
Organizing, resisting, and claiming rights: The Collective Mobilization of Migrant Domestic and Care Workers in Spain

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in Spain

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Abstract

The outsourcing of domestic work in Spain has been an increasing trend throughout the last 30 years. The emancipation of women, the entrance of women in the labor force, and the lack of family policies that allowed a proper work-family balance played a major role in this phenomenon. The domestic task started then to be taken over immigrant women both because they were cheaper than local work force and due to the shortage of local workers. In Spain, the proportion of migrant workers working in the domestic sector has surpassed that of native-born, reflecting the common trend where immigrants work over proportionally in jobs with lower wages and less regulated working conditions and rights. These issues have complicated the situation of many immigrant domestic workers who depend for instance on a contract to regularize their situation in the country. In light of the increasing informality in the sector, in 2011 the Spanish government issued a legislation mandating that all employers of domestic workers should provide a work contract and cover the social security costs. Despite the resulting decline of informality in the sector, the working conditions of many migrant domestic workers (documented and undocumented) remain precarious. In recent years, there has been an increasing organization of migrant domestic workers in labor unions and other associations, demanding for better working conditions and more recognition. The literature on the situation, positionality and the policies affecting migrant domestic workers in Spain and beyond is vast, however, little has been written on their political mobilization. This thesis looks at the political mobilization and activism of migrant domestic workers in the Spanish context, focusing on the question how do migrant workers in Spain reinforce their agency through political mobilization? For this purpose I apply Katz's (2004) framework on agency. Through a qualitative analysis with combined methods I identify 36 organizations across the country. The results show that through the associations migrant workers are able to strengthen their agency at different levels.

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1 Introduction

The year 2022 marked a series of milestones for domestic and care workers in Spain. Eleven years after the International Labor Organization (ILO) adopted the 2011 Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers (Domestic Workers Convention, No. 189), the Spanish Government ratified this Convention on June 8, 2022. In September of the same year, the Government recognized the right of domestic and care workers to receive unemployment benefits and unemployment protection (BOE, 2022). Both decisions were welcomed by members of domestic and care workers organizations, mainly led by migrant women, who advocate for better working conditions.

The situation of domestic and care workers has gained attention in the Spanish context. The emancipation of women, the entrance of women into the labor force, and the lack of family policies allowing for a proper work-family balance played a major role in the outsourcing of domestic work in Spain, an increasing trend throughout the last 30 years. Together with the feminization of immigration since the 1980's, this led to immigrant women taking over domestic tasks, both because they were cheaper than the local workforce and due to the shortage of local workers. In 2005 the proportion of migrant workers in the domestic sector in Spain has surpassed that of native-born (Hobson, Hellgren, & Serrano, 2018). The large number of migrants working in the sector reflects a common trend of migrants working low-paid jobs and often under precarious conditions, especially when they are (Castellani & Roca, 2022; Ramírez Bolívar & Corredor Villamil, 2022). These issues have complicated the situation of many immigrant domestic and care workers, who depend, for instance, on a contract to regularize their situation in the country. In light of the increasing informality in the sector, in 2011, the Spanish Government issued legislation obliging all employers of domestic workers to provide a work contract and cover the social security costs. Despite the resulting decline of informality in the sector, the working conditions of many migrant domestic workers (documented and undocumented) remains precarious. This has triggered the increasing organization of migrant domestic workers in labor unions and other associations, which become important vehicles for allowing migrants to publicly claim better working conditions and the recognition of their status and rights.

The literature on the situation, positionality, and the policies affecting migrant domestic workers in Spain and beyond is vast, although little has been written on collective mobilization, claim-making processes, the role of migrants as activists, and the strength of alternative subjectivities. It is not uncommon for migrants to appeal to their networks in order to enlarge, strengthen, and mobilize them to achieve a common purpose. Newcomers facing barriers and challenges navigating the host society, the labor market, and obtaining work and residence permits, often reach out to already established migrant networks. Although migrant groups and associations sometimes pursue a common goal, their strategies, and resources to mobilize their claims, may vary. Migrant

