A Trans Response to Right-Wing Attacks: Analysis and Proposals

Reflections on the text "Trans Counteroffensive" by the Union Communiste Libertaire (UCL)

Liza — Plataforma Anarquista de Madrid

20/02/2025

Contents

The Current Situation of the Trans Issue in the Spanish State 3
Responses from the Queer Community and the Need to Rethink Our Struggle 5

From Liza's Gender Commission, we present this article as a complement to the translation of the text "Trans Counteroffensive" by the Union Communiste Libertaire (UCL).

The document produced by our companions provides a contextual analysis of the trans issue both internationally and nationally within the French context, outlines the organization's theoretical stance on including trans people in the feminist struggle, and includes notes on how they have decided to put this into practice politically.

We strongly encourage you to read the aforementioned text, which is available at this link: www.regeneracionlibertaria.org

The following article represents our own reflection as feminist and especifist anarchists on the trans issue, as well as an adaptation of our companions' analysis to our specific context. However, we believe that addressing the trans struggle cannot be resolved in a single article. After all, what is at stake here is nothing less than the articulation of different sectors of the working class and the creation of strategies that strengthen and expand their partial demands—achieving both small victories that build social power and the construction of a revolutionary perspective.

Obviously, this article will not resolve such a complex issue, but it does reaffirm the necessity for political organizations (especially those aligned with us) to recognize trans people as legitimate participants in both the feminist struggle and the broader workers' struggle. We'll return to this point later. For now, we'll begin with a brief analysis of the legislative situation surrounding the trans issue in our region.

The Current Situation of the Trans Issue in the Spanish State

As a complement to the international context provided in "Toward a Trans Counteroffensive," we wanted to include some notes on the specific situation in Spain. In February 2023, the national Trans Law was passed. However, Madrid's right-wing government has since rolled back several provisions of the law at the regional level. On June 25, 2024, the national government issued a press release stating that the Council of Ministers agreed to file constitutional appeals against the regulations approved by the Community of Madrid.

The outcome of these appeals is still pending, but it's clear that Madrid's original legislative proposal has been significantly weakened. This is reflected in the continued use of pathologizing language in legislation, the cancellation of an LGTBI Historical Memory and Documentation Center, the inability to align regional documentation with gender identity without first modifying the national ID, and the rollback of accommodations for trans students in schools.

While the national government did file these appeals, internal divisions remain, with a strong transphobic faction gaining ground—as seen during the party's 41st Federal Congress in December 2024. There, an amendment was approved barring trans women from participating in female categories, using typical right-wing rhetoric to delegitimize trans women. Additionally, the party's political roadmap replaced "LGTBIQ+" with "LGTB," excluding a significant portion of gender and sexual dissidents.

Although dissenting voices within the party exist, these resolutions highlight the precariousness of trans rights and their use by political parties to attack each other and manipulate public opinion—ultimately ignoring the real needs of trans people for legal protection and freedom from discrimination. As Shon Faye notes, the trans debate is always on the political agenda—but never

to address the community's actual demands. Instead, it fuels public discourse with imaginary problems, like alleged threats to minors in bathrooms or supposed risks to women's rights.

Regarding the limitations of the Trans Law, one egregious issue is how it addresses conversion therapies. While banned nationally, these practices continue, and no penalties have been imposed on their promoters. The association "No es Terapia" claims this is because sanctioning power lies with high-level administrative bodies that follow the political directives of regional governments. Due to this tacit approval, queer individuals continue to suffer the effects of these degrading and violent practices. This administrative negligence is just one example of the many barriers even well-intentioned laws face when trying to enact real change.

The Trans Law also fails to robustly protect non-binary individuals, lacks strong measures against existing transphobia, and does not challenge the foundational premises of the capitalist and patriarchal system—such as binary gender, heterosexual couples, and the nuclear family.

Another important aspect of analyzing the Trans Law is understanding the origin and intent behind the right-wing cuts to the original legislative project in Madrid. These rollbacks are both a demonstration of political power and a clear statement of intent: portraying queer and especially trans people as threats to "women and children" using conspiratorial rhetoric that exploits fear of sexual violence to demonize migrants and trans individuals. Right-wing representatives have even described the community as chronically ill and have imposed ideological bans on LGTBIQ+ cultural events.

We must also acknowledge the alignment of a significant sector of feminism with the far right on transphobia. Despite the misogyny historically exhibited by the right, these two sectors often share arguments and have even mobilized together. These feminists are not only part of the neoliberal institutional sphere but also active in grassroots movements, leading strong rejections of trans individuals. This has even led to a split in Madrid's historic March 8th demonstration. The official march, organized by the 8M Commission, embraced trans inclusion and flew the trans flag. Meanwhile, the self-styled "Madrid Feminist Movement" organized a separate march with openly transphobic and sex worker-hostile positions.

