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Women in Poland

“Black protest” in Poland

- News from around the world -

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Today, with more and more information about what happened yesterday in Warsaw and in Poland in general, during the so-called "black protest", it is very clear that we had, in its different forms, one of the hugest mass protests in the post-1989 Poland. [1]

It is happening in a country where during the last quarter of a century we never had more than hundreds, not even thousands, of persons taking part in street protests.Â

It is difficult to evaluate the participation in the central event, because organizers didn't expect such strong participation and called to protest in a relatively limited space of the Castle Square, so there was no room for many of those who took part in the protest, and there was even a dangerous situation created by the growing pressure of the mass of people in this limited space.

Organizers called desperately to defuse the pressure, to leave the square and to march towards the parliament, so people marched under rain, without legal permission, through the streets paralyzing the traffic in the center of the city for at least two hours. The police forces nearly completely disappeared, and where some small police forces were present their attitude was sympathetic.Â

In any case there were, in Warsaw, tens of thousands of persons, fundamentally young women, taking part in this protest, and it is more or less clear that since the beginning of democratic protests in last December, it was the third most massive protest, and the most massive up to date on the question of abortion in the history of Poland. There were protests also yesterday in many other cities.Â

Another big surprise yesterday was that a lot of people, in majority women of all ages, in the whole country, including small cities, arrived to their schools, workplaces, etc., dressed in black.

All this movement is largely self-organized in a dispersed manner, propulsed by a lot of different women's initiatives, groups, small networks, ad hoc appeals, etc., and no political party is leading it or even visible a little as an actor.Â [2]

[1] This report was sent to *IVP* from our correspondent Poland on Tuesday 4 October 2016.

[2] The beginning of the campaign was, during several months, the collection of signatures under the civic project called Save the Women. Razem refused to collect signatures. Neither is it true that "the black protest was initiated by the Razem party". No political party initiated this protest. The black protest is a mass protest while Razem has no capacity of mass mobilisation.