

1. Can you say something about the situation on gender identity in your country – is there self ID etc?

The situation in Spain is getting more worrying by the day.

We do have a law that allows for the change of legal gender, provided some requirements are met (diagnose by a psychologist, hormonal treatment for two years and absence of other mental issues that could be influencing the dysphoria; surgery is not required). But the activists are pushing to change that into self-ID.

As a mini-intro, I have to say that we have different levels of government, similar to the States in the US or the *lander* in Germany, so regions have a certain amount of “autonomy” in order to pass their own legislation on certain topics. That’s what happens in UK with Scotland, for instance, with what are called *devolved matters*.

We have 17 of such regions which we call “autonomous communities” and in 14 of them there is legislation that regulates transgender issues, most of them even allowing self-ID, but luckily only within the scope of those *devolved matters* that are specifically regulated by the regions, mainly health and education.

This means that students at school or high school could change their name and pronouns, or that medical or healthcare cards could be issued with the new identity chosen by the transperson.

So transactivists are pushing very hard for a central (federal) law that would unite and “harmonise” all the regulation in Spain but also would enforce “self-ID” into our law.

Now in Spain we have a coalition government, the first one in our recent history after the Francoist dictatorship, and both parties have distributed the Ministries among them.

The problem is that the party called Podemos (We can) that is pushing very hard for self-ID into Spanish law is the one that is ruling over the Equality Department.

Sources from that Ministry for Equality announced last week that they will carry out three new different pieces of legislation for the LGBT community

1. Against discrimination and LGBT phobia
2. Equal treatment law
3. What is commonly referred to as “Trans law”.

and that in one of them –still to be disclosed– they will include “self-ID”.

Last Friday (not yesterday, but last week’s) they launched a public consultation on the Ministry’s official website, open to everyone to send their suggestions, until July 15th, but with very little information about its scope. We only know its title “*ORGANIC LAW FOR THE EQUALITY OF LGTBI PERSONS AND FOR NON-DISCRIMINATION ON GROUNDS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION OR SEXUAL CHARACTERISTICS*”. So the protected characteristics are going to be “sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or **sexual characteristics**”.

Also this week, coinciding with Pride, two very important LGBT organisations had a meeting with the Minister for Equality and staged the delivery of a draft of a bill. I say staged because the text those LGBT organisations handed over was the same text the party that nowadays is running the Ministry of Equality registered before our Parliament two years ago. That proposal decayed last year when the Parliament was dissolved because of the call for early elections that we had in 2019.

So the whole thing was a PR event, to have an excuse to have a press release to the media, with pictures and such.

The reason they gave as to why they were pushing for the very same text was that it was developed, they say, “*out of a broad and collaborative process*” of trans collectives and **families**. (When they mention the “families” is because they’re talking about kids. So their parents are the ones speaking on their behalf.)

They are doing all this public efforts not only to show their commitment to gender identity politics for the general public but also because there is disagreement within the political parties that are governing together in a coalition.

The Socialist Party (PSOE; similar to Labour in the UK) is officially supporting the push for self-ID that their partner, Podemos is pushing for, but there is some resistance from within the party to accept it.

At the beginning of June, some PSOE officials published a four page manifesto with the title "ARGUMENTS AGAINST THEORIES THAT DENY THE REALITY OF WOMEN".

In it they stated that "Sex is a biological fact and gender is a social construction".

That caused some anger from their partners from the woke party Podemos, so much that yesterday (or Thursday) a regional parliamentary of that party in Andalusia, South of Spain, was defending trans rights in a speech wearing a t-shirt with the letters FCK TRF: "Fuck TERF".

Currently the government of that region is a right wing coalition, including the fascistic party Vox (nostalgics from Franco times), but she decided to attack feminists instead of the far right.

This is how polarised things are here so far.

2. What made you realise transgenderism is a threat to women's rights?

One of my first "encounters" with what was going on was a video uploaded to YouTube by Julie Bindel. She had recorded it with her phone, when she was being prevented to attend a meeting to discuss the proposals for self-ID in British law. I think the video is from 2018.

It wasn't very long, but I felt frustrated. And very angry. Those people blocking Bindel's way were displaying typical male sexist behaviour. Something we've seen so many times in other circumstances not related to transgenderism at all.

So I could see that not even them were buying the narrative of "feminine" is "submissive", they were just messing with the women that wanted to have a meeting on their own. They were upset they were not the stars of the show and decided that no one was attending it if they were not.

And I don't remember exactly whether it was in that moment too or maybe later, at some point, when learning more about this issue I had a sort of flash: **statistics of violence**.

I realised those males blocking Bindel and others like them would be counted as women if they were to be granted a "female gender identity", so women would begin to appear as violent as men in official data.

Here in Spain we have a very far right political party, called Vox, that has won a lot of seats at our Parliament in the last elections. They are extremely sexist, racist, ... The whole package of intolerance that is classic of fascistic parties.

They claim men are oppressed by women, because we have laws against domestic violence, which in Spain is called "gender-based violence", meaning "male violence against women", so they campaign AGAINST our equality laws, specifically against the law against gender-based violence, which they *abhor* because it does put the spotlight on male violence against their female partners. They want to stop collecting segregated data for those cases and that "all domestic violence" like intergenerational violence, would be collected all together.

So, with self-ID, we could have, on the one hand, "legal women" being as violent as men, and on the other we could have men self identifying as women in order to AVOID the aggravation of the "gender-based violence". Both effects combined would affect statistics of violence by increasing "female violence" and decreasing male's.