workers have proven their willingness to organize and improve their rights and living conditions through collective action (Milkman, 2018). Although there is an extensive body of literature on migrant workers and their relations to trade unions, the specific case of migrant domestic workers remains underrepresented in scholarly work. Migrant domestic workers make up approximately 7.7 percent of international migrant workers across the globe (Gallotti & Mertens, 2013). Existing studies focused on this group are mostly limited to their individual experiences and the transnational nature of the sector (e.g., Hellgren, 2015; Lutz, 2007; Triandafyllidou & Marchetti, 2013). Research on their mobilization and organization (e.g., Abrantes, 2013; Anderson 2010; Meagher, 2010; Gupta, 2003) has mostly focused on the Southeast Asian contexts (e.g., Lai, 2021; Koh et al., 2017; Rother, 2017). Only a handful of studies have looked at European cases (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016; Abrantes, 2013; Marchetti, 2012), although Spain has not been one of them.

This thesis aims to address this research gap by closely examining the political mobilization and activism of migrant domestic workers in the Spanish context. In doing so, the thesis aims to answer the following research question: *How do migrant domestic workers strengthen their agency through public claims-making and collective mobilization in Spain?* Conceptually, the thesis draws on Katz's (2004) framework of agency, by disaggregating different forms of migrant agency such as recuperation, resilience, and resistance. Epistemologically, it adopts an intersectional approach, by looking beyond the homogenization of "migrant domestic workers" as a universal description of women that many studies take and shedding light on the multiple subjective positions of gender, race, sexual orientation, and class, that can affect individuals' experiences, interest, and activism.¹ The research further examines the strategies that migrants use to overcome obstacles and pursue their individual professional and personal aspirations.

This thesis aims to contribute to the literature on the dynamics of self-organization among migrant domestic workers. It builds on the theory of migrant agency in migration processes focusing on collective organization and mobilization. I look at the different types of constraints migrants can face in their effort to navigate the labor market in the receiving country leading them to work in low-paid jobs, and how they improve their working and living situations through self-organization and collective action. Moreover, through qualitative fieldwork, I look at how they perceive their current working conditions and find strategies to overcome them collectively through different types of agency, gaining a better understanding of the benefits and obstacles of the participation of migrant domestic workers in civil society. Additionally, I identify the profile of the members of the associations, and the reasons behind their organization and mobilization. Likewise, the original data collected for this research represents a contribution to further understanding the implications of these issues in the Spanish context.

My empirical analysis is based on eight interviews conducted between July and December 2022 with speakers and representatives of grassroots organizations formed by

¹See Lai, 2021

domestic and care workers, and feminist organizations across Spain. The data gathered through the interviews is complemented by a thorough mapping of the organizations formed by domestic and care workers across the seventeen Spanish autonomous communities. Given the nature and extension of the data, this thesis provides an important contribution to better understanding the role of collective organizations among migrant domestic and care workers. While there have been many studies on collective organizations, I bring together different groups from different cities across the country and focus on their own assessment of their experience as migrants, domestic workers, and their work as activists. Based on the conducted fieldwork, I argue that migrants working in the domestic and care sector often find themselves in precarious situations. This precarity and lack of support from the Government has led them to find creative alternatives to claim their rights, such as new spaces of empowerment through self-organization.

This thesis is divided into four sections, besides the introduction and conclusions. I first provide an overview of the literature on migrant networks, activism and collective organization, migrant agency, and domestic and care workers. Second, I examine the Spanish context regarding the entrance of migrant workers into the care and domestic labor sector, and their corresponding rights. Subsequently, I outline the methodology used in the thesis for the collection and analysis of data. Next, I present an analysis of the collective organization of migrant domestic workers across different cities in Spain. Finally, I discuss the results with some concluding remarks, and some suggestions.

2 Making their voices heard: From networking to action of migrant domestic and care workers

For the purpose of this thesis, I delve into three streams of literature: migrant networks, political organization and mobilization, and labor migration focusing on the sector of domestic workers. I do this with the main purpose of expanding the existing literature on migrant organizations beyond the ‘bridging’ of ethnicity and gender. The literature review considers the main question of this thesis, first discussing the literature on migrant networks, migrant associations and organizations, and migrants’ agency. I then dig into the scholarship on migrant domestic workers, focusing on the Spanish context. Each of the frameworks presented in this chapter permit to grasp the networks established by migrants through associations and how their organization and agency are interlinked. Finally, I consider the literature and analytical frames that have focused on mobilization of migrant domestic workers and their collective organization regardless of their migration status, their country of origin, or their working conditions.

