

# MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup>

CHRONICLES OF A GLOBAL UPRISING



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## The Transnational Social Strike Platform

The Transnational Social Strike (TSS) Platform aims at involving different kinds of workers—women and men, those employed in factories, those who experience the normality of precarity, locals and migrants—in a political process against subordination and exploitation. It is open to workers, groups and unions across Europe and beyond that share a common goal.

We experience every day that things in the workplaces and in society have changed. Organization of labor struggles is weakened by the divisions between those who work in the same hub, factory, school, call center etc. Solidarity is challenged by the differences of contracts, time of employment, political conditions such as residence permits or welfare rights. Labour disputing is more and more difficult and it is often not enough to stop the increasing precarization. National divisions imposed on labor obstruct the capacity to fight back against the transnational dimension of production and exploitation. As a result, a little conquest by one can sometimes be a loss for many others: be they workers in other countries with lower wages and income or temp workers in the same factory, young interns or migrants and refugees forced to work for free to get their visa.

The TSS process is born from the assumption that there is no technical way out to this situation: only a political movement can overturn the state of affairs according to which we are just numbers and shares in the balance sheets of the European technocrats and capitalists. The strike is for us the name of a power that aims at damaging the pillars on which this unequal and unjust society is grounded. Building the conditions to exercise this power is what we need in order to overthrow the current state of subordination to employers and politicians.

**Therefore, today the strike needs to be transnational and social.**

Transnational because capital works and thinks transnationally, creating divisions among countries, wages and working conditions to weaken us and make profits. Only by facing and overturning these divisions we can aspire at increasing our power and make ourselves heard. In this, we refuse to be labeled either as anti-EU or pro-EU: we deem insufficient to organize at the national level, as the transnational dimension is our battlefield and Europe is for us a common space of organization where to find allies and enemies.

Social because the power of the strike cannot be restricted to some categories of workers, trade unions or groups of supporters. The strike is a weapon that everyone has to be able to hold and use throughout society: even those who are constantly changing jobs, the migrants who risk their residence permit, the students and the unemployed. The strike can become for them a chance to be in the frontline, to organize and to overthrow the political conditions of exploitation. There must be no exclusion from the strike movement: this is the basis of our understanding of solidarity and social strike.

The TSS Platform is the political infrastructure to confront these challenges. It is a reservoir of experiences and tactics to politicize labor struggles, to connect social and labour struggles, and make their claims heard well beyond each group's and union's capacity. It is a space of organization, communication and encounter where different figures of labour can think together about how to develop a common discourse, how to support common European claims capable of being instruments of emancipation and how to build the conditions of possibility of the transnational social strike.



## EDITORIAL: An Extraordinary Strike: Paths of Organization after March 8<sup>th</sup>

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of March we saw a global uprising of women, which has been able to trigger a global uprising against the neoliberal order. Women's mobilization and the process of organization of which they have been protagonists ended in a massive transnational strike that took place in more than 50 countries and involved all spheres of society. The strike was launched by the Ni una menos-movement in Argentina, inspired by the black protest strike against the abortion ban in Poland and the following global women's marches, starting from the one in Washington and London, that overrun hundreds of cities. Women practiced the strike as a powerful weapon of insubordination. In all respects, it was a transnational social strike because in every part of the world it questioned the overall current organization of society and because it involved also those who are not in the condition to strike in a traditional sense.

It was a transnational social strike because it challenged the borders, not only the geographical ones, but also those between public and private, productive and reproductive work, workplaces and society. In this sense, the strike of the 8<sup>th</sup> of March was not just a tool to obtain legal improvements or to gain something in the different national or labor contexts. Neither it was just an institutionalized "form" of organization: it was a moment of global uprising. From here on the idea of what a transnational social strike can be has become clear to all. Also the more skeptical, saying it's too ambitious, too abstract, that local initiatives and territorial attachments offer a more concrete basis for the political initiative, must be by now convinced by this extraordinary March 8<sup>th</sup>. The bet on the strike as a broad and powerful practice of insubordination, to be played out transnationally, turned out to be the right one.

