Landes airport
France	2009	Protesters in Martinique and Guadeloupe strike over wages
Global	2009	Activists protest at G20 summit in London
Global	2009	Workers protest on May Day 2009
Global	2009	Activists protest at 2009 WSF

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Global	2009	NGOs/CSOs and activists protest 2009 World Bank-IMF meeting
Global	2009	Environmental activists protest at COP15
Greece	2009	Greeks protest austerity measures, debt crisis
Honduras	2009	Against government and 2009 coup ousting President Zelaya
Iceland	2009	Icelanders protest mismanagement of financial crisis
Iceland	2009	The Anthill: Icelanders popular national assembly
Iran	2009	Iranians protest election results
Ireland	2009	Irish workers protest handling of economy
Italy	2009	Italians hold “No Berlusconi Day” in protest of Premier
Italy	2009	Italians demonstrate against threats to freedom of press
Italy	2009	Italy’s Five Star movement is a complex amalgam of social forces
Madagascar	2009	Malagasies protest in support of mayor Rajoelina
Madagascar	2009	Malagasy loyalists protest coup d’état
Mali	2009	Malian protesters oppose women’s rights bill
Mexico	2009	Mexicans protest privatization of oil
Mexico	2009	Mexican electricity workers protest government liquidation of company
Morocco	2009	Moroccans demand human rights
Niger	2009	Nigeriens protest President Tandja
Pakistan	2009	Pakistanis protest feudal land grab
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2009	Palestinians boycott products made in the settlements
Peru	2009	Indigenous Amazonians in Peru protest resource extraction
Romania	2009	Romanians protest austerity measures
Romania	2009	New wage law triggers general strike
Singapore	2009	Singaporeans rally for same-sex rights
South Korea	2009	South Koreans protest labor laws
Spain	2009	Spaniards protest evictions
Spain	2009	Fraudulent banking practices drive Spaniards to civil disobedience and occupations to demand refunds

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Tanzania	2009	Tanzanians protest land seizures
Thailand	2009	Thais demand Prime Minister Abhisit's resignation
United Kingdom	2009	British energy workers protest layoffs
United States of America	2009	Americans protest education cuts
United States of America	2009	Tea Party movement demands fiscal restraint and limited government
United States of America	2009	Americans demand LGBT rights
United States of America	2009	Americans call for end to fossil fuels
Western Sahara	2009	Western Saharans call for Aminatou Haidar's return
Yemen	2009	Yemenis call for secession of South
Algeria	2010	Algerians demand reforms, resignation of president
Argentina	2010	Qom indigenous tribe demands land rights
Australia	2010	The occupy movement of Australia
Bangladesh	2010	Bangladeshi garment workers demand wage increase
Bangladesh	2010	Bangladesh opposition party stages strikes
Belarus	2010	Wide protest in Minsk following the re-election of Lukashenko
Bolivia	2010	Bolivians protest removal of fuel subsidies
Chile	2010	Gas price increase leads to conflict in Magallanes
China	2010	Macanese protesters in China demand rights, reforms
China	2010	Tibetan students protest language policy
China	2010	Workers in China protest poor conditions
China	2010	Annual New Year's Eve Marches in support of Democracy in Hong Kong
Colombia	2010	Movement against free trade treaties
Ecuador	2010	Police and military strike against President Correa and Law of Public Service
France	2010	French strike over pension reforms
Germany	2010	German workers demand labor rights
Global	2010	Workers protest on May Day 2010
Global	2010	Europeans protest austerity measures

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Global	2010	Activists protest at 2010 G8/G20 meeting
Global	2010	Grassroots alternative to the UN climate change meeting in Bolivia
Greece	2010	Greek “Den Plinoro” movement won’t pay
Greece	2010	Police shooting fuels movement against police brutality
Greece	2010	Greece rejects the Republic of Macedonia’s attempts to join NATO and the European Union
Honduras	2010	Honduran campesinos demand land rights
Iceland	2010	new governing parties following mass protests against the financial crisis ignite grassroots process and draft a new constitution
India	2010	Indian villagers protest thermal power project
India	2010	Indians protest fuel prices
Indonesia	2010	Indonesians protest Yudhoyono government
Indonesia	2010	Muslims in Indonesia protest removal of tomb
Iran	2010	Iranian merchants strike over tax increase
Iran	2010	Iranian gold and jewelry vendors strike over VAT tax
Ireland	2010	Irish students protest increase in education fees
Italy	2010	Italian workers strike against austerity
Ivory Coast	2010	Transport workers in Cote D’Ivoire strike over price of diesel fuel
Ivory Coast	2010	Ouattara supporters in Ivory Coast protest election results
Jamaica	2010	Jamaican workers protest sale of airline
Kenya	2010	Kenyans protest use of GM crops
Kyrgyzstan	2010	Kyrgyz people revolt against Bakiyev government
Malaysia	2010	Malagasies protest privatization of water management
Mozambique	2010	Mozambicans riot over food and utility prices

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Pakistan	2010	Dismissed union leaders escalates a service employee strike into an occupation
Peru	2010	Peruvians protest mining project
Peru	2010	Peruvians protest gas prices and revenue distribution of natural gas
Portugal	2010	Portuguese protest gay marriage bill
Portugal	2010	Portuguese workers strike over budget cuts
Portugal	2010	Portuguese civil servants strike over austerity
Russia	2010	Nationalist Russian youths' riot over race
South Korea	2010	South Koreans protest G20
Spain	2010	Spanish workers strike over labor reform
Spain	2010	Spaniards protest cutbacks
Sri Lanka	2010	Sri Lankans protest constructions of Seaplane platform
Tanzania	2010	Tanzanians demand election transparency
Tanzania	2010	Tanzanians demand free expression
Tunisia	2010	Tunisians demand social justice, democracy
Tunisia	2010	Tunisians revolt for democracy
Turkey	2010	Turkish Kurds demand equal rights
United Kingdom	2010	Brits protest austerity measures
United Kingdom	2010	Brits protest high tuition fees
United States of America	2010	Students protest revised history textbooks
United States of America	2010	"Dreamers" call for pathway to citizenship
Western Sahara	2010	Western Saharans protest Moroccan repression
Angola	2011	Angolans protest against President José Eduardo dos Santos
Argentina	2011	Argentine hackers protest digital tax
Australia	2011	Australian public sector workers strike over wage and job cuts
Australia	2011	Occupy Australia
Belarus	2011	In the midst of an economic crisis voices raise against Lukashenko's rule
Bolivia	2011	Indigenous communities in Bolivia protest road construction

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Brazil	2011	Brazilian protesters demand reforms
Brazil	2011	Brazilians march against corruption
Brazil	2011	“Churrascada” in Higienopolis neighborhood due to the refuse to build a new subway station
Bulgaria	2011	Bulgarians demonstrate against Roma community
Burkina Faso	2011	Protests demand resignation of President, democratic reforms, higher wages for troops and public servants, and economic freedom
Canada	2011	Quebecois students protest tuition hikes
Chile	2011	Chilean students demand education reform
Chile	2011	Chilean environmentalists protest hydroelectric dam
Chile	2011	Reforms of miners pay, and pension leads to strike
China	2011	Migrant workers in China protest conditions
China	2011	Ethnic Mongolians in China demand rights
China	2011	Residents protest construction of nuclear plant
China	2011	Chinese truckers strike for better conditions
China	2011	Protesters stage pro-democracy rallies across China
China	2011	Unlike the rest of China Wukan protest led to democratic reforms and elections
Colombia	2011	Colombian miners’ strike over working conditions and pay
Colombia	2011	Colombian students protest proposed reform
Croatia	2011	Croatian veterans, nationalists protest Gotovina conviction
Democratic Republic of Congo	2011	Congolese protest election results
Egypt	2011	Egyptians revolt against President Mubarak
Ethiopia	2011	Ethiopian Muslims protest religious repression
Germany	2011	Germans protest economic inequality

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Germany	2011	Anti-war militants demand the end of the Afghanistan war
Global	2011	Activists call for release of Chinese artist
Global	2011	Workers protest on May Day 2011
Global	2011	People around the world protest economic and social inequality
Global	2011	Protesters dispute DRC election results
Global	2011	Activists protest at 2011 WSF
Global	2011	Activists protest at 2011 G20 meeting
Greece	2011	Greeks protest Canadian mining venture
India	2011	Indians protest corruption
Indonesia	2011	Indonesian protesters demonstrate against mining companies
Iran	2011	Iranians protest regime and repression
Ireland	2011	Irish workers at Vita Cortex demand pay
Ireland	2011	Residents in Ballhea, Ireland march to protest bailouts
Israel	2011	Israelis protest lack of social justice
Italy	2011	Italians strike over austerity
Italy	2011	Italians call for resignation of Berlusconi
Italy	2011	African immigrants in Italy protest killing of Senegalese vendors
Italy	2011	Italian women protest Berlusconi
Japan	2011	Japanese protest nuclear power post-Fukushima
Jordan	2011	Jordanians demand reform from King Abdullah
Kazakhstan	2011	Kazakh oil workers' strike over conditions
Kyrgyzstan	2011	Kyrgyz prisoners protest inhumane conditions
Libya	2011	Libyans demand end to Gaddafi regime
Libya	2011	Libyans protest lack of post-revolution reform
Mauritania	2011	Mauritanian activists jailed as police quash resurgent anti-slavery protests
Mauritania	2011	Mauritanians protest census