2.1 Migrant networks and social capital

Within a migration context, networks are often understood as a resource that facilitates the experience of newly arrived immigrants in 'host' societies, a source of social capital. Ryan et al. (2008) argue that networks are crucial to understanding the various patterns of migration, the processes of settlement that individuals go through, as well as their links to their country of origin. The effects of networks and social capital have been widely considered in migration scholarship as they play a central key in the decision to migrate, in the process of migration, and in settlement (Boyd & Nowak, 2012; Castles & Miller, 1998; Portes, 1998).

Commonly, social networks are seen as a form of social capital, following Bourdieu's (1986) and Putnam's (1994) definition of the latter. On the one hand, Bourdieu (1986) differentiated between three types of capital: social, economic, and cultural. Social capital is the "aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 21). Economic capital is the set of material assets and income. Meanwhile, cultural capital refers to the symbolic resources that individuals gain throughout their life and can be embodied in the shape of institutionalized qualifications, for instance, or in non-institutionalized knowledge that reflects through individual's behavior and skills. On the other hand, for Putnam (1994) social capital refers to "features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit... [and, NC] enhances the benefits of investment in physical and human capital" (p. 6-7). This conceptualization relies mainly on the aspects of collaboration, and reciprocity. Social capital tends to be stronger among communities with strong traditions of civic engagement. Building on Coleman's definition, Putnam argues that social capital becomes stronger the more it is used, and weaker when not. Additionally, social capital and civic engagement make the achievement of certain ends possible. Networks can thus impact the type of resources and capacities and, as social ties, they can facilitate or discourage courses of action (Diani, 2002, p. 9). They can also play a role in identity formation (Melucci, 1996) and help define "how actors attribute meaning to their social linkages, thus (re)creating rules and arrangements perceived as relatively stable and 'structural.'" (Diani, 2002). Ultimately it is the repetitive interactions that "people create webs of ties that enable them to further act collectively and shape their future behavior" (Diani, 2002, p. 9).

Research on migrant networks and political participation is divided into the analysis at an individual level (Diani, 2002; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) and at the organizational level (Eggert & Pilati, 2014; Fennema & Tillie, 1999). Research on networks of migrant organizations and their political actions by migrant organizations has highlighted how such networks can foster political engagement in the residence country and transnationally (Fennema & Tillie, 1999). For instance, the density of ethnic

organizational networks has been considered a decisive aspect affecting the level of political engagement of migrant communities (ibid.). When looking at the reasons behind the participation (or lack thereof) of migrants in political activities, some studies have pointed out the lack of representation of migrants and ethnic groups in local organizations (Eggert & Pilati, 2014; Poros, 2008). Ryan et al. (2008) apply an interesting approach in their research on Polish migrants in London as they expand the classical understanding of networks and apply it to the context of migration. They highlight the complexity and diversity of these migrant networks and emphasize the necessity of differentiating between 'bridging' horizontally and vertically. They argue that the "migrants' ability to mobilize social capital and successfully engage in bridging may thus depend upon the cultural capital [...] at their disposal" (p. 677).

The interpersonal relationships between co-ethnics may also have a positive impact in terms of decreasing risks in migration processes and improving migrants' economic opportunities (Tilly, 1998). It is also important to mention that collective endeavors are more likely to be successful if members trust each other (Fennema & Tillie, 1999). Yet, they also segregate migrants from native networks and other organizations and can lead to a slower integration process (Poros, 2008). However, Ryan et al. (2008) highlight the importance of widening the dimensions within which networks are normally researched in migration as the bridging does not exclusively happen based on ethnicity but also happens in relation to other aspects and categories such as gender or class, among others. The research of "native trade labor unions, immigrant associations, nongovernmental organizations (national and international), and social movement organizations" (Poros, 2008, p. 1621) is key to understanding the integration of migrants in the host country, as they can forge ties between organizations and open new opportunities that would not be possible without the interorganizational relations, and can also promote the integration of their members in the local political community (Eggert & Pilati, 2014; Poros, 2008). Additionally, such networks are important predictors of collective action (Eggert & Pilati, 2014). It is important to highlight that not all organizations follow a political purpose and that their "degrees of social and political commitment" (Eggert & Pilati, 2014, p. 859) can vary widely. Some organizations focus more on the socialization of members, and do not necessarily aim at provoking changes in the institutions. Other civic actions follow a political agenda and seek to shift the *status quo* (Eggert & Pilati, 2014).