In retrospect, it becomes more urgent than ever to understand the strike on the basis of its global and political dimension. We know that this was not just a ritual moment. In Istanbul, hundreds of thousands of women were protesting in Gezi Park against

Erdogan's government and the upcoming referendum on constitutional change; in Ireland the biggest bridge in Dublin was blocked by the movement Strike4repeal as a protest against the current abortion ban; in Russia protests were carried out against the new reform that decriminalizes domestic violence; in Brazil hundreds of thousands women protested against the recent introduction of a social reform that raises the retirement age for women; in Italy a nationwide strike took place from North to South, with a participation of about 24% of dependent employees and a significant migrant women's protagonism; in the United States "A Day Without a Woman" was carried out in hundreds of cities against Trump's sexism and racism.

Although often targeting national governments, the strikes of the 8<sup>th</sup> of March cannot be reduced to the request of electoral change or to a demand for political reforms. All over the world, women fought together against the patriarchal and neoliberal order. They fought against institutional racism and the constraints on their freedom of movement; they fought against welfare cuts increasing their exploitation; they fought against lowered wages and unpaid reproductive work; they fought for their reproductive rights and freedom, refusing all the measures that impose maternity as their only possible destiny. The fight to end male violence against women addressed the several ways in which violence is deployed in society: precarization, welfare cuts, a total subjugation of people's body and time to the needs of the employers, the imposition of gender roles. In this way, women did not simply address their particular conditions as women, but have practically shown that those conditions are the pillars upon which the neoliberal order is based. This is why the women's strike was not simply a women's concern, but was actually able to involve men, precarious, migrants and industrial workers, and to point out the concrete possibility of practicing the strike in order to refuse in mass all exploitation and oppression. ✦

Over the last decades, the right to strike has been under attack, but on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March the strike took place beyond traditional union organizing, taking from its global diffusion the strength to overcome legal constraints. While political and trade union leaders were eager to tame the women's strike, by enclosing it into worn-out categories—saying the strike was separatist, or symbolic, or “just” political—women imposed a radical redefinition of the strike, giving it new meanings that can no longer be ignored.

In many workplaces, the strike was practiced autonomously by women, often in opposition to their union's representatives: this enabled precarious or on call workers to struggle together with their colleagues with a different labor contract, something that cannot be easily achieved by a traditional labor dispute. While exploitation in the workplaces was denounced as part and parcel of women's submission, the women's strike has offered the possibility to overcome the fragmentation that characterizes the workplaces of today. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of March women and men, precarious workers, industrial workers, migrants, LGBTQ people all over the world mobilized themselves to break the isolation of daily insubordination. Even in countries where it wasn't extensive, the strike activated a process of organization. It opened up a new space for discussion and organization on workplaces where women find it hard to strike—for example in the healthcare sector in Sweden.

Moreover, the strike took place inside the homes, where women take care of the elderly and kids, in the factories where women produce for the global markets, in the schools and hospitals, in the public and private services. This year women have given new significance to the strike as a practice of struggle. In this respect, March 8<sup>th</sup> gained its force also because it resonated with the recent over-national circulation of the strike: from the struggle against the *loi travail*, where the strike overflowed from the workplaces to the metropolitan space, to the “24 hours without us” carried out by migrants in the last months in the



US, in Great Britain on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February, in Argentina on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, while also anticipating and recalling the migrant strike planned for the 1<sup>st</sup> of May in the US.

The 8<sup>th</sup> of March shows that all refusal of the neoliberal order as a whole must address and subvert its patriarchal structure. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of March women all over the world showed that the transnational social strike is possible and has to be feminist in order to become a global mass practice to overturn the present. In turn, women's strike has shown clearly that the strike is the way in which today mass movements are organizing themselves on a transnational scale. Women's strike cannot be reduced to a “women's issue,” because it clearly shows how the practice of the strike provides the possibility to express a particular position against a global order, thus calling into question and mobilizing all those that aim to subvert it.