These intertwined legal and social dynamics highlight the need to look beyond laws when analyzing the reality of the trans population. Transphobia, like other forms of oppression, manifests in every area of life. Trans individuals face various forms of violence in schools, workplaces, social settings, and families. They also face significant barriers to employment and housing, and suffer from the effects of public health cutbacks and a lack of medical training for trans-specific care.

From our libertarian perspective, we don't believe that the struggles faced by trans people—or any marginalized group—can be solved solely through legal reforms. Only the end of capitalism can bring about the radical societal transformation needed to overturn material inequalities and dismantle the institutions that uphold them. Still, we believe in organizing concrete demands in a structural and systematic way, aiming for the emancipation of the working class. In other words: legislative reforms are not the end goal, but a necessary step along the way—especially when won through the strategic unity of different sectors of the working class.

That's why we support the need for a Trans Law, as well as the abolition of the Immigration Law, the defense of public healthcare, and other legislative demands that the working class must fight for—particularly in housing. We also reaffirm that trans people are part of the feminist struggle and the working class. They are deeply affected by privatization and precarious living

conditions, in addition to facing specific violence due to growing transphobia fueled by the global and local far right.

Still, as we've seen in Madrid, laws are fragile. To preserve hard-won rights and build working-class unity, we need a solid, coordinated organization. This requires recognizing the diversity within the working class: trans rights may not directly impact cis people, but victories for trans communities are victories for the working class as a whole—especially when they come from collective struggle. And of course, because we are one class, and we want the needs of all its members to be met—understanding that those needs differ, but are equally valid.

It's also important to consider the unique demands of different sectors of the working class, all of which suffer under capitalism and its intersections with other forms of domination. Each sector's contributions are essential to fully understanding our common enemy and developing strategies that don't reproduce oppressive systems but instead point toward collective liberation.

Responses from the Queer Community and the Need to Rethink Our Struggle

In the face of all these attacks, the trans community has mobilized in different ways: NGOs dominate mainstream responses, while more radical spaces have focused on demonstrations during Pride (28J) and informal networks organizing autonomous queer events. As participants in these spaces, we've noticed a general reluctance toward union-style organizing or deeper engagement in debates on social organization—favoring instead the creation of autonomous spaces and symbolic shows of solidarity.

We want to be clear: this isn't a critique of our companions' work, but an invitation to reflect on certain political questions within the queer movement. We agree with UCL's position that affinity networks are vital for trans survival—but they can and should coexist with strong organizations capable of reclaiming the revolutionary potential that gender-dissident movements have historically held. We believe in building a political force that can think strategically, win future victories, raise awareness, and take part in deep social transformation.

As especifist anarchists, we believe that social movements can organize themselves autonomously without party oversight, set goals, and generate their own strategies and discourses. We see anarchism not as a countercultural niche but as a proactive participant in all the arenas where the working class organizes to defend its rights and build alternative futures—be it in healthcare, education, housing, trans or LGTBI struggles, feminism, anti-racism, etc.

We aim to engage in all these movements and advance together toward a society free from LGTBIfobia—one that breaks with gender binaries, traditional gender roles, and the nuclear family model.

In the magazine *Zona de Estrategia*, Charlie Moya calls for moving beyond identity politics and reclaiming the queer movement's potential for radical change. We don't intend to settle the debate on whether we need specifically queer or trans political structures, whether we should channel activist energy into unions, or participate in public healthcare platforms. What we want is to open and encourage this debate, because we see it as essential for the queer and trans movement to come together and think strategically about our current situation—and how we can organize to change it.

We also call on all other organizations—not only to show solidarity with the specific struggles of trans people but to incorporate the critiques and challenges that trans experiences and proposals bring to patriarchal institutions.

Finally, let's not forget the heated debate this issue is sparking within the left and feminism itself. We must confront right-wing discourses that blame trans people for the harms caused by capitalism and patriarchy. Ignoring these attacks means ignoring our trans companions' humanity and denying their rightful place in the working class and the feminist struggle. Organizations must educate themselves, take a stand, and engage in these ideological and strategic debates to actively include trans people.

Now is the time to come together, build strong alliances capable of confronting the far right and capitalism, and move toward the world we want to live in. Until all discrimination—whether based on gender identity, sexual orientation, race, origin, or ability—is gone.

For us, and for all our companions.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Liza — Plataforma Anarquista de Madrid
A Trans Response to Right-Wing Attacks: Analysis and Proposals
Reflections on the text “Trans Counteroffensive” by the Union Communiste Libertaire (UCL)
20/02/2025

www.regeneracionlibertaria.org

theanarchistlibrary.org