As previously mentioned, most existing scholarship has focused on the configuration of migrant networks based on ethnic belonging, showing the positive aspect they may have provided with resources and emotional support to newly arrived migrants (Wierzbicki, 2004). Nonetheless, they also can reinforce the dependency of migrants and ethnic minorities on niche markets (Putnam, 2000, p. 322). However, their importance goes beyond this understanding, as they also forge the ties of migrant associations and collectives.

2.2 Activism from below

Over the last two decades, scholars have increasingly acknowledged the extent of the political impact that organized communities can have (Theodore & Martin, 2007; Babcock, 2006). Self-organization of migrants does not always have to be through migrant associations – it can also be through participation by institutional means (Morad & Della Puppa, 2019). Migrant communities have received legitimization of their work and have been recognized as a central entity of the civil society due to their important role on the policy landscape. Migrant organizations tend to address issues that affect the community, as migrants often encounter hardships and challenges when adjusting to life and in their new country, and when navigating the society and the bureaucracy (Babcock, 2006)(Babcock, 2006). As of matter of fact, the upsurge of migrant civil society has been identified as one of the most recent manifestations of “transnationalism from below” (Theodore & Martin, 2007, p. 272).²

Theodore and Martin (2007) define civil society as “community organizations, social movements, hometown associations, churches and faith-based organizations, social clubs, and other organized groups that represent the interests of migrants and operate between markets, households, and the state” which play “an increasingly important role in mediating the myriad dislocations and conflicts brought on by mass migration” (p. 271). They see migrant civil society as an emerging leading voice in policy debates at federal, state, and local levels. Additionally, previous research has shown that migrant organizations driven by activism provide a “free space” that social movements need to forge a collective identity (Evans & Boyte, 1986). Still, the identity based on collective action can be fragile (Milkman, 2018). Once the individual situation changes, so can their identity change as well (ibid.). At the same time, these organizations provide a platform for political activism and make political claims, while also providing social services and an alternative view on local life. The networks shaped by migrants produce actions that reinvigorate the social space that connects migrants and locals both at an individual and at a collective level (Castellani & Roca, 2022). Furthermore, in the case of migrant workers, migrant associations are considered to contribute to strengthen and stimulate their activism in general as they bring to light different issues that foreign workers face and which are often different from the ones that national workers deal with (Piper, 2006). Moreover, Fennema and Tillie (1999) argue that among ethnic communities, the linkages formed between migrant organizations, thus their social capital, is what constitutes their civic culture. It is important to highlight that organized political activism not always involves a mobilization, as mobilizing and organizing differ from one another. Organizing

²Overtime, many associations also foster transnational ties, extending their reach to the country of origin (Babcock, 2006). Transnational practices often involve the sending of remittances, economic aid for development, supporting of political movements and democratization processes among others. The transnational practices of migrants can be identified and analysed at a macro, meso, or micro level, depending on the modes and channels of engagement (through the government, via organizations, or as individual forms of mobilization) (Østergaard Nielsen, 2003).

happens when a formal organization or leadership put into effective action the energy that is developed through mobilizing (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016, p. 13). Mobilizing, on the other hand is the act of bringing together a group of people that support a common cause and participate in challenging the status quo (ibid.). In practice, both mobilization and organization can coincide in social processes. Additionally, while organizations mostly require a membership status, mobilization movements do not.

The classical strains from social movements studies argue that the participation in civic endeavors has been accounted to the civic culture and the degree of civic community (Putnam, 1994). Central to civic communities are the participation, solidarity, and integrity of the group, and their contribution to the functioning of democracy. Different from Putnam, Tilly's framework on collective action and social movement addresses the sustainability of collective mobilization. Tilly's (1978) framework focuses on the experiences and lived experiences of those who come together, centering on the interactions between individuals. Tilly (1999) conceives social movements as a foundation of the creation of public spaces that can promote democracy under certain conditions.