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Mauritania	2011	Mauritanians protest President Abdelaziz
Mexico	2011	Mexican indigenous Huichol protest mining project
Mexico	2011	Mexicans and Americans protest drug war
Mexico	2011	AMLO calls for peaceful civil resistance and change in Mexico
Morocco	2011	Moroccans protest autocratic regime
Myanmar	2011	Burmese protest copper mine
Niger	2011	Nigerians protest low living standards
Nigeria	2011	Nigerians protest election results
Oman	2011	Omanis demand reform
Philippines	2011	Filipinos protest unjust economic policies
Portugal	2011	Portuguese strike over budget cuts following bond downgrade
Portugal	2011	Portuguese “desperate generation” demands reform
Russia	2011	Russian punk feminist band protests Putin
Russia	2011	Rally for fair local elections in Moscow
Saudi Arabia	2011	Saudi families demand release of prisoners
Saudi Arabia	2011	Saudi minorities demand reforms
Saudi Arabia	2011	Saudi women demand right to vote
Senegal	2011	Senegalese demand that President Wade step down
Serbia	2011	Serb hardliners protest Mladic arrest
South Africa	2011	South Africans demand greater economic power for black people
South Africa	2011	South African “Occupy” movement demands economic justice
South Korea	2011	South Koreans protest tuition hikes
South Korea	2011	Student LGBTQ+ petition the government for more freedom
Spain	2011	Spaniards demand real democracy
Sri Lanka	2011	Sri Lankans protest new pension plan
Sudan	2011	Sudanese demand reforms to democracy and departure of Omar al Bashir
Sudan	2011	Sudanese protest food prices
Syria	2011	Syrians protest Assad

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Uganda	2011	Ugandans demand lower prices: “Walk-to-work” protests
Ukraine	2011	Ukrainians demand Chernobyl cleanup
United Kingdom	2011	Brits protest social service cuts
United Kingdom	2011	Brits strike over government cuts
United Kingdom	2011	London + + riots after a man was killed by the police in the context of recession and austerity
United Kingdom	2011	Occupy movement calls for economic justice
United States of America	2011	Americans protest income inequality
United States of America	2011	Americans in Wisconsin protest governor’s attempts to end collective bargaining
United States of America	2011	Americans demand climate change action
Uzbekistan	2011	Uzbeks demand human rights
Vietnam	2011	Vietnamese protest Chinese
Vietnam	2011	Vietnamese Falun Gong members demand right to practice
Yemen	2011	Yemenis demand democratic rule
Argentina	2012	Argentinians protest President Fernández
Argentina	2012	Argentinian workers strike over economic concerns
Australia	2012	Australian students protest education cuts
Bangladesh	2012	Garment workers demand wage increase
Canada	2012	Indigenous communities in Canada demand rights and environmental protections
China	2012	Women in China demand gender equality
China	2012	The Moral and national education curriculum sparks protest from Hong Kong teachers and parents
China	2012	The rise of the modern Chinese feminist movement has roots in domestic violence

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Colombia	2012	Colombians protest government priorities, tax and subsidy reform, too much focus on FARC and too little on people
Czech Republic	2012	Largest protest since the fall of communism amidst austerity measures
Democratic Republic of Congo	2012	Congolese protest ongoing violence
Democratic Republic of Congo	2012	Christians protest government harassment
Ecuador	2012	Ecuadorian activists protest oil extraction
Egypt	2012	Egyptians protest President Morsi
France	2012	French protest legalization of same-sex marriage
Germany	2012	Germans protest austerity
Ghana	2012	Youths demand justice after opposition party claims of tampering with results of presidential election
Global	2012	Workers protest on May Day 2012
Global	2012	Muslims protest United States following anti-Islam film release
Global	2012	Europeans strike over austerity
Global	2012	Europeans protest international copyright treaty
Global	2012	Activists protest at 2012 G20 meeting
Global	2012	Activists protest at Davos 2012 summit
Global	2012	Activists protest at Rio + 20
Greece	2012	Anti-austerity protests shift from streets to election of SYRIZA 2012–2015
Hungary	2012	Hungarians protest constitutional changes
Hungary	2012	Hungarian far-right Jobbik party members hold anti-Roma march
Hungary	2012	Hungarian students rally over education cuts
India	2012	Indian workers strike over conditions, anti-inflation measures
India	2012	India's poor march for land rights
India	2012	Indians protest brutal gang rape
India	2012	Indian shopkeepers and laborers strike over foreign retailers

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Indonesia	2012	Indonesian workers protest for better conditions and benefits
Ireland	2012	Irish protesters demonstrate against Labour Party
Israel	2012	Israeli workers strike over contract terms
Israel	2012	Israeli nationalists protest against African immigrants
Italy	2012	Italian mayors protest Stability Pact
Italy	2012	Italian students protest austerity measures
Italy	2012	Italians protest austerity measures, Monti government
Jamaica	2012	Jamaicans protest violence against women and girls
Jamaica	2012	Jamaicans demand justice for Tivoli Gardens victims
Jordan	2012	Jordanians riot over fuel prices
Kazakhstan	2012	Kazakhs protest election results
Kyrgyzstan	2012	Kyrgyz protesters demand nationalization of gold mine
Libya	2012	Libyans protest militia groups
Libya	2012	Libyan oil workers block exports
Macedonia	2012	Macedonia's Albanian minority demands equal rights
Madagascar	2012	Malagasies protest radio crackdown
Mali	2012	Maliens protest government's handling of conflict in north
Mexico	2012	Mexican students demand media transparency
Myanmar	2012	Buddhists in Rakhine refuse to recognize rights for Rohingya Muslims
Nigeria	2012	Nigerians protest removal of fuel subsidy
Nigeria	2012	Nigerians protest corruption, fuel prices
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2012	Palestinian prisoners stage hunger strike over administrative detention
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2012	Palestinians protest PA, high food prices
Peru	2012	Peruvians protest new education law
Peru	2012	Peruvians protest mining project expansion

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Peru	2012	Peruvians protest corruption
Poland	2012	Polish Law and Justice Party supporters' stage anti-government march
Poland	2012	Poles protest Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement
Portugal	2012	Portuguese protest austerity
Portugal	2012	Portuguese unions call strikes against austerity measures
Romania	2012	Romanian Protesters Urge Government's Ouster
Romania	2012	Romanians protest fracking projects by Chevron
Slovenia	2012	Slovenians protest over austerity and corruption
Slovenia	2012	Slovenian public sector strikes over austerity
South Africa	2012	South African miners' strike over pay
South Africa	2012	South African farmers strike over daily wages
Spain	2012	Spanish miners protest budget
Spain	2012	Catalonians demand independence
Spain	2012	Spaniards protest austerity measures
Spain	2012	Students protest reforms and privatization of education
Sudan	2012	Sudanese protest austerity measures
Tanzania	2012	Tanzanians demand higher salaries
Tanzania	2012	Tanzanians demand equal pay for foreign workers
Tunisia	2012	Tunisians demand women's rights
Ukraine	2012	Ukrainians protest push to make Russian official language
United States of America	2012	Americans protest domestic citizen surveillance
United States of America	2012	Americans protest raising debt ceiling
United States of America	2012	Americans protest attacks on voting rights
United States of America	2012	Americans demand justice for Trayvon Martin
United States of America	2012	Americans demand rights for rape and violence victims
United States of America	2012	Students Protesting Guns Say "Enough Is Enough"

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Yemen	2012	Yemenis protest immunity for former president
Zambia	2012	Zambians protest economic policies
Argentina	2013	Mapuche indigenous people protest Chevron deal
Australia	2013	Australians Protest Five Years of Offshore Detention Policy
Bangladesh	2013	Bangladeshis protest after Savar building collapse
Bolivia	2013	Workers in Bolivia demand higher pensions
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2013	Bosnians block parliament to demand agreement on IDs
Brazil	2013	Free transport ends Workers Party rule
Brazil	2013	“No World Cup!” Activists call to invest in transport, education, health, wages, and housing
Brazil	2013	Economic Policy changes lead to General Strike in Brazil
Bulgaria	2013	Bulgarians protest Oresharski government
Bulgaria	2013	Bulgarians protest Borisov cabinet
Canada	2013	Canadians protest handling of rape case
Chile	2013	March for territory and autonomy for the Mapuche people
Chile	2013	Fed up with privatization miners of Chile demand a rethinking of national policy
Colombia	2013	Colombian workers demand reform
Colombia	2013	Colombian farmers protest Monsanto
Croatia	2013	Croats protest Cyrillic signs in Vukovar
Croatia	2013	Croatian trade unions strike over austerity measures
Denmark	2013	Danish teachers protest working conditions
Egypt	2013	Egyptians protest coup
Ethiopia	2013	Ethiopian protesters call for release of activists
Germany	2013	Germans protest NSA PRISM program