The general uprising that we saw on March 8<sup>th</sup> found in the strike the common watchword able to unify different practices of disruption of the present and to connect them with the current global circulation of the strike. In each place, the call for the global women's strike made something new happen. We have now to face the challenge of consolidating our political infrastructure, in order for the strike movement to grow stronger and not to disperse the global potential it has accumulated so far, by pulling it back into the local dimension. We recognize an ongoing strike movement, that is irresistibly crossing the borders: we need to work to build stable connections and set our own terrains of struggle to let its force pour out in the whole European space. ¶

# I SVERIGE

The Feminist Action group in Sweden was a swift mobilization, formed in response to the international women's strike call out, and consisting of various organizations and individuals. Understanding that the 8<sup>th</sup> of March was embraced by liberal feminist manifestations, we were determined to make sure that the international **STRIKE** would be part of the otherwise autopilot day of parades and events. In just a few weeks we managed to organize and promote strike in many locations. Inspired by Ireland's Strike for Repeal-campaign, we started by making a simple viral video about the strike. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, we landed a spot on a morning talk show and discussed the International Women's Strike on national television. The actions during the day included a walk-out strike demonstration held at two schools by high school students and teachers.

SAC—the syndicalist union strikers—gave out flyers and reported that over 10 workplaces had participated in the political strike. Those who were not able to strike, like workers in the care sector, showed their solidarity at their workplace, taking an hour break to discuss salaries, budget cuts, the general poverty and inequality of women, working conditions, future organizing, and of course the global women's strike. SAC hosted a lunch at the local anarchist Kafe 44, where comrades gave a presentation about the Transnational Social Strike platform and shared their knowledge about the organizing taking place in other countries like, Italy, Poland, Ireland, etc. The reliable group Demos, who run a coffee break and a chat/freeshop in a popular city square held a special "Strike" solidarity coffee session. Our collectively written manifesto was read aloud at a public conference and film release during the day. Demonstrations were held in the main squares of Stockholm, Malmö and Luleå. Moving and angry speeches were given on why we are striking together collectively and on our demands. In Luleå there was a candle light manifestation in support for and in solidarity with the maternity clinic in Sollefteå that has now been occupied for two months. And at the central station in Stockholm around one thousand people gathered for a flash mob singing a song called "I can't keep quiet" wearing what's called a pussy hat. Both the song and the hat are a comment on Trump and the misogyny he represents. The song was performed on the women's march in Washington D.C. the day after Trump's inauguration. Since then, flash mobs have appeared in several locations around the world.

In this short period we were able to create an awareness of what it can mean to take part in a social strike and we sparked new collaborations which will keep on growing. The momentum of this international strike has provided a jumpstart for a dynamic radicalization process in the feminist movement here in Sweden. ¶





Strike is the weapon of the working classes.



The right to strike is often harder to use within female dominated professions.



We need to strengthen our possibility to strike.



We need to find new ways.

**“Towards a Feminist Social Strike in Sweden the 8<sup>th</sup> of March”**  
See the film at → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qb39jPYeuX8>



A new wave of women's uprisings is building up across the planet.



In Poland, hundreds of thousand women went on strike on October 3rd, 2016



In Argentina, thousands of women in the last months, have gathered



On the 8th of March there will be a strike in Italy.

# IN IRELAND

**S**trike 4 Repeal are an ad-hoc, non-affiliated group of activists, academics, artists and trade unionists who prepared a nationwide Strike for Repeal in Ireland on the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March 2017. On the 23<sup>RD</sup> of January, we called a strike with one demand: that the government call a referendum on the 8<sup>TH</sup> amendment\*. In 44 days, we had over 15 thousand Facebook likes, nearly 4 thousand Twitter followers, more than half a million views on our launch video, and a single demand.

We mobilized from the bottom up, decentralizing the pro-choice movement outside of the capital city to create a nationwide strike. In Sligo people protested on the beach in solidarity with the 12 people a day forced to leave Ireland to receive reproductive healthcare abroad. In secondary schools, students wore black armbands or refused to speak for the day. Thousands of people contributed to the strike in a variety of different ways in line with what they were able to do. Strike 4 Repeal held open meetings for people to organize what the strike would be on the day. We facilitated media training, steward and legal observer training, direct action and banner making workshops. We split into teams including: direct action, regional and international outreach, student outreach, politicians and business outreach, media spokespeople, fundraising, visual media and social media.