The research on the mobilization of migrants has shown that most of this mobilization is due to the lack of regularization and limitations in their rights as political actors (Caraus, 2018; Milkman, 2018; Poros, 2008). For instance, irregular migrants mobilize in cases of repressive contexts, e.g., when they are barred from the labor market (Milkman, 2018). The repressive system can trigger frustration and indignation that translate into collective action (ibid.). Among migrant workers, the demands of mobilizations are often also related to underpayment and poor working conditions (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003).

Milkman (2018) highlights the importance of the inter-subjective dimension for the organization and mobilization to succeed. An inter-subjective dimension can be based on a collective identity that creates an awareness of common suffering in the group. Additionally, the claims made must be judged reasonable by the wider public to draw attention. To show their indignation and disagreement, migrants often organize protests to have their voices heard. In some cases they have turned to other strategies and have used artistic expressions to catch the public eye (Lara-Guerrero, 2021).

In the case of migrant workers, exploitative and degrading working conditions have pushed them to mobilize among the civil society, leading to the creation of NGOs and migrant associations (Koh, Wee, Goh, & Yeoh, 2017). Despite the similarities that migrants NGOs may have in advocating for rights and interests, and looking to improve their life through collective action, they still keep certain differences in their organization and in their strategies (Castellani & Roca, 2022). It is important to keep in mind the heterogeneity among associations despite them having a common nominator among their members. Previous research has shown the fragmentation among associations as the local authorities seek to identify one leadership that represents all of the migrant associations, disregarding the members' will of how and by whom they want to be represented (Morad

& Della Puppa, 2019). Despite this growing stream of literature on migrant organizations, there is still a gap on migrant labor organizations (Ford, 2004), especially since most definitions of labor movements disregard migrant workers and grassroots migrant labor organizations. The surge in the number of migrant labor NGOs and associations over the last two decades has called for industrial sociologists and labor politics' scholars to consider them as an alternative to labor unions – the foremost recognized form of labor movement organization. Migrant NGOs and associations have been the driving force behind an important number of international, non-union campaigns related to labor. Ford (2004) cites two reasons why migrant workers are often excluded from labor unions: on the one hand, they often work in the informal sector, and on the other hand, they are often employed under a short-term contract. Furthermore, the case of domestic workers who are employed in the “private” sphere is another contributing factor for this exclusion, because many labor unions traditionally focus on the formal industrial systems. This has led labor unions to label migrant workers as the “unorganizable” (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016).

2.3 On agency and migrant agency

The conceptualization and theorization of migrant agency has been thoroughly researched and aims to understand how migrants, in vulnerable situations and in situations of adversity, seek to change the conditions and regain control (Rydzik & Anitha, 2020; Berntsen, 2016). Triandafyllidou (2019) defines agency as “one’s capacity to shape one’s life and exploit opportunities or indeed open up new possibilities for one’s self and their family” (p. 4). Their definition resembles that of Sewell’s (1992), focusing on the individual’s capacity to utilize available resources and make a rational choice to change the conditions and provoke changes in social relations (Wrenn, 2015). Central to the notion of agency are the challenges posed to the institutional/structural context’s distortions (Castellani & Roca, 2022; Wrenn, 2015). In terms of irregular migration and borders studies, looking at agency has been a way to change the narrative of perceiving migrants as villains or victims, helping also to impact policy (Anderson, 2010). Yet, migrant women are often still portrayed as victims, and their agency not recognized (Bastia, Datta, Hujo, Piper, & Walsham, 2022, p. 11). As some of the few scholars who have researched the issue, Mansour-Ille and Hendow (2018) argue that migrant domestic workers in Lebanon developed agency through collective organization and mesh-level resistance. Individuals’ capacity to mobilize resources and access migrant networks may depend on the presence of such networks, environmental factors such as the working conditions (Mansour-Ille & Hendow, 2018), and individual characteristics such as class, gender, race, nationality, levels of education, and language skills (Mansour-Ille & Hendow, 2018; Alberti, 2014; Datta et al., 2007). For instance, Mansour-Ille and Hendow (2018) found that domestic workers with higher education levels and connections to activists had developed more agency (p. 464). As previously exposed, migrant networks can play a central role in

the migration process and in navigating life in the receiving society. Along these lines, Berntsen (2016) argues that social networks may “enhance (or constrain) migrants’ agency” (p. 476).