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Germany	2013	Germans protest in favor of renewable energy
Germany	2013	Germans protest eviction at Rote Flora
Germany	2013	Thousands in Germany protest against Europe-U.S. trade deal
Germany	2013	Rise of AfD party sparks protests against it
Germany	2013	Alternative für Deutschland party seeks power to enforce austerity and reform immigration
Global	2013	Workers protest on May Day 2013
Global	2013	Activists protest Monsanto and GM crops
Global	2013	Activists protest at 2013 WSF
Global	2013	Bolivian president organizes summit to protest imperialism
Global	2013	Anti-war protesters oppose intervention in Syria
Global	2013	Day of protests against Europe's austerity policies
Global	2013	People protest inequality in 450 world locations
Greece	2013	Greek neo-Nazis protest construction of mosque
Greece	2013	Political violence erupts against journalists covering refugees in Greece
India	2013	Indians protest rape of child
India	2013	Indian workers strike over rising prices, low wages, poor implementation of labor laws and privatizations
India	2013	Indian farmers march against land acquisition in Haryana
Indonesia	2013	Indonesians protest Australian spy activities
Ireland	2013	Irish protest bank debt burden
Israel	2013	Israelis protest planned removal of Bedouin settlements
Italy	2013	Italians protest austerity
Italy	2013	Italian anti-government protesters demonstrate against European Union, austerity measures

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Italy	2013	Italian immigration policy increasingly fueled by racism and challenges to right to asylum
Japan	2013	Japanese protest secrecy law
Kenya	2013	Kenyan demonstrators protest MP pay raises
Kenya	2013	Kenyans demand justice for gang rape victim
Madagascar	2013	Malagasies protest Rio Tinto mine
Malaysia	2013	Malaysian opposition supporters rally against alleged election fraud
Mali	2013	Protesters decry continued French military intervention in the country
Montenegro	2013	Protesters interrupt Macedonian gay pride marches
Morocco	2013	Economic austerity and failure of the new government to deliver on anti-corruption led to mass grassroots movement
Mozambique	2013	Mozambicans demand security, oppose civil war
Mozambique	2013	Mozambican brick makers protest loss of livelihoods
Niger	2013	Nigerians demand investment from mining company
Pakistan	2013	Pakistanis protest government corruption
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2013	Protesting Israel's imperialism and conflict
Philippines	2013	Filipino students protest high tuition
Philippines	2013	Filipinos protest pork barrel spending
Poland	2013	Poles strike for labor reform
Poland	2013	Poles protest Chevron
Poland	2013	Polish unionists protest reforms
Portugal	2013	Portuguese workers strike over austerity
Portugal	2013	Portuguese march against poverty
Portugal	2013	Portuguese protest 2014 budget proposal
Romania	2013	Romanians protest gold-mining project
Russia	2013	Russians protest persecution of activists
Russia	2013	Russians protest anti-LGBT bill

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Singapore	2013	Singaporeans protest Immigrant Rights
South Africa	2013	South Africans protest Obama visit
South Korea	2013	South Koreans protest electioneering
Sri Lanka	2013	Sri Lankans demand explanation for disappearances
Sudan	2013	Sudanese protest land sales
Tanzania	2013	Tanzanians protest Mtwara pipeline
Thailand	2013	Thais demand the creation of a People's Council
Tunisia	2013	Tunisians protest Islamic government
Turkey	2013	Turks protest destruction of park
Turkey	2013	Turks demand civil rights
Ukraine	2013	Ukrainians call for Yanukovych resignation
United Kingdom	2013	Brits protest after soldier's killing
United Kingdom	2013	Brits call for an end to Bedroom Tax
United Kingdom	2013	Brits protest plans to cut NHS funds
United States of America	2013	Black Lives Matter
Bolivia	2014	Bolivian soldiers charged with mutiny and sedition after demanding equal treatment with higher ranks
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2014	Bosnians protest corrupt political system
Burkina Faso	2014	Protests against amendment to the constitution raise need for democratic reforms
Chad	2014	Activists march against fuel shortages and government inaction
Chile	2014	Students push back against Bachelet education reforms, demanding greater action
Chile	2014	March of all Marches presses Bachelet to deliver on reforms for social and economic justice
China	2014	Electoral reforms spark democratic demands in Hong Kong
Ecuador	2014	"No!" to labor reforms and for better education
Ethiopia	2014	Protesters bash urban plans threatening rural communities
France	2014	French farmers protest low living standards and European Union policy

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Germany	2014	PEGIDA stokes fear of Muslim immigrants and refugees
Ghana	2014	Protesters blame government for rising cost of living and currency crisis
Global	2014	Mayday protests in 2014 focused on protesting austerity measures
Global	2014	Protesters organize worldwide to denounce Israeli attack on Gaza
Greece	2014	Greece protests over government plans to sell off historic national buildings
Haiti	2014	Protests demand government resignation over mismanagement of earthquake crisis
Hungary	2014	A tax on internet data transfer leads to protests on taxation and beyond
India	2014	“Kiss of love” protests moral policing and rules regarding public demonstration of affection
India	2014	Students demand investigation into molestation of a female student on Campus
Iran	2014	Iranian teachers protest wages
Iran	2014	Protesters decry government inaction following acid attacks on women in Isfahan
Ireland	2014	Soggy Ireland rebels against austerity fueled water charges
Israel	2014	Israeli ultra-Orthodox gather in mass rally over call to lift their protection from army draft
Ivory Coast	2014	Former rebels protest demanding payment of bonuses and past salaries
Kenya	2014	MyDressMyChoice is a rallying cry for women’s safety and freedom in Kenya
Madagascar	2014	Electricity shortages spark riots
Mexico	2014	Mexico claims justice against the killing of students
Mexico	2014	Protests against the construction of the new airport in Mexico Df
Nicaragua	2014	Nicaraguans against the interoceanic canal

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Nigeria	2014	#BringBackOurGirls and Salvation Rally against violence and the President and police corruption
Pakistan	2014	Following allegations of irregularities in 2013 elections PTI request electoral reforms and resignation of PM Nawaz Sharif
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2014	New series of Palestinian protests seen as signs of third intifada
Russia	2014	Opposition to Russia military involvement in Ukraine hits the streets
South Africa	2014	Violent protests over electricity and water shortages
Spain	2014	Spain austerity: Spending protest in Burgos
Ukraine	2014	Pro-Russian unrest east of Ukraine escalates into war
United Kingdom	2014	United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) urges Brexit
Zambia	2014	Riots lead to the reinstatement of Edgar Lungu as secretary general of the ruling party
Angola	2015	Angola in transition towards a more democratic rule of law
Australia	2015	White Australians deny rights of Muslim and non-white immigrants
Bolivia	2015	Bolivia signs with Rosatom to build research and nuclear power station for uranium mining
Bolivia	2015	Miners' protest
Brazil	2015	Brazilians protest corruption, President Dilma Rousseff and Lula
Canada	2015	Unions and community groups join student-led anti-austerity protests
Canada	2015	National anti-terror law threatens rights to speech and assembly
Democratic Republic of Congo	2015	Keep the planned elections in 2016
Ecuador	2015	No to new inheritance taxes against President Correa reelection and his Secretary of <i>Buen Vivir</i> (Welfare)
El Salvador	2015	Half a million Salvadorans march against gang violence

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Ethiopia	2015	Two largest ethnic groups defy government ban on protest in clash with police
France	2015	Following deadly attack on newspaper French march in solidarity of freedom of expression
Germany	2015	Nordkreuz infiltration of army reserves continues
Ghana	2015	Ghanaians protest years of power outages
Global	2015	Mayday protests in 2015 against austerity; racial justice also a component in United States
Global	2015	Activists protest at the WSF 2015
Guatemala	2015	National protests against corruption demand the whole government step down
Guatemala	2015	Guatemala proclaims the end of corruption and impunity
India	2015	Cow vigilantes' protests
Israel	2015	Protesters decry police racism against Ethiopian Jews
Italy	2015	Expo emerges as hotbed of labor exploitation
Jamaica	2015	Kingston residents claim to keep police officer
Jamaica	2015	Parents and students strike against a decision to merge schools
Japan	2015	Huge rally staged in Tokyo against legislation that would allow the military to deploy overseas
Kenya	2015	Protesters march in Nairobi after \$100 million in public money revealed stolen by government workers and business contacts
Kosovo	2015	Kosovar Albanians protest government official, mining dispute
Kosovo	2015	Kosovo opposition parties disrupt parliament over deals with Serbia, Montenegro
Lebanon	2015	Protests against garbage collection issues in Lebanon become protests against the entire political system
Macedonia	2015	Macedonians protest after revelations of corruption

