

SPANISH STATE

Historic feminist general strike in the Basque Country

Tuesday 12 December 2023, by [Luis \(NPA 33\)](#) (Date first published: 7 December 2023).

On Thursday 30 November, a feminist general strike took place in the Basque Country for “the collective right to care and support”, called by the Euskal Herria Feminist Movement and the coordination of dozens of associations, struggle groups, trade unions and political parties.



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More than 1,500 works councils joined the strike, which was supported by all the Basque trade unions except CC.OO and UGT (a minority in the Southern Basque Country). The aim of this mixed day of struggle was to demand a public and community care system in the face of casualisation, privatisation and mercantilisation, and to highlight the importance of gender, race and class in the economy of social reproduction.

PICKET LINES

From 7 a.m. onwards, picket lines blockaded numerous industrial sites and halted traffic on the main access roads to Bilbao, Pamplona, San Sebastian and Vitoria. Around midday, other actions and rallies were called in front of town halls, provincial parliaments and even the Martutene prison, to highlight the inequalities in the conditions of women prisoners. In Bilbao, another rally was held at the initiative of a group of women workers in front of the Immigration Office to denounce the working conditions suffered by home help workers, 42% of whom are immigrants. In the afternoon, demonstrations in the four Basque capitals and a dozen other towns brought together several thousand people in the rain.

The impact was very strong in the public sector, particularly in education (70%), but also in industry, though less so in commerce. The unions denounced excessive minimum services in the health sector in order to break the strike. The day ended with a number of clashes with the police during the blockades. Two women activists were arrested at the Michelin factory in Vitoria, and five others in Donostia for chaining themselves to a public building.

MILITANT RESISTANCE AND INNOVATION IN THE STRUGGLE

This day is set against the backdrop of the long and victorious strikes by nursing home workers in recent years, as well as the 8 March strikes in 2018 and 2019. Despite this historic success, it was essential for the organisers to think of all those who could not be there, such as the “internas”, the homecare workers. “We’re not all here, the interns are missing” or “Precariousness is also violence”, they chanted in the streets of Bilbao.

In an article published in El Salto/Hordago, Xavi Mínguez and Clara Sanchez (Antikapitalistak) point out that the long process of building this strike (since 2020) reveals the need to move forward with new mechanisms of solidarity and militant resistance, but also to continue building popular power and innovating strategies of struggle.

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P.S.

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