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Abstract for: *Alltagswelten von Frauen* im pOST-Sozialismus* conference

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**Women – the biggest losers of the transformation? The Struggle for Abortion
Rights in Poland after 1989**

It would be a large generalization to divide the winners and losers of 1989 transformation in Poland by gender, however, when analyzing the situation of women, it is impossible to notice that, as a social/ political group, women experience many negative effects of 1989 transformation and neoliberalism in Poland. For women, the collapse of communism was a radical change in the abortion law. On January 7, 1993, the “the Family Planning, Human Embryo Protection and Conditions of Permissibility of Abortion Act” entered into force. In this new law, there was a removal of the “socioeconomic grounds” for abortion. Instead of recognizing women's rights, an anti-women policy was introduced. The so-called “Abortion compromise” (three cases permitting termination of pregnancy) lasted until 2020, although attempts to introduce a complete ban on abortion were made successively from 1993. In 2020 the restrictive law has become even more restrictive. After the decision of the Constitutional Tribunal of October 22, 2020, termination of pregnancy is allowed in Poland only if the pregnancy is endangering the pregnant woman's life or health, and when there is a justified suspicion that a pregnancy is a result of a prohibited act, incest or rape. The judgment of the Constitutional Tribunal made Polish abortion law one of the most restrictive not only in the European Union, but also in the world. This radical change in the abortion law shows that the largest costs of the transformation in Poland were and are still paid by women (Jane Hardy 2010).

The aim of the paper is to discuss the range of women's reproductive rights in Poland in the context of the political transformation of 1989. I am interested in the discourse on women's

rights and the language of the debate on reproductive rights, particularly regarding Women's Strikes (2016, 2020) as a pivotal point that has influenced the political mobilization of women and organization of feminist movement in Poland recently.

The abstract is assigned to theme 5: Gender Equality Policy - Gleichstellungspolitik