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Malaysia	2015	Following a financial corruption scandal Malaysians demand resignation of prime minister Najib Razak
Montenegro	2015	Montenegrins protest PM Djukanovic
Morocco	2015	Women demand personal freedoms in face of harassment prosecutions for “indecent exposure”
Mozambique	2015	Protests follow the assassination of Franco-Mozambican constitutionalist Gilles Cistac
Nepal	2015	Citizens demand federalism and inclusion of marginal regions in Nepal’s new Constitution
Nepal	2015	Maoists strike to demand affordable food and energy
Romania	2015	A nightclub fire creates a storm against government corruption
South Africa	2015	Police clash with students demanding lower tuition fees
South Korea	2015	Protests demand ouster of President Park following unpopular education and labor reforms
Spain	2015	Fines and jail for exercising democratic rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and protest lead to “hologram protests”
Ukraine	2015	Proposed autonomy plans lead to years of protests in unsolved Donbass Issue
United Kingdom	2015	Remain movement rises up in face of Brexit demand
United States of America	2015	White nationalism and sexism gains steam in United States
United States of America	2015	Trump and Tea Party movement rise together
United States of America	2015	Political leaders for a new progressive movement
Argentina	2016	Social groups organize massive mobilization against Macri government austerity policies
Australia	2016	Rising racism in Australia provokes anti-racist backlash
Bangladesh	2016	Bangladeshi workers demand better working conditions

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Bolivia	2016	Persons with disabilities demand better pensions
Brazil	2016	Anti-corruption protests take turn to the right, embracing guns and return to monarchy
Cameroon	2016	A protest to keep common law turns into a separatist movement
Canada	2016	Black lives matter in Canada too
Chad	2016	Rape of 18-year-old woman ignites antigovernment protests on a variety of issues
Chad	2016	Teachers strike against government-imposed austerity
Chile	2016	Chileans demand the elimination of Pinochet era private pensions and the institution of public pensions
China	2016	Villagers take to the streets after their representative is arrested
China	2016	Attempts to forcibly remove street food stands causes riots in Hong Kong
Colombia	2016	Colombians take the streets denouncing living conditions asking for a better future in EL Paro Nacional
Colombia	2016	Taxi drivers clash with UBER in Colombia
Colombia	2016	Truck drivers block the country to make the government react
Colombia	2016	Colombians demand an end to gender violence
Democratic Republic of Congo	2016	Congolese demand new elections be held
France	2016	A large movement protests new labor laws and capitalism
Germany	2016	“Blockupy” protests against bankers and austerity broadens to the plight of refugees
Germany	2016	Simmering dispute between squatters and police in Berlin erupts into violence
Ghana	2016	Ghanaians protest rising fuel and electricity tariffs

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Global	2016	Mayday 2016 turn violent in many cities with a focus on the need to change the system
Global	2016	Protests at the WSF 2016 oppose the World Economic Forum
Greece	2016	farmers protest planned tax rises and pension reforms
Greece	2016	Greek police used tear gas on pensioners at anti-austerity protest
Greece	2016	Humanitarian crisis in Greece's refugee camps
Hungary	2016	Hungarian teachers strike for better pay and freedom to choose textbooks
Iceland	2016	Islanders call on Prime Minister to resign in corruption scandal
Iceland	2016	Icelanders rail against Prime Minister's corruption exposed by Panama Papers
India	2016	Protests erupt against violence and human rights abuses by Indian security forces in Kashmir
India	2016	JNU students and faculty protest arrest of student leader on sedition charges
Indonesia	2016	Islamist protests against Governor of Jakarta Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, who was accused of committing blasphemy of the Quran
Iran	2016	Government arrests leader of march to tomb of pre-Islamic Persian king Cyrus the Great
Kazakhstan	2016	Massive protests against land reforms allowing foreigners to rent Kazakh land are fueled by fears of Chinese takeover
Kenya	2016	Protests against corruption in the national electoral commission met with violence by authorities
Morocco	2016	Rifis demand protection of their culture, investments in the region and demilitarization
Peru	2016	Peruvian claim gender justice
Philippines	2016	Protesters demand government relief after drought caused by el Niño

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Philippines	2016	Protesters come out against United States military presence in the country
Philippines	2016	Protesters denounce President Duterte's drug war and extrajudicial killings, demanding his resignation
Poland	2016	Anti-abortion law drives thousands of women to the streets
South Korea	2016	Hundreds of thousands demand resignation of President Park Geun-hye
Spain	2016	Spaniards protest new conservative government and reforms
Tanzania	2016	Opposition parties call for nationwide rallies to protest the government's ban on broadcasting live parliamentary debates
Tunisia	2016	Protests erupt when high unemployment linked to rising suicide rate
Turkey	2016	Tunisians protest state of emergency following coup attempt in 2016
Uganda	2016	Protesters contest the re-election of Museveni and irregularities in the vote
Ukraine	2016	Ukrainians protest corruption practices
United Kingdom	2016	Black Lives Matter in the United Kingdom
United States of America	2016	"Not My President" movement emerges in wake of Trump victory
Zimbabwe	2016	Decades of corruption, economic hardship and overall repression from the Mugabe regime sparks protest demanding change
Argentina	2017	Against Pension Reform
Argentina	2017	Students and Teachers Protest Against Education Reform
Belarus	2017	After the government voted a new tax people called for economic reform and resignation of President Lukashenko
Bolivia	2017	Bolivians protest Morales' new bid to extend term limits
Brazil	2017	Out with President Temer!

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Canada	2017	Anti-immigrant and allied groups clash with immigrant-rights and anti-racist groups
Czech Republic	2017	Andrej Babis tax evasion as prime minister leads to massive demonstrations
Germany	2017	Anarchists on fringe of G20 peaceful protests loot and burn shops
Germany	2017	Growing opposition to migrants after German citizen killed in Chemnitz
Germany	2017	Counter-protesters face off against anti-immigration groups
Germany	2017	Germany: Thousands of protesters demand European Union open borders
Global	2017	Mayday 2017 sees immigrant workers rights at the forefront of the struggle
Global	2017	The #metoo movement generates global awareness on violence against women
Global	2017	Overshadowed by riots, 100,000 attend alt-G20 summit for global justice
Global	2017	Time to regulate social media-the most powerful marketing tool an extremist could hope for
Global	2017	As the United States recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital Muslims around the world hold protests
Global	2017	Activists protest at 2017 G20 meeting
Honduras	2017	Hondurans protest electoral fraud
Hungary	2017	New law regulating foreign higher education in Hungary leads to anti-government protest
India	2017	Supreme Court ruling bans Jalikatu (Tamil Bull Taming), sparking protests
Iran	2017	Iranians protest high prices for basic good
Ivory Coast	2017	Military demand better severances and threaten to mutiny to obtain better pay
Kenya	2017	Protests over election fraud turn deadly in Kenya

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Kyrgyzstan	2017	Supporters of Kyrgyz opposition leader protest his arrest
Mexico	2017	Mexicans protest hike in energy prices
Mozambique	2017	Protesters demand justice following assassination of Mayor Morreu Mahamudo Amurane
Niger	2017	Police violently disperse demonstration denouncing government corruption and electricity shortages
Nigeria	2017	Beset by economic, political woes, Nigerians protest for change
Nigeria	2017	Nigerians protest massively to #endSARS
Pakistan	2017	Followers of radical cleric protest perceived softening of blasphemy laws and demand resignation of law minister
Pakistan	2017	Shias in Pakistan's Parachinar caught in the middle of proxy wars
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2017	Protesting Temple Mount Security
Peru	2017	Peruvians protest Odebrecht corruption
Peru	2017	Teachers demand higher budget allocation to education
Peru	2017	Peruvians protest pardon of former President Fujimori
Peru	2017	Peruvian protest "gender ideology"
Philippines	2017	Filipinos protest non-delivery of promised housing by national housing authority
Philippines	2017	Protesters demand transportation policy based on national industrialization
Philippines	2017	Protesters object to proposed lowering of income taxes
Philippines	2017	Protesters decry police state and anti-terror Law
Poland	2017	Poles gather against Supreme Court legislation seen as an attack on judiciary independence
Portugal	2017	Portugal emerges as European Union exception to the sway of populism

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Romania	2017	Romanians protest planned prison pardons and demand the government's resignation
Russia	2017	Russians stage massive protest against state corruption
Somalia	2017	Military personnel protest the non-payment of their salaries
South Africa	2017	Tens of thousands call for President Zuma's resignation
Spain	2017	Catalans demand independence from Spain
Sri Lanka	2017	Sri Lankans protests Hambantota port deal seen as debt trap
Turkey	2017	Political and grassroots activists protest government crackdown on opposition under emergency law instated after 2016 coup
Uganda	2017	Ugandans protest removal of age limit on Uganda presidential office, allowing Museveni to run again in 2021
United Kingdom	2017	#MeToo United Kingdom
United States of America	2017	Protests erupt against Trump travel bans and detention
United States of America	2017	Me Too movement takes on patriarchy and sexual harassers
United States of America	2017	QAnon exponential growth threatens United States political order
Zambia	2017	Multiple corruption scandals spark protest movement in Zambia
Argentina	2018	General Strike says NO to IMF cuts and reforms
Brazil	2018	Protests against fuel price hike demand President Temer step down
Bulgaria	2018	Bulgarians protest construction of ski resort on Pirin National Park UNESCO site
Bulgaria	2018	No new taxes on cars and fuel
Canada	2018	Canada spawns its own yellow vests movement against a carbon tax
Canada	2018	Canadians rally across country to call for bolder action on climate change
Chile	2018	#Meetoo #NiUnaMas Feminists mobilize against machismo and patriarchal society