In just 44 days Strike 4 Repeal expanded to 53 groups and actions. Working off the back of what pro-choice groups had done to spread the movement we tapped into the anger and frustration that was there and activated it. On the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March, we went on strike in the largest simultaneous all island direct action that has ever happened in Ireland. In Waterford, Sligo, Ashbourne, Limerick, Ennis, Castlebar, Dun Laoghaire, Kilkenny, Dundalk, West Cork, Derry, Belfast, Maynooth, Cork City, Westport, Blackpool, Tralee, Galway, Navan, and Dublin we filled the streets. There were walk outs from every university in the country and several businesses shut for the day or repurposed their space to assist strikers e.g. provide childcare or give away free tea and coffee. Repeal Global facilitated the organization of international Strike 4 Repeal groups. We were on strike in New York, Liverpool, Glasgow, Berlin, Manchester, Utrecht, Cardiff, Durham, Vancouver, Nottingham, Cambridge, Brussels, Aberdeen, Oxford, London, Tasmania, Buenos Aires, Portland, and Melbourne. Last but not least, our sister group Strike 4 Choice saw Belfast strike against their own particular draconian abortion laws in Northern Ireland.

In Dublin, early in the morning banners were dropped from bridges for all the main bus routes to view while monuments were blacked out in the city centre. We had roving pickets from the Departments of Justice, the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Health, which grew increasingly at each stop before we took to O'Connell bridge for the Strike Assembly. Responding to our video call out for people to "meet us on the bridge", it is estimated that up to 8-thousand assembled and blocked, the main city centre bridge, shutting the city down for several hours. This was scheduled from 12:30 to allow those who worked in the city, who were unable to take the day off, join us on their lunch break, thus making the strike more accessible to those in various different circumstances. In terms of political pressure created, the government continue to ignore the majority who are for a repeal. However we encourage that the energy, anger, and new widespread willingness to engage in direct action that has been created should feed into other pro-choice groups to expand and escalate the movement for a referendum and for a repeal. We took to the streets for over 10 hours, picketing, marching, striking, making it clear: We, the majority, have one demand of the government. Call a referendum on the 8<sup>TH</sup> amendment. 15 people travel every day, 14 years in prison, 1 amendment to the constitution. We are not invisible, we will not be silent, we won't wait. **Repeal the 8th!** ♣

8<sup>TH</sup> Amendment was inserted in the Irish Constitution in 1983 equating the life of a pregnant person with the life of the embryo/foetus. This prohibits abortion in nearly all circumstances. As soon as you become pregnant in Ireland, you lose your bodily autonomy.

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# EN FRANCE

**F**rance responded to the transnational call to transform the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March from a women's day into a wider women's strike against neoliberal violence and oppression, that want them calm and silent, with more than 300 actions, strikes and demonstrations following the call of organizations and feminist collectives. In Paris a first call was promoted by Alerta Feminista, Family Planning, Standing Migrant Women, Anti-Sexist Libertarian Collective, Gender Brigade, Kurdish Women's Movement in Europe. The CGT, FSU (public service and teachers' trade union) and the Union Solidaires have called a strike starting from 3:40 pm and a gathering in Place de la République. It is a symbolic hour because it underlines the wage discrimination suffered by women: according to calculations in a working day from 9am to 5pm, due to wage disparity, it is as if women were paid only until 3.40pm. During the afternoon strike from Republic square to Opera, several thousands of French women, as well as South American, Kurdish, Turkish, Chinese ones gathered. A second call for an evening march in Paris was organized in Belleville by other collectives as a part of an autonomous demonstration, involving 10.000 participants.

All these women have taken to the streets to fight and strike, moved by the desire to face together the oppression of the patriarchy that tries to crush them as an increasingly powerful political force. A force that frightens, as it was clear during the mobilizations of women of the last two years at a global level, in Argentina, India, Poland, as well as in Turkey, because it's able to trigger a socialization of the strike, involving people inside and outside the workplaces, beyond the division between productive and reproductive labor, by making the strike social through its scale and its transversality. The 8<sup>TH</sup> of March for France represented a double stake. On the one hand, it allowed us to reactivate a dialogue between organizations and collectives with trade union organizations in the context of a call to strike, even in the face of persistent political differences and especially after the decline of struggles following the strike movement against the loi travail and its world of last year. On the other hand, the framework of the struggle in France was widened. The strike of the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March showed us very clearly that the women's strike is necessarily both a social and transnational strike to the extent that it keeps under tension the sphere of reproduction and of production, going beyond the working sphere, involving also men. At the same time women's strike is immediately transnational from the moment that global is the scale of organization of this oppression. ¶