When it comes to the role of agency in civil society, two main arguments have been highlighted in theoretical debates. Some scholars have opted for applying the notion of agency to analyze civil society, social networks, social movements. Within the context of migration, the environment is considered to have an impact during the migration process (Boyd, 1989). Even in contexts where there is little to no political opportunity for civil society to execute their agenda and national institutions impose several constraints, civil society organizations find ways to carve their own political spaces through agency (Kemp & Kfir, 2016). More recently, some scholars argue that the notion of agency is not sufficient for the analysis of collectives, and instead opt for the concept of bricolage that allows an understanding of the tensions between practices of action and organizations. Bricolage looks at both the individual’s and the collective actor’s capacity to find collaborative solutions, while adapting to the available resources and to the social context. It thus refers to the collective capacity to find innovative and creative strategies to navigate challenging conditions (Castellani & Roca, 2022, p. 82). The focus of bricolage thus rests rather on a meso-level, different from the agency’s focus at the micro-level.

For the purpose of this thesis, I follow Katz’s (2004, p. 242) framework on agency that provides a disaggregated understanding of the concept by looking at three different types of agency: recuperation, resilience, and resistance. Resilience refers to the autonomous individual capacity to address an issue that affects their own situation without necessarily changing the overall context. Recuperation or reworking implies changes in one’s own situation but also to change one’s circumstances. Finally, resistance entails an action that seeks to subvert and disrupt the conditions in which one finds oneself. These categories of agency have previously been used to study the agency among irregular migrants during their migration process (Triandafyllidou, 2019), as well as on the mobilization of migrant construction workers to negotiate their employment relations (Berntsen, 2016).

Central to the social movement approach is a focus on how subjectivities of agents come to change, for there is an understanding that emergence of a social movement requires a revision in the manner in which people look at the problematic conditions of their life (Kelly, 1998; Turner, 1969). In McAdam’s words (1988), the process of ‘cognitive liberation’ is crucial to individuals’ participation in collective actions. He identified three key cognitive processes in ‘cognition liberation’. First, people who normally accept the authority of rules begin to question the legitimacy of those institutional arrangements and their rulers. Second, people who used to prove that these institutional arrangements are inevitable begin to realize their rights and demand a change. Finally, people who originally considered themselves powerless and hopeless begin to believe that they have the capacity to change the situation (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996, p. 131).

So far, I have outlined the role networking and social capital can have in collective organization among migrants and how this collective organization can reinvigorate the activism and political participation of migrants in the search of (and their claims for) better rights, better life quality, and in providing support to each other. Although there is a big array of migrant organizations, considering the important role that migrant workers, and more concretely migrant domestic workers, play in the globalized world, the following section presents a general overview of this specific group.

2.4 Migrant domestic and care workers and the feminization of labor: a general overview

According to estimates of the ILO, over half of the world's migrants are part of the labor force of their country of residence, with the majority of them residing in high-income countries (ILO, 2021). Yet, while in some countries migrants represent up to 25 percent of the work force, in others they represent less than 2 percent. Southern, Northern, and Western Europe are the main destinations, hosting 24 percent of migrant workers, followed by North America (22 percent) and the Arab States (14 percent). In Europe, migrant workers represent 18 percent of the labor force. Local and national governments play a major role in this movement through emigration and immigration policies shaping the international movement of targeted groups of workers. Policies can either encourage or discourage the international mobility, e.g., discourage emigration of high-skilled citizens and encourage emigration of 'low skilled' citizens to promote remittances and decrease poverty (ibid.).

Migrant workers represent a central pillar in modern economy. According to the ILO, domestic work, construction, and agriculture are the three main sectors that concentrate migrant workers (ILO, 2021; Piper, 2006), and the literature on migrant workers and more concretely on migrant domestic workers is wide. The integration of migrants into the labor market is largely related to the segmentation of the labor market in the destination country (Piore, 1979). According to Piore (1979) a primary sector with relatively high-pay, highly skilled, and stable jobs can thrive and rely on secondary segments with low paid, low-skilled and highly volatile jobs with the possibility of upward mobility, which are often filled by migrant workforce (Reyneri & Fullin, 2011). Segmentation of the labor force can also be seen from a demographic perspective considering other indicators such as the number of migrants in the country, migration status, levels of participation of female migrants, and the proportion of high- versus low-skilled occupations, migration policies, and the social acceptance of informality (Triandafyllidou & Bartolini, 2020).