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
China	2018	Technology workers demand better working conditions at Jasic Technology
Colombia	2018	Students protest to guarantee a proper budget for education
Czech Republic	2018	Czechs demand the resignation of prime minister in multiple demonstrations
Dominican Republic	2018	Dominicans protest gender violence
El Salvador	2018	New water laws raise concerns about private sector involvement
France	2018	In France the yellow vests protest against the system first then against others
Ghana	2018	Thousands support “Ghana first!” protest against new defense deal and increased United States military presence
Global	2018	Starting 2018 youth activists strike and protest the inaction of government on climate change around the world
Global	2018	Mayday 2018 has been refocusing on traditional wage and labor condition issues with an anti-austerity focus in the West
Global	2018	Activists protest at the WSF 2018
Global	2018	Activists protest 2018 G20 Meeting in Argentina
Haiti	2018	Haiti protests high fuel prices and corruption
Hungary	2018	Hungarians protest an election seen as deeply undemocratic
Hungary	2018	Demonstrators call new overtime law Slave Law and protest entire government policies
Iceland	2018	#MeToo is Moving Forward
India	2018	Dalits protest supreme court ruling that weakens protections for lower caste minorities
Iran	2018	Teachers protest privatization of educational system
Ireland	2018	Black lives matter in Ireland spurs call for hate crime laws

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Israel	2018	Israel's LGBT community calls for strike after surrogacy bill defeat
Italy	2018	Salvini's Lega Nord party rebrands itself as "the Lega"
Italy	2018	Sardine's movement forms in response to the Lega party's rise to power
Ivory Coast	2018	Opposition criticized inauguration of new Senate
Jordan	2018	Government plans to raise taxes spark the largest protests in years in Jordan
Madagascar	2018	Protesters reject new electoral law as too restrictive and allege presidential corruption
Malaysia	2018	Ethnic Malays protest government plan to ratify U.N. treaty against racial discrimination that would end Malay affirmative action
Myanmar	2018	Protesters denounce a proposed law to curb free speech and peaceful protest
Nicaragua	2018	Nicaragua claims the government to resign
Nicaragua	2018	Wildfires in UNESCO heritage spark protests against government
Niger	2018	Protesters object to provisions in new finance law favoring foreign companies
Nigeria	2018	Nigerian security forces resorted to violence to end Shiite Muslim protests in Abuja
Oman	2018	Young Omanis protest high unemployment
Pakistan	2018	Protesters decry inaction of the government following abduction and murder of 6-year-old Zainab Ansari
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2018	The continued Israeli blockade on Gaza creates new dimensions of an old conflict
Peru	2018	Peruvian peasants and indigenous demand better prices from FTAs
Peru	2018	Peruvians protest corruption and elites

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Philippines	2018	Protesters denounce deference to China in President Duterte's foreign policy
Russia	2018	Russians protest the increase of retirement age
Senegal	2018	Opponents protesting vote in Parliament to revise electoral code are arrested in Dakar
South Africa	2018	Protesters demand a higher minimum wage
Spain	2018	Thousands protest bail for convicted sex abusers in rape cases
Spain	2018	Supporters of a united Spain protest against Catalan separation
Sri Lanka	2018	Sri Lankans take to the streets in defense of unconstitutionally sacked prime minister
Sudan	2018	Rising prices became an omnibus protest against the government of Omar Al Bashir
Tanzania	2018	Government adopts harsh measures against supporters of U.S.-based Tanzanian social media activist
Tunisia	2018	Continued economic hardships after 2010 revolution leads to demand for repeal of 2018 budget
Turkey	2018	Anti-war protesters supporting Syrian rights arrested and detained
Turkey	2018	Trade unions protest working conditions on the construction site of the new Istanbul Airport
Turkey	2018	Metal workers demand wage raises
United Kingdom	2018	Extinction Rebellion launches campaign of civil disobedience for climate justice
United Kingdom	2018	Tens of thousands take to the streets to protest visits of United States President Trump
United States of America	2018	Essential workers assert the right to do jobs safely in the face of threats
Vietnam	2018	Vietnamese protest special economic zones and land leasing to Chinese companies

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Zimbabwe	2018	Zimbabwe election unrest turns deadly as army opens fire on protesters
Algeria	2019	Algerians demand the end of the FLN and its representation in government
Angola	2019	The movement for independence of Cabinda from Angola revival
Argentina	2019	Economic and social crisis follow IMF program
Bolivia	2019	The revolution of the Pititas ousts President Morales
Brazil	2019	Protesters demand education and pension reforms
Bulgaria	2019	Do not appoint the sole candidate for prosecutor Ivan Geshev
Canada	2019	First Nations protesters rise up against pipeline projects
Chile	2019	“Estallido social” demands public pensions, social services, and a new constitution
China	2019	Protest against new extradition law spirals into wide protest regarding HK sovereignty
Colombia	2019	“Paro Nacional” denounce government management of Peace Process
Colombia	2019	“Minga por la Vida” blocks the main road of the country asking the government to deliver
Colombia	2019	Massive march against corruption and state violence
Democratic Republic of Congo	2019	Congolese ask UN and government to protect civilians
Dominican Republic	2019	“Marcha Verde” against corruption and impunity for elites
Ecuador	2019	Ecuadorans protest austerity reforms by IMF and Presidency
France	2019	Newly suggested pension reforms revive and old French trade union struggle
Germany	2019	Giant protests against regulation of social media and internet
Germany	2019	Movement grows behind demand for bolder climate policies

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Germany	2019	German “Yellow Vests” protest being ignored in climate policy
Ghana	2019	Ghanaians protest \$200 m parliament building
Global	2019	Mayday 2019 sees anti capitalists in the United States and demands for a European minimum wage
Global	2019	Amazon workers strike over labor conditions and wages
Global	2019	Activists protest 2019 G20 meeting in Japan
India	2019	Protests demand repeal of citizenship amendment act that limits citizenship access rights for Muslims
India	2019	Protesters rain against government decision to end Kashmir special status
Indonesia	2019	43 Papuan students arrested for disrespecting the Indonesian Flag
Indonesia	2019	Presidential challenger Subianto claimed cheating on elections and refused to accept defeat
Indonesia	2019	Against “omnibus bill” labor flexibilization law Against “omnibus bill” labor flexibilization law
Indonesia	2019	Protests against religious revisions of Criminal Code Bill Protests against religious revisions of Criminal Code Bill
Iran	2019	Iran’s Supreme Leader orders bloodiest crackdown on protesters since the 1979 Islamic Revolution
Israel	2019	Ethiopian-Israeli protests resume after pause
Italy	2019	Italy’s Orange Vest movement takes cue from Yellow Vests in call for government to resign
Jordan	2019	Amidst crackdown, teacher’s union leads protests against government corruption
Kazakhstan	2019	Government opposition protests demand full relief for debtors hit by the COVID-19 lockdown and reclamation of privatized land

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Kyrgyzstan	2019	Protests against corruption follow whistleblower claim of massive government bribery
Kyrgyzstan	2019	Kyrgyz police disperse anti-Chinese rally
Lebanon	2019	Lebanese demonstrations keep gaining momentum against corruption sectarianism and political mismanagement
Madagascar	2019	Madagascar police break up post-election protest
Mauritania	2019	Opposition parties protest the first-round election of the ruling party candidate
Mexico	2019	Airport blocked by federal police asking the government to pay their salaries
Morocco	2019	Last straw for Moroccans tired of government harassment of journalists
Myanmar	2019	Activists protest the construction of a Chinese dam in northern Myanmar
Nepal	2019	Protesters organize to stop new Guthi Bill ending patriarchal landownership
Niger	2019	Protesters demand departure of foreign forces from Niger following a deadly attack on an army camp
Pakistan	2019	All male Islamist convoy demands resignation of PM Khan
Russia	2019	Rejected independent candidates from local elections spark protests in Moscow
Singapore	2019	Singaporean climate activists targeted by police
South Africa	2019	In national crisis of violence against women protesters call for death penalty against perpetrators
South Africa	2019	Widespread looting and protests in the transport industry follow a wave of anti-foreigner sentiment
South Korea	2019	Protests call for the resignation of President Moon Jae-in and Justice Minister Cho Kuk for corruption
Spain	2019	Catalonians strike and march against jail sentences for separatists' leaders