**T**his year, inspired by second wave and Marxist feminism, the working group for feminism of student organization Iskra decided to organize a campaign around the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March. In Slovenia, we don't remember there being a women's strike or women's protest on the International Women's Day. We can partly connect this to the situation in Slovenia, as we used to be a part of socialist Yugoslavia and as kind of a "leftover" of socialist system,

we used to have a very strong welfare state that helped young mothers and families and we still have one year of paid maternity leave. The right of women to decide about our own bodies is a part of our constitution. But as in many other countries the situation is worsening year by year, month by month. There are almost no regular jobs for young people anymore, almost all of us work in precarious work relations (76% of working Slovenian youth is working in some form of precarious work), which means there is no maternity or sick leave, paid or unpaid. It means you are going to lose your job if you don't show up for giving birth or getting sick or your children getting sick. In the last years Slovenia has been also under very strict austerity measures, which means there is less and less public and affordable care institutions (for old people, for children etc.), the social transfers are also smaller and there's less of them. You have to prove again and again how very poor you are to get for example 100€ monthly from the state (a so called extra security for old people whose pensions are less than 300€ monthly).

Another thing that happened recently is the formation of a catholic extreme right wing party in Slovenia whose members are already campaigning against the right to have an abortion, and it seems that they will get in parliament in next elections (in a year and a half from now), and it is also very possible that they will form government with other right wing parties in Slovenia.

So, this year we decided to start organizing against all of that. First we wrote a manifesto in which we focused on theories of F. Engels, E. Reed and S. Federici, so we focused on the question of patriarchy beginning with privatization of reproductive work, and later on in a manifesto we discuss how it still affects women tremendously today. We organized one week campaign, we started on 1<sup>ST</sup> of March near one gyno clinic in Ljubljana, where so-called "Children of god" are praying against abortion every year for 40 days. We gathered in much bigger numbers than they did, and we sent them a very clear message, their agenda has no place in public spaces, especially such gentle spaces as clinics are. A day after, 2<sup>ND</sup> of March, we had an assembly at Faculty of Arts, where we read parts of our manifesto, and later on we discussed some parts of it and demands for the protest we had on the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March. Assembly was very nice, it happened in the hall of the faculty, so we "invaded" public space, and discussed the position of women in our society. On Monday, 6<sup>TH</sup> of March, we had a lecture of one very great Slovene Marxist feminist about the reproductive work, and how it is connected to all sorts of repression and exploitation of women. One day after, on 7<sup>TH</sup> of March, we went to the main square of Ljubljana, where we swept the floor, washed the dishes, cooked and similar, to show the paradox of all the reproductive work being "privatized" onto nuclear families, even though it is necessary for a society to have this work done in order to reproduce itself. All these days we were also agitating on the streets and in the faculties, presenting our manifesto and inviting people to events of our campaign. ✦

## V SLOVENIJI

Our campaign finished with a protest on 8<sup>TH</sup> of March. It was a beautiful, strong event, with more than 300 people showing up (for Slovenia that is quite a lot, we don't really have a culture of protesting, and if it is not against one specific person, it is very hard to mobilize people), a lot of professors who gave us support, a lot of other collectives, who are not primarily feminist collectives, but also some feminist collectives. We got a lot of support of women of different ages and classes, especially from middle aged working class women. The protest was very empowering moment, we read some speeches, only women were speaking, we were listening to some amazing women artists, a feminist choir sang. It was a beautiful way to honor women, and to show everybody that we are here, and that we will fight for a world, that will be based on solidarity and respect amongst all of us.

