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Worker Protests and Trade Unions in Post-Communist Europe, with a Special Focus on Ukraine and Romania

by

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CEU Nador utca 9, Monument Building, Popper Room | Thursday May 7 – 2015 | 9.30-11.10

The talk focuses on how trade unions in post-communist Europe respond to worker discontent and protests, and on whether and how trade unions have tried, over the past 25 years, to rely on this discontent in order to become more legitimate vis-a-vis workers and more influential vis-à-vis governments. In addition, contrasting "factory regimes" at the plant level in Ukraine and Romania help explain why trade unions could and can escape the control of management and become more representative of worker interests.

Mihai Varga is a senior research fellow in sociology at the Eastern Europe Institute, Freie Universität Berlin. He was a Max Weber Fellow in 2011-2012 and has finished his doctoral studies at the Sociology Department of the University of Amsterdam with a dissertation on the political economy and sociology of labor relations in the post-communist context (cum laudae, February 2011). Generally his research focuses on problems of interest representation and consequences for quality of democracy (with post-communist Europe as the geographical focus). Other areas of interest and/or teaching include the development of the European Social and Employment Policy, of the European Neighborhood Policy, International Political Economy, sociology of social movements and in particular of the labor movement, qualitative research design, Russian politics, the post-communist far right.

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