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Sudan	2019	Amidst ongoing military transition, protesters denounce toxic effects of mining and killings of civilians
Uzbekistan	2019	Energy shortages spark protests throughout country
Zimbabwe	2019	Increased fuel prices lead to large protests in Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe	2019	Main opposition party launches a series of protests on economic and human rights issues
Argentina	2020	anti-quarantine COVID-19 protests
Bangladesh	2020	Boycott France/West and caricatures of Prophet Muhammad
Bangladesh	2020	Garment workers demand salaries during COVID-19 lockdown
Belarus	2020	The largest movement in Belarus organizes against Lukashenko ahead of presidential elections
Bolivia	2020	Bolivians protest election delays
Brazil	2020	Demonstrators in Brazil protest crimes committed by police
Brazil	2020	Brazilians bang pots to protest Bolsonaro handling of pandemic while others turn out to support him
Bulgaria	2020	“Mafia out!” Protesters demand resignation of PM Boyko Borissov
Canada	2020	Unprecedented array of allies fight to protect climate, indigenous and next generation
Chile	2020	Chileans in Covid quarantine demand, “We are hungry and need jobs!”
China	2020	Mongolians protest Beijing imposed new Mandarin Chinese school program
Democratic Republic of Congo	2020	Congolese protest for a free and fair election by requesting a new Chairman of the electoral commission
Dominican Republic	2020	Dominicans protest in favor of democracy
Ecuador	2020	Ecuadorans protest wage cuts and lack of funds to fight COVID-19
Egypt	2020	Egyptians take to streets in rare protests against President el-Sisi

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
El Salvador	2020	Salvadorans take the streets against government COVID-19 measures
El Salvador	2020	Women in El Salvador and around the region defend abortion rights
Ethiopia	2020	Oromia ethnic protests erupt after killing of singer
Germany	2020	Coronavirus: Thousands protest in Germany against restrictions
Global	2020	Mayday 2020 highlights the role and risks taken by often little compensated essential workers as well as fears of massive job losses due the crisis
Global	2020	The black lives matter in the United States draws support from anti-racists around the world
Global	2020	The restrictions imposed by countries to fight the pandemic saw the beginning of a grassroots movement against restrictions
Global	2020	Protests against Covid related sanitary restrictions seen all around the globe
Global	2020	QAnon Goes Global
Global	2020	As Arab nations normalize ties with Israel protesters take the streets in defense of Palestinian rights
Hungary	2020	Demonstrators fear a loss of autonomy at their university after new government appointed board
Iceland	2020	Black lives matter in Iceland too
India	2020	Protests against attack to JNU university Protests against attack to JNU university
India	2020	The largest coordinated strike in history sees 250 million people protest government plan to dismantle labor rights
Indonesia	2020	Controversy on a series of laws discussed by parliament
Ireland	2020	Yellow Vests movement protests masks and curbs to personal freedoms
Israel	2020	Netanyahu's handling of pandemic sparks calls for his resignation following corruption charges

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Ivory Coast	2020	Côte d'Ivoire shaken by multiple demonstrations against President Ouattara's bid for more time in office
Jamaica	2020	Jamaicans' Black Lives Matter
Japan	2020	Millions of tweets force Japan's government to delay a bill that critics say threatens judicial independence
Kenya	2020	Police stage violent crackdown on peaceful protests against government corruption
Kenya	2020	Medical workers protest lack of pay and personal protective equipment against Covid
Kyrgyzstan	2020	Kyrgyz parliament approves law allowing internet censorship
Kyrgyzstan	2020	Kyrgyz stage revolution after corrupt 2020 elections
Madagascar	2020	Anti-lockdown protests fueled by stories of police killing of a street vendor
Mali	2020	Protesters demand resignation of president following irregularities in 2018 and 2020 elections and ongoing Northern Mali war
Mexico	2020	Mexicans protest gender violence and femicides
Mexico	2020	Mexicans protest police brutality
Mexico	2020	Mexican feminists demand decriminalization of abortion on the Global Day of Action for Access to Abortion
Morocco	2020	Thousands march to denounce social inequalities, demand the release of "political detainees" and call for "true democracy"
Nigeria	2020	Protesters demand good governance and justice from Nigerian government
Nigeria	2020	Nigerian women take to the streets to protest rape and sexual violence
Palestine, Occupied Territory	2020	Protesters reject Trump peace plan for the middle east seen as de facto an apartheid regime
Poland	2020	LGBT community of Poland protest arrest of activist and LGBT aggressions

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
Portugal	2020	Portuguese workers protest for better wages amid pandemic
Portugal	2020	Black Lives Matter in Portugal
Russia	2020	Moscow accuses and fires governor on allegations of crime sparking protests in his defense
Senegal	2020	Protesters demand end to curfew and other health restrictions due to Covid pandemic
Somalia	2020	The killing of two men during an imposed curfew to curb coronavirus spread sparks protests
Somalia	2020	Protests erupt against Al Shabab following the death of over 90 people in bombing
South Africa	2020	The Move One Million march promises to take a peaceful stand against corruption and forms of brutality
South Africa	2020	Medical workers protest lack of pay and personal protective equipment against COVID-19
South Korea	2020	Protests call for President Moon to step down over policy failures, election corruption and kowtowing to North Korea
Spain	2020	Protesters denounce government mismanagement of COVID-19 lockdowns
Thailand	2020	Abuse of military power in place since 2014 leads Thais back to the streets
Tunisia	2020	Protests point to failure of various governments to bring economic success to the country after the political revolution
Turkey	2020	Protesters denounce government plan to withdraw from the Istanbul treaty protecting women from violence
Turkey	2020	Metal workers demand wage increases and better working conditions
Uganda	2020	Protests break out on coronavirus pandemic response and mismanagement of relief and testing measures

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<i>Country</i>	<i>Start year</i>	<i>News headline</i>
United States of America	2020	United States President stokes rebellion against state and local pandemic restrictions
Zimbabwe	2020	Activists launch social media campaign against human rights abuses and corruption

Source Authors' analysis of media sources published from January 2006 to December 2020

For full description of protests, visit: <https://worldprotests.org/>

MAIN REFERENCES

MEDIA SOURCES

Please visit <https://worldprotests.org/>

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INDEX

A

Activism/activists, 4, 8, 21, 24, 25, 32, 41, 47, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 58, 61, 62, 69, 99, 113, 114, 119, 122, 123, 125, 130, 133–138, 140, 143, 146, 149–152, 155, 160, 162, 163, 165, 167, 168, 171, 173
Agrarian/land reform, 8, 18, 29, 33, 37, 106, 113, 121
Anonymous, 24, 40, 49, 136
Arab Spring, 4, 9, 24, 32, 43, 51, 53, 61, 63, 64, 70, 73, 99, 100, 112, 123
Arrests, 9, 41, 69, 74–77, 102, 111, 115, 124, 137, 144, 158, 161, 171
Austerity, 1, 3, 7, 15, 18, 27–31, 33–35, 52, 54–56, 60, 62, 65, 66, 71, 77, 78, 88, 90, 99, 104, 112, 114, 126, 134, 138–141, 143, 145–151, 153–157, 166
Authoritarian, 9, 83, 84, 87–89, 116, 135

B

Black Lives Matter, 53, 152, 157, 159, 163, 170–172

Blockades, 8, 52, 58, 59, 78, 114, 123, 130, 164
Boycott, 9, 62, 71, 123, 126–128, 131, 138, 169

C

Capture, 61, 87, 96, 114
China, 9, 18, 24, 26, 31–33, 35, 37, 41, 42, 47, 56, 60, 64, 67–69, 73, 76, 93, 96, 113, 115, 123, 131, 133, 134, 136, 137, 139, 142, 145, 152, 157, 163, 165, 166, 169
Citizen surveillance, 22, 26, 40, 107, 121, 148
Civil disobedience, 8, 47, 58, 59, 61, 114, 123, 128, 130, 138, 165
Civil rights, 1, 3, 8, 15, 19, 36–39, 52, 54, 69, 102, 113, 114, 117, 122, 152
Civil servants, 97, 141
Civil Society Organization (CSO), 8, 49, 50, 52, 113, 122, 133, 134, 138
Climate change, 14, 43, 47, 49, 52, 54, 56, 62, 104, 114, 125, 130, 134, 140, 145, 162, 163

Climate justice, 8, 18, 45, 47, 104, 113, 122, 165

Communism, 121, 146

Corona-Virus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19), 3, 20, 27, 31, 40, 42, 59, 60, 88, 90, 167, 169, 170, 172

Corporate influence, 7, 18, 28, 29, 31, 87, 103, 113, 120, 121

Corporations, 9, 26, 27, 31, 32, 48, 64, 65, 71, 90, 94, 97, 102–104, 115, 123

Corruption, 1, 3, 7, 9, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 52, 53, 55, 60, 64, 78, 79, 84, 85, 87, 88, 94–97, 103, 112, 114, 116, 117, 121, 130, 133, 136, 142, 143, 147, 148, 151, 154–156, 158, 159, 161–164, 166–168, 170–173

Crisis/financial crisis, 6, 18, 21, 27, 31, 49, 62, 66, 70, 71, 84, 87–89, 112, 136, 138, 140, 141, 153, 158, 166, 168, 170