We are not done. With a lot of other collectives, feminist or no, we started the initiative of 45 Days of Feminism, so we are organizing a lot of very different events that focus on different questions regarding women in our society, and the events are happening from 1<sup>ST</sup> of March and until 14<sup>TH</sup> of April, anniversary of one of the greatest feminists, Simone de Beauvoir, who we respect very much, and her works are held very dearly by us. ¶



**I**n Italy, the global women's strike was launched on November 27<sup>TH</sup> after the great demonstration in Rome of more than 200.000 people to stop male violence against women. In the following months, an extraordinary organizational effort spread under the coordination of the network Non Una Di Meno. In dozens of cities and towns, assemblies took place week after week, becoming an organizing tool for women who are involved in associations and collectives but also for precarious workers, students, migrants never involved in political militancy before. After the national meeting on February 4<sup>TH</sup>-5<sup>TH</sup> in Bologna, in which more than 2000 women participated, the strike movement continued growing. The sense to be part of a global movement in all its novelty, the perception to be at the forefront of a process that after many years was able to give a unitary voice to a mass discontent against neoliberalism, strengthened the determination to realize the strike potential by making it reach every corner of society. The fight on violence against women targeted the several faces of violence under neoliberalism: precarization, welfare cuts, institutional racism, restriction of reproductive rights, total availability of body and time to satisfy the needs of society and employers.

In Milan, Padua, Turin, Naples, Rome, Bologna and dozens of other cities and towns from South to North, every corner of the country was involved in the strike. Hundreds of thousands of women and men, precarious and industrial workers, care-givers and teachers, migrants and students took to the streets going on strike and showing their collective force and their desire of freedom, amid the indifference and, in many cases, the antagonism of the main national trade unions. No surprise: the mass presence of women determined to go on strike risked to threaten their supposed monopoly of the strike. In spite of this, the figures refer a participation of at least 24% of dependent workers on strike, to which casual workers, free-lancers and non-regular workers must be added.

By refusing reproductive work, women also made the strike "social", involving women as well as men, inside and outside the workplaces, and led them to take side and stand up against exploitation and violence in all its forms. For instance, in Bologna people in more than 200 workplaces (schools, public offices, factories, logistical warehouses, etc.) went on strike and about 15.000 people took to the street. In Rome, more than 20.000 people took part in the different initiatives of the morning and in the evening demonstration. In several cities and smaller towns all over Italy women's political initiative had the power to produce mobilizations that were not seen in a long time or that never happened before, especially in peripheral areas. Many of the demos and events showed an unprecedented presence of migrant women denouncing the institutional racism they experience in detention and reception centers, in immigration offices, in the workplaces: March 8<sup>TH</sup> had a global mark also because of this very presence.

March 8<sup>TH</sup> is not over yet: its symbolic and material force keeps on triggering local processes of organization. Stronger after the strike, Non Una Di Meno will meet again in the next national assembly on April 22<sup>ND</sup> to 23<sup>RD</sup> in Rome to continue writing the feminist plan against male violence. The political space opened by the strike cannot be silenced: the challenge that lays ahead is to enlarge it and to keep the pace with the global movement that allowed it in the first place. ¶





## IN DEUTSCHLAND

As in the rest of world on the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March also in Berlin the feminist tide poured into the streets. In the German capital there were several marches, several speech corners, giving expression to a feminist patchwork that mirrors a difference of positions, subjectivities and practices of intersectional feminism today. On the 8<sup>TH</sup> of March in Berlin there were two different parades, which started from two different locations and then united at the end in a place that carries a radical imagery of struggle, Oranienplatz, the square occupied two years ago by refugees after the eviction of the occupied Olauerstrasse School. One important event was the traditional 8<sup>TH</sup> of March demo, that is organized by the radical “left” of the city, made up of parties, trade unions, political organizations and autonomous collectives, under the shared name “Frauenkampftag”. This year, the interesting aspect was the change of the starting point which was set in Hermannplatz, Neukoelln, one of the most multiethnic neighborhoods of Berlin, differently from the historical starting point which is the more central Rosaluxemburgplatz. We have taken part in this parade in the block called “Make Feminism a Threat Again”, that was part of the bigger block made by the autonomous feminist and queer groups. The block that we were part of is also working to prepare a mobilization to challenge the G20 of the women (meeting of entrepreneurs and successful women that will be held in April in Berlin), in order to mark a clear distinction with the so-called “state feminism” and reaffirm the inherent connection between feminism and class struggle. The other important event of the day was a second demo, this one organized by the anti-imperialist area, a separatist demo in which many migrants and refugees women groups were taking part. The demo started from Warschauerstr, again giving a symbolic value to the starting point, since is the same place where the Polish women in Berlin called for a solidarity strike during the Black Monday. The parade was also attended by the Irish women, who have called for the “Strike for Repeal” day of action throughout Europe, to support the proposal of a referendum in Ireland pro-abortion.