So, when I realised that gender identity legislation would have the effect that the very far right is pushing for, I realised that it was very, very wrong.

That opened a door to see all other effects on statistics like glass ceiling or wage gap, for instance, and other effects in real life like males in women's spaces like prisons, shelters, etc.

3. Who opposes gender identity politics in your country?

Sadly the far right were the first to oppose it very openly, with a bus that went all over Spain, with their motto "little boys have penises, little girls have vulvas". So now, in Spain, many people associate any critique of gender identity politics with that. Far right always opposes anything that "deviates" from the idea of traditional values and family, very attached here to Catholic values.

On the left though, many other voices are also speaking up against it, increasingly so in the past one or two months. Things are really speeding up here.

I'd like to mention first Amelia Valcárcel, one of the most prominent Spanish feminist philosophers, who last year devoted a whole seminar to this issue, making it visible for many women that were unaware of it until that moment. That was a turning point or at least, the beginning of it. This very week she has spoken again about queer theory as a Trojan Horse in feminism and how queer theory's agenda and the feminist one clash because they don't have the same goals and objectives.

Also other prominent feminist speaking against this is Lidia Falcón, whose political party was expelled from a left wing coalition because of that.

This year many feminists groups are beginning to talk openly against the idea of self-ID.

One of the new groups is the Alliance against Women's Erasure, a group that has began some actions against drafts of new bills that included gender identity in their text and have had some visibility on the press, which is very good. The downside is that they are being connected or related to one of the parties in Government, so some feminists are wary of their true intentions, which would weaken the Alliance's influence in general if they're not careful with that.

Other initiatives are also blooming, with new groups like **Radical Feminist Space** in Madrid, **Feminists of Catalonia** and other groups so far without an official name but very interested in fighting gender identity politics. We hope to be able to build bridges among all those groups to strengthen our position and gain visibility and power.

Some good news is that the debate in social media is getting very visible, people –specially women– are not as afraid to speak up as they were before. And a very positive thing is that some men from the left are very openly siding with us feminists against queer theory, which also helps.

4. How do transgender policies affect international laws on women's rights? Who is promoting these changes?

I think in these webinars we have already mentioned how some very wealthy men are funding transgender policies all over the world. Names like Soros, Pritzker or Stryker appear in Jennifer Bilek's or Michael Biggs' excellent articles.

But trying to focus on the influence from Spain, as we are here today to inform about our countries, I think it's worth mentioning for instance that the main organisation pushing for the changes in Spanish law, FELGTB (Spanish Federation of LGBT groups) those who have met several times in the past weeks with our Minister for Equality, have consultative status with the UN, as they mention in their Twitter bio.

They are also members of ILGA World – the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association. Established in 1978, ILGA World has ECOSOC consultative status at the United Nations.

[ECOSOC is UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COUNCIL]

We all remember how shocked we were with the Dentons report. But how did that come to be? IGLYO, another LGBT lobby group, this for young people were the ones that commissioned it. It's in their website.

[YGLYO is The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth and Student Organisation]

As about the effects, we're watching it in sports, parity, etc. Women could disappear from public life. We could be back in the kitchen even with apparent progressive and inclusive legislation, as long as they allow anyone to "identify as a woman".

A friend of mine said that this is like going back to Elizabethan times, when women were not allowed to perform female parts in plays so men had to perform "femininity".

And what are the roles that cannot be "performed" by men?

Prostitution, porn and surrogacy. Those are the roles opened to "natal women" when we are rendered powerless.

So we have to fight back as hard as we can.

5. What is happening in schools? Are children being taught to be trans?

The gender identity issue in schools is very complicated in Spain because of what I told you before of our political system, where there are over a dozen different regulations, each in a different region.

The situation is that activists have lobbied the regional administrations very successfully and have created different regulations and guides for different regional governments. 14, so far.

In these regulations they try to settle the idea of the "spectrum", against the binary of the "heteronormativity", and allowing students to change their names and pronouns without any psychological or medical diagnose, even without the family's consent or knowledge, just with the students self assessment.

This is very recent in comparison to what's been going on in other countries. Probably happening during the last 4 years, so it's beginning to be noticed in schools and high schools.

Now it's the "phase" of intensive formation for teachers and educators, even from unions, who consistently quote or directly hire LGBT organisations to create these materials, like Chrysalis—who are very similar to Mermaids in the UK—.

There are not scientists or other professionals consulted in these guides.

Just yesterday, we knew that the Ministry for Equality, not the Education one, has published a guide for teachers and educators, carried out by many of the queer activists to help "prevent bullying" of LGBT people.

This is the official reason for the guide but under the title "We are Diversity" (http://www.igualdad.gob.es/Documents/Guia_Somos_Diversidad.pdf) they claim to offer teachers a "toolbox" to address "familiar sexual diversity, corporal sexual diversity and gender identity expression sexual diversity" (in Spanish, "diversidad sexual familiar, corporal y de expresión de identidad de género".)

The guide consists of 161 pages and is divided into five thematic modules.

The guide is extensive and difficult to understand, as it uses confusing terminology. In addition, it includes a lot of ideological content that has nothing to do with LGTBphobia and assumes postulates of queer theory.

Judith Butler is referred to as a source for more information.

For instance, in its section on "sexualities" they have a subsection for the "debate on trans lesbianism".

This is a guide for educators, to help them introduce this topic at schools, with examples of activities to be carried out in the classroom.