D

Deep government, 7, 18, 22, 26, 85, 96, 106, 113, 121

Democracy, 2–4, 19–21, 48, 60, 63, 78, 79, 86, 88, 89, 93, 94, 96, 103, 108, 112, 113, 116, 131, 139, 141, 144, 169, 171

Deny/denial of rights, 8, 18, 36, 38, 84–86, 113, 116, 122, 154

Deportation, 75, 115, 124, 128

Deregulation, 7, 18, 29, 31, 32, 103, 105, 113, 121

Development/development policies, 2, 3, 7, 10, 19, 27, 40, 47, 69, 96, 102, 103, 107, 108, 112, 117, 129

Direct action, 8, 47, 52, 58, 59, 61, 114, 123

Disinformation, 3, 88, 89, 116

Displaced people, 75, 115, 124

E

East Asia and Pacific, 14, 21, 24, 37, 47, 51

Economic justice, 15, 19, 24, 27–30, 42, 54, 68, 87, 100, 113, 132, 137, 144, 145, 152

Economic system, 19, 43, 51, 63, 102, 112, 114, 115, 123

Education, 3, 24, 31, 37, 52, 53, 55, 60, 69, 77, 100, 103, 114, 121, 139, 140, 142, 145–149, 152, 156, 159–161, 163, 166

Elections, 25, 37, 43, 69, 73, 77–79, 88, 97, 98, 125, 128, 132, 134, 135, 138, 140–144, 146, 147, 151, 154, 157, 160, 163, 166–169, 171, 172

Elites, 21, 27, 31, 32, 51, 65, 70, 84, 86–88, 93, 94, 96, 102, 103, 114, 115, 123, 130, 164, 166

Employers, 8, 50, 64, 71, 115, 122, 123

Environment, 37, 45, 47, 104, 122

Ethnic, 8, 18, 36–38, 40, 50, 71, 73, 78, 88, 104, 113, 122, 137, 142, 155, 164, 170

European Central Bank (ECB), 8, 9, 18, 47, 48, 62, 66, 70, 113, 115, 123

Europe and Central Asia, 14, 21, 28, 37, 42, 47, 68, 95

European Union (EU), 8, 9, 18, 48, 54, 65, 66, 84, 87, 94, 102, 113, 115, 116, 123, 140, 150, 152, 160, 161

F

Facebook, 61

Farmers, 32, 33, 48, 52, 72, 73, 100, 114, 131, 133, 135, 148–150, 152, 158

Fees, 60, 69, 127, 140, 141, 156

Financial sector, 9, 66, 70, 71, 104, 115, 123

Fiscal justice, 7, 18, 27, 29, 32, 104, 113, 121

Food prices, 8, 18, 29, 35, 60, 72, 73, 107, 113, 121, 135–137, 144, 147

Fraud, 24, 25, 43, 60, 77, 104, 151, 160

Freedom of assembly/association, 8, 18, 36, 38, 41, 57, 72, 106, 113, 122

Freedom of speech/press, 8, 17, 18, 19, 36, 38, 41, 94, 106, 113, 122, 138

Free trade, 8, 18, 34, 44, 48, 62, 66, 70, 107, 113, 115, 123, 133, 139

Fuel/energy prices, 8, 18, 27, 29, 34, 60, 77, 79, 86, 100, 106, 113, 115, 121, 134–137, 139, 140, 147, 152, 157, 161–163, 169

G

General assembly(ies), 71, 123

Girls' rights, 8, 18, 37, 41, 97, 98, 113, 117, 122

Global commons, 8, 18, 40, 45, 49, 107, 113, 122

Globalization, 43, 84, 88

Global justice, 3, 8, 15, 18, 43–47, 69, 113, 122, 160

Global protests, 2, 14–16, 27, 28, 40, 42, 47, 49, 67, 68, 73, 98, 112

Government, 3, 4, 9, 10, 19, 20, 25–27, 32–34, 47, 49, 50, 52–54, 56, 59–63, 66, 68, 71, 73, 76, 78, 86, 93, 94, 97, 100, 102, 106–108, 112, 114, 115, 117, 122–124, 127, 128, 130, 131, 133, 135–140, 144–149, 151–153, 155–159, 161–168, 170–172

Grassroots, 4, 8, 50–52, 113, 122, 140, 151, 162, 170

Grievance, 3, 4, 6–8, 15, 17–23, 27–30, 32, 33, 37–39, 44–46, 67, 68,

77–79, 85, 87, 89, 96, 97, 100–107, 111–113, 115, 117, 120, 121

Group of 20 (G20), 8, 14, 18, 43, 49, 70, 73, 77, 94, 102, 107, 113, 115, 122, 123, 137, 140, 141, 143, 146, 160, 163, 167

H

Hackers/hacktivist(s), 8, 24, 40, 50, 61, 114, 122, 141

Hacking, 71, 123

Harassment, 41, 63, 75, 86, 99, 115, 117, 124, 146, 156, 168

Health, 24, 31, 37, 40, 52, 55, 59, 103, 114, 121, 149, 172

High-income countries, 14, 20, 24, 27, 35, 68, 90, 93, 96, 112

Housing, 8, 18, 29, 35, 37, 103, 107, 113, 121, 149, 161

Human rights, 7, 10, 62, 72, 73, 79, 102–105, 107, 111, 117, 138, 145, 158, 169, 173

Hunger strike, 9, 43, 62, 114, 123, 129, 132, 136, 147

I

Imperialism, 8, 9, 18, 44, 56, 70, 79, 113, 115, 150, 151

Indigenous peoples, 25, 37, 40, 104, 149

Indignados (Outraged), 4, 51

Inequality, 3, 7, 9, 18, 19, 27, 29, 32, 33, 44, 52, 55, 70, 71, 84, 87, 89–93, 96, 102, 104, 106, 112–117, 121, 123, 133, 142, 145, 150, 171

Injury(ies), 9, 72, 74–77, 102, 111, 115, 116, 124

Injustice, 3, 7, 19, 89, 112

International Financial Institutions (IFIs), 8, 18, 31, 34, 35, 43–45, 47, 48, 72, 97, 105

International Monetary Fund (IMF), 8, 9, 14, 18, 31, 34, 37, 44, 47, 48, 60, 62, 66, 70, 72, 78, 94, 102, 105, 113, 115, 123, 162, 166
 Internet, 6, 8, 14, 26, 40, 49, 58, 69, 75, 88, 107, 114, 115, 123–125, 137, 153, 166, 171

J

Jobs, 1, 7, 18, 19, 27, 29, 31, 47, 52, 54, 60, 77, 78, 84–86, 97, 100, 102, 103, 105, 113, 114, 116, 117, 121, 127, 132, 141, 165, 169, 170
 Justice, 1, 6, 7, 18–20, 24, 25, 35, 37, 47, 55, 61, 62, 70, 71, 77, 85, 104, 112, 113, 119, 121, 131, 135, 141, 143, 146–148, 151, 153, 158, 161, 168, 171

L

Labor rights, 8, 18, 36, 38, 42, 106, 113, 122, 139, 170
 Latin America, 4, 14, 16, 21, 22, 28, 29, 37, 38, 41, 45, 47, 48, 51, 67, 68, 97, 99, 100, 112
 Latin America Spring, 9, 99
 Laws, 24, 33, 47, 53, 54, 59, 63, 68, 69, 72, 75–77, 86, 98, 115, 124, 128, 130, 132, 133, 135, 138, 147, 148, 150, 151, 154, 157, 159–164, 166, 167, 170, 171
 Lawsuit, 62, 75, 114, 115, 123, 124, 129
 Leaks, 8, 26, 61, 71, 123, 125, 129
 Legal/paralegal, 4, 7, 9, 18, 24, 25, 62, 88, 99, 112, 123
 Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered people (LGBT), 8, 18, 36–38, 42, 60, 99, 106, 113, 122, 139, 164, 171
 Local government, 65
 Looting, 8, 60, 71–73, 114, 123, 168

Lower middle income countries, 15, 68
 Low income countries, 14, 20, 24, 68, 90, 91, 112, 117
 Low living standards, 7, 18, 27, 29, 33, 60, 77, 105, 113, 121, 144, 152.
See also Poverty/poor

M

Marches, 8, 25, 49, 58, 59, 114, 123, 125, 126, 139, 151, 152
 Mayday, 153, 155, 158, 160, 163, 167, 170
 Merchant strike, 123
 MeToo, 41, 54, 62, 71, 99, 117, 160, 162, 163
 Middle class, 3, 4, 19, 21, 32, 51, 52, 59, 84, 88, 90, 112–114, 116
 Middle East and North Africa (MENA), 14, 15, 24, 51, 67, 68, 97, 100
 Migrants, 8, 42, 52, 53, 87, 114, 142, 160
 Military, 9, 26, 50, 60, 65, 67, 70, 71, 79, 87, 105, 106, 115, 122, 123, 128, 129, 131, 132, 139, 151, 154, 155, 159, 160, 162, 163, 169, 172
 Military-industrial complex, 7, 18, 22, 26, 106, 113, 121
 Missing people, 75, 115, 124
 Monsanto, 55, 67, 149, 150
 Mutual aid, 123