As mentioned before, both demos ended in a common rally in Oranienplatz, where an open space for music, speeches, stories of women was created in order to overcome the differences and meet each other. As a general consideration, we must say that Germany, where historically the gender battles have gone through the entire history of post '45 and which has in the figure of her Chancellor one of the highest representative of state feminism as well as one of the leading figures of European austerity, has failed to grasp the challenge of the political strike, in particular the gender strike of the 8th of March. It has to be considered that in the German movement the connection with unions or other work-related organizations is very weak, the issue of the strike is considered still a purely goal-oriented tool and its social dimension is scarcely considered. Moreover the political strike is forbidden by law. However, different subjectivities, especially migrant groups, showed an interest around this practice, and tried to evoke what was happening in the rest of the world, through their speeches at the demos, or in their documents of participation in the struggle.

The transnational dimension of the 8<sup>th</sup> of March had a really powerful impact in the production of meaning worldwide, even where, as in Germany, the process of building a block of production as expression of the structural feminist conflict, is still not accomplished. So can we really speak about a failed opportunity? Actually not, and out of any optimistic rhetoric, we see in the emergence of differences within the feminist movement in Germany, a fragmented framework in which the potentiality to build a path towards the strike has already emerged. As a group of migrant women in Berlin, we are trying to build a path towards the gender strike but as we said, this is only at its beginning. However the day after the demo, the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, we were invited precisely to talk about “women strike” in a major event organized by some feminist groups. Here, as well as in the meetings which we took part in, we are trying to elaborate a discourse that starts from the assumption that the feminist movement is the only concrete answer to the authoritarian and populist twists, and we are especially considering the practice of the strike as a political tool of subjectivation and concrete articulation of feminism, starting right from the productive role of women in capitalist society. On these key points, trying to involve other groups (in particular migrants) we are trying to weave a feminist path and shared discourse also towards of the anti-G20 mobilization. ¶



## W POLSCE

Since the '90s, any of the Polish governments have challenged the neoliberal program of privatization and social cuts. Cutting budgets for schools, hospitals, kindergartens, canteens, community centers, the privatization of municipal resources, the decline in wages in female-dominated occupations, the increase in unemployment among women, labour market casualization, raising the retirement age and other measures resulted in the impoverishment of the living conditions of many women and working families.

Since then, women frequently chose to resist the political and economic oppression by initiating strikes, occupations, blockades and other actions leading to changes in social relations. Each year during marches, we strive together to create a space to connect those moments of feminine rebellion.

Together, we organized the strike of October 3<sup>rd</sup>. “The Women’s Strike” was the slogan for our mobilization, that expressed our anger and highlighted its economic background. There was no formal organization. We did it in a non-hierarchical way, involving many different bodies and people, without having any leaders.

March 5<sup>th</sup> was organized in the same way. That day several thousand people went on street in Warsaw, Wroclaw, Krakow, Poznan, Lodz, Kielce, Tri-city, Szczecin, Lublin, Torun, Olsztyn, Koszalin, Silesia etc. to resist violence of authorities and demand decent wages, social security, universally accessible health care, including the possibility of termination of pregnancy, with a roof over our heads, free education, free childcare institutions and prosperous retirement for the elderly—all across national borders, against conservatives and liberals. There were tenants, workers, migrants, mothers, LGBT, women and men among us. Before the demonstration we organized a few pickets, leafletings and informal actions spreading information about our postulates. We also took part in many public debates about women’s rights. To widen the discussion about women’s struggles we published local and national newspapers and prepare videos.

The second protest took place on March 8<sup>th</sup> mobilizing another thousands of people in many cities. It was focused rather on reproduction rights and policy of current government. Both demonstrations and all protests organized abroad showed that women have immense power to create social change on a global scale. **Not only poverty has a woman’s face—the strike also has feminine features!** ¶

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# Organize!

Join the process of the transnational social strike! After four transnational meetings in Frankfurt, Poznan, Paris and London, we will meet again in Ljubljana (Slovenia) from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2017, for a weekend of assemblies and workshops.

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