This segmentation winds up in a higher concentration of migrants working in the less desirable employment positions, and in less regulated and more exploited sectors (Hobson et al., 2018; Da Roit & Weicht, 2013). The domestic sector, for instance, has a lower possibility of being covered by collective agreements regulating wages, working

conditions, and employment rights (Gallotti & Mertens, 2013; Lutz, 2016). Moreover, migrants working in the domestic and care sector “are a vulnerable group with weak capabilities (Hobson et al., 2018) as they are more vulnerable than their native counterparts. They depend on a working contract to renew their working permit. If they are undocumented, they are at risk of being deported (Triandafyllidou & Marchetti, 2013). In addition, they have a lower probability of having a strong support system that helps them find employment if needed (Hellgren & Serrano, 2017).

According to the ILO, approximately one in six domestic migrants in the world are international migrants, and over 70 percent of them are women.³ This is a mirror of what many scholars have discussed within the feminization of labor (Hochschild, 2018; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001), as it appeals to the devaluation of feminized labor. Oso and Catarino (2013) define the feminization of migration “as a process in which the flow and/or stock percentages of migrant women increase in comparison with the total number of migrants” (p. 628). Although at a social and political level, domestic work continues to be seen as unskilled labor, several scholars have challenged this view, highlighting the value of domestic work for social reproduction (Pérez Orozco, 2004). Although most of the literature focuses on the migration of workers from the ‘Global South’ to the ‘Global North’, particularly that of Filipino women to East Asia, Europe and North America, ‘South’ to ‘South’ migration has proven to be equally important. Moreover, migrant scholars have stressed the social-economic importance domestic work has for migrant women as it often becomes the source of income for them to send remittances to their home countries and to provide for their families (Oso, 2018, 1997). Previous studies have shown that despite the marginal position and lower wages of migrant labor women in the ‘South’ in relation to those in the ‘North,’ they feel empowered through their economic capacity of sending remittances to their family (Parella Rubio, 2003). Domestic work has also proven to be a source of resistance for women during economic crises. As many men lose their jobs in other sectors such as constructions, domestic workers are seen as less affected by the recession and take over the role of ‘breadwinner’ creating shifts in normalized gender roles (Oso, 2018). Yet, this feminization of labor has also created another phenomenon. For example, Hochschild describes ‘global chains of care,’ where women emigrate to work in the care sector, leaving their own children and/or other family relatives in charge of other caregivers (Hochschild, 2018).

Due to the predominant number of female domestic workers, scholars have approached the topic from a gender and migration perspective (Oso, 2018; Castles & Miller, 1998; Sassen, 1988). The feminization of migration refers to the rise in lone female migrants and a growing trend to differentiate between the sexes, focusing on the causes of migration for women. Some studies approach the question of gender by drawing attention to the way in which the lack of sexual redistribution of social reproductive work

³<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2016/9/infographic-migrant-domestic-workers>

in northern households has led to a demand for female migrant labor from southern countries (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2004). In other words, a 'global transfer of services' associated with women's traditional role as providers of care, domestic service, and sex work. Therefore, there is a transfer of feelings and affection that characterized the care services provided by women from the 'South' in northern countries. Both for their country of residence as well as for their country of origin when they maintain transnational relations.

The most common push factors that have been attributed to the emigration of migrant domestic workers are poverty, domestic violence, personal and family issues, family reunification, widowhood, and lack of financial resources to provide for their families in their country of origin (Oso, 2018; Gupta, 2003). Depending on the destination country's approach to immigration and its policies, some migrant domestic workers immigrate without a precise labor perspective, many being undocumented and ending up working in the irregular economy, in precarious conditions. Meanwhile, others arrive under a migration scheme for migrant workers or low skilled labor, having been recruited in their homeland and arriving with a working contract from which they depend on (Anderson, 2010; Gupta, 2003). Canada, Hong Kong and Singapore have been countries with a long tradition of regularizing the entry of foreign domestic workers and the terms of their residence (ibid.) However, regardless of the working contract or the migration status, migrant domestic workers often find themselves