

International anti-feminist network organises rally in Spain

Tuesday 14 May 2019, by [NORRIS Sian](#) (Date first published: 8 March 2019).

Globally connected groups are working together to threaten women's rights - and they've landed in Spain for International Women's Day.

An international anti-feminist network is organising a rally in Spain on Sunday (10 March) just days after a bus was driven across the country condemning "feminazis" and demanding the repeal of legislation against gender-based violence.

The network called [Women of the World](#) (WoW), which claims to have members in 47 countries including in the US and Canada, is leading a march through Madrid to "respond to radical feminism" and show "our gratitude to men, our dear men".

The "feminazi" bus, launched by the ultra-conservative HazteOir association, bears an image of [Hitler wearing lipstick](#) and has travelled through [Barcelona, Valencia, Seville, Cadiz, and Pamplona](#) to Madrid, arguing that "gender laws discriminate against men".

Viviana Waisman, director of the [Women's Link Worldwide](#), a women's rights organisation which has offices in Spain and Colombia, said these as "attacks" are "connected to a global movement... to crackdown on equality".

These campaigns aim to "take us back in time in terms of what women can and can't do", she said, adding: "We really see that anti-feminist and anti-rights groups use the same strategies in Spain as they are using in other countries around the world".

"We really see that anti-feminist and anti-rights groups use the same strategies in Spain as they are using in other countries around the world"

Maria Palomares Arenas Cabral, at the Barcelona-based [Calala Women's Fund](#), also commented that movements in Spain and Central America "use the same frameworks. They use the same images, and the same campaigns against feminists".

In Spain, these actions also come as far right and ultra-conservative movements appear emboldened, including the party Vox which campaigns against gender-based violence laws and won [400,000](#) votes in last year's Andalusian regional elections.

Vox has said it [wants to](#): "repeal the gender violence law and any other law that discriminates against one of the sexes, and replace it with a family violence law."

"These anti-rights organisations are very successful at making sure they leverage opportunities in countries like Spain when there are elections, for example", said Waisman, as they "adapt their global strategy to suit a national context".

WoW is a relatively new organisation created by the traditionalist Spanish non-profit [Profesionales por la Ética](#), which acknowledges that Sunday's rally will have "a very different spirit and objectives" to previous International Women's Day celebrations.

"Feminism and machismo are terms that today imply contempt for the opposite sex", it says, calling the demonstration just the first step in "this great battle" and that "we want to reach all corners of Spain and the world. We know that we are making".

WoW's international membership includes [Moms for America](#), the [Real Women of Canada](#), and Canadian anti-choice group [Silent No More](#).

Real Women of Canada told me over email that they first met WoW at the [World Congress of Families](#) (WCF) - another international network bringing together groups that oppose abortion, sex education, same sex marriage and adoption and trans rights.

It is "of critical importance to work with our European partners in order to offset the dominance of militant feminism world-wide"

They added that it is "of critical importance to work with our European partners in order to offset the dominance of militant feminism world-wide", and that they're trying to publicise the demonstration in Madrid via Canadian publications as well.

Silent No More said that WoW were "are a strong voice for the majority of women".

Another WoW [partner](#) is the increasingly well-known conservative campaign group called [CitizenGo](#), founded in 2013 by HazteOir. These groups are also connected to the WCF international network which is next meeting in Verona, Italy at the end of March.

CitizenGo previously [launched other buses](#) carrying transphobic messages. Their activities led to the Spanish government [revoking their official status](#) last month as a non-profit organisation contributing to the public good.

WoW says that Sunday's march through Madrid will "affirm femininity, the value of motherhood and dedication to the family".

This network wants to "break with the old-fashioned 'hater' style of feminism and gender ideology" and restore "complementarity" - a term used by these groups to say that men and women have distinct, complementing identities.

"By using this terminology that they've made up like 'gender-ideology'", Waisman said, such movements "are really working to confuse people who might not have clarity on these issues", while deliberately provoking feminists with their messages.

Both she and Cabral warned that this appears to be a strategy to distract women's rights organisations from their work. According to Waisman, it's "a proven strategy that has worked for them in other places".

For this reason, Cabral explained that feminist groups in Spain are refusing to respond directly to these provocations, focusing instead on communicating "our own campaigns and our own narrative and our own positive messages".

"Our way is not to engage", Waisman added. She told me that "we're focused on reaching a situation where there's no discrimination, no gender stereotypes, and no women dying at the hands of their

partners”.

Sian Norris

[Click here](#) to subscribe to our weekly newsletters in English and or French. You will receive one email every Monday containing links to all articles published in the last 7 days.

P.S.

Open Democracy

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/international-anti-feminist-network-organises-rally-spain/>