N

Neoliberal, 3, 19, 90, 112
 Noisemaking/*caceroladas*, 8, 61, 123, 125
 Non governmental organization (NGO), 8, 49, 50, 113, 122, 133, 134, 138

North America, 14–16, 21, 22, 24, 28, 29, 37, 38, 42, 45, 47, 50, 68
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 48, 133, 137, 140

O

Occupations, 8, 49, 52, 58, 59, 66, 114, 123, 125, 138, 141
 Occupy, 4, 32, 40, 44, 59, 62, 65, 66, 71, 84, 87, 112, 123, 139, 141, 144, 145
 Oligarchy, 7, 18, 22, 26, 85, 86, 106, 113, 121
 Omnibus protests, 3, 6, 19, 112, 165

P

Pandemic, 3, 19, 20, 27, 31, 33, 40, 42, 86, 88, 90, 99, 112, 169, 170, 172, 173
 Patriotic, 7, 18, 19, 25, 85, 86, 105, 112, 121
 Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident (PEGIDA), 84, 87, 116, 153
 Pension(s), 8, 18, 27, 29, 33–35, 47, 52–54, 56, 60, 66, 69, 78, 100, 107, 113, 114, 121, 139, 142, 144, 149, 157–159, 166
 People's Tribunal, 62
 Personal freedoms, 3, 8, 18, 19, 36, 38, 42, 43, 85, 86, 113, 116, 122, 156, 170
 Petition(s), 123–125, 134, 135, 144
 Police, 24, 26, 33, 50, 52, 60–63, 65, 71, 73–75, 77, 89, 115, 122–124, 129, 139, 140, 143, 145, 154–158, 161, 168, 169, 171
 Political movement, 2, 84
 Political party(ies), 8, 49–51, 65, 84, 113, 115, 122, 123

Political representation, 3, 7, 18, 20–23, 68, 100, 112, 121
 Political stunt, 123
 Political system, 3, 7, 15, 18, 20–23, 51, 68, 84, 116, 152, 155
 Populism, 7, 9, 42, 83–85, 87, 89, 116, 161
 Poverty/poor, 19, 43, 53, 55, 88, 90, 100, 105, 139, 146, 150, 151. *See also* Low living standards
 Prayer, 123, 125
 Prisoners, 8, 18, 36, 38, 43, 50, 62, 71, 77, 107, 113, 122, 127, 132, 143, 144, 147
 Privatization, 7, 18, 29, 31, 32, 35, 53, 60, 66, 77, 100, 103, 105, 113, 121, 135, 138, 140, 148–150, 163
 Protests assemblies, 8, 58, 59, 114, 123
 Public services, 1, 7, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27–29, 31, 52, 55, 56, 69, 78, 100, 102, 103, 113, 114, 117, 120, 121, 132, 139

Q

QAnon, 52, 86, 114, 116, 162, 170

R

Racial justice, 36–38, 52, 104, 114, 122, 155
 Radical Feminist Group (FEMEN), 41, 99, 125, 136
 Radical right/far right, 7–9, 19, 26, 27, 36, 40, 42, 52, 60, 73, 85, 88, 89, 102, 111, 113, 114, 116
 Real democracy, 1, 3, 7, 18, 21, 22, 52, 85–87, 94, 96, 97, 103, 112, 121, 144
 Rebellion, 3, 47, 77, 89, 165, 173
 Reforms, 3, 7, 8, 18, 19, 25, 27–29, 31, 33–35, 47, 48, 52–56, 65, 66,

69, 77, 78, 87, 100, 103, 107, 112, 113, 120, 121, 131, 133, 139, 141–144, 146, 148–152, 154, 156, 158, 159, 162, 166

Refugees, 25, 40, 52, 53, 87, 88, 114, 136, 150, 153, 157, 158

Religious procession, 123, 126

Religious rights, 38, 43, 86, 107, 122

Repression, 4, 6, 9, 57, 72, 74–76, 102, 111, 115, 116, 121, 124, 141–143, 159

Revolution, 63, 78, 84, 86, 87, 165–167, 171, 172

Right to the commons, 8, 18, 19, 36, 38, 40, 105, 113, 122

Riot(s), 2, 34, 36, 60, 66, 72–74, 77, 102, 112, 114, 135–137, 140, 141, 145, 147, 153, 157, 160

S

Self-inflicted violence, 9, 62, 71, 114, 123

Sexual rights, 36–38, 42, 99, 106, 113, 122

Socialism, 7, 18

Social movements, 50, 59, 61, 86, 98, 122

Social policy(ies), 62

Social protection, 19, 33, 100, 102, 103, 105, 113, 117

Social security, 34, 37, 103

Social Uprising/*Estallido Social*, 4, 51, 56, 64, 78, 166

South Asia, 14–16, 22, 26, 29, 38, 45, 68

Sovereignty, 7, 18, 22, 25, 85, 105, 112, 121, 130, 166

Statements, 123, 124

Street theater/music, 8, 61, 71, 123

Strike, 2, 8, 47, 49, 52–54, 56, 59, 60, 63, 71, 72, 99, 114, 123,

126–128, 131–146, 148–151, 155–158, 162–164, 167, 168, 170

Student(s), 8, 50, 54, 60, 69, 73, 77, 113, 122, 126, 133, 134, 137, 139–142, 144–148, 151–153, 155, 156, 158, 159, 163, 167

Sub-Saharan Africa, 14, 16, 22, 24, 28, 29, 38, 45, 51, 68

Sustainable development, 43, 105

T

Tax, 7, 9, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32, 68, 71, 72, 90, 92, 104, 113, 121, 132, 135, 136, 140, 141, 146, 152, 154, 158–162, 164

Teargas, 75, 115, 124

The 1%, 87, 96

The 99%, 27, 32, 71, 87

Torture, 75, 115, 124

Trade agreement/partnership, 49, 63, 148

Trade union, 4, 50–52, 59, 60, 72, 113, 120, 122, 149, 165, 166. *See also* Unions

Transparency and accountability, 7, 18, 22, 25, 105, 112, 121

Twitter, 61, 71

U

Unions, 8, 49, 56, 120, 127, 132, 135, 141, 148, 154, 167. *See also* Trade union

United Nations (UN), 3, 4, 10, 47, 49, 72, 89, 102, 108, 112, 117, 134, 140, 166

United States, 4, 9, 18, 21, 24–27, 31–33, 35, 37, 40–42, 47, 48, 52–56, 60, 61, 64–68, 71, 73, 76, 84, 86–89, 113–116, 120, 123, 132, 134, 135, 137, 139, 141, 145, 146, 148,

152, 155, 156, 159, 160, 162, 163,
165, 167, 170, 173
Unorganized workers, 8, 50
Upper middle income countries, 15,
20, 68, 96
Uprising, 64, 84, 112

V

Vandalism, 8, 60, 71–73, 114, 123
Violence, 9, 24, 41, 43, 54, 60, 62,
63, 71–75, 77, 78, 88, 89, 112,
114–116, 123, 124, 129, 145–148,
150, 154, 157, 158, 160, 163, 164,
166, 168, 171, 172

W

Wages, 7, 18, 29, 31, 33, 47, 52–54,
59, 64, 66, 68, 69, 86, 88, 97, 99,
103, 105, 113–115, 121, 132,
134–139, 141, 142, 145, 148–150,
153, 163, 165, 167, 169, 172
Walkout, 8, 59, 123, 126, 127
War, 7, 18, 26, 40, 53, 61, 72, 84,
86, 92, 105, 106, 131, 143, 144,
151, 154, 159, 161, 171

Whistleblowing(ers), 8, 26, 61, 71,
114, 123, 127, 129, 168
Wikileaks, 26, 61, 68
Woman(en), 7, 8, 18, 38, 40, 41, 50,
52, 56, 59, 61, 62, 69, 71, 97, 98,
102, 106, 111, 113, 114, 117, 122,
132, 133, 138, 143–145, 147, 153,
156, 157, 159, 160, 168, 170–172
Women’s rights, 3, 9, 19, 36, 37, 40,
41, 53, 54, 71, 97–99, 117
Workers, 8, 26, 49, 52–56, 59, 86,
99, 106, 114, 116, 126–128,
131–143, 145–150, 155, 156, 160,
163, 165, 167, 169–172
Work(ing) conditions, 27, 31, 59, 60,
64, 142, 149, 156, 163, 165, 172
World Bank, 8, 9, 14, 18, 32, 44, 47,
48, 66, 105, 113, 115, 123, 133
World Social Forum (WSF), 41, 44,
47, 49, 134, 137, 143, 150, 155,
158, 163

Y
Yellow vests, 4, 51, 60, 64, 77, 87,
112, 116, 162, 163, 167, 170
Youth, 8, 47, 50, 54, 61, 99, 113,
122, 141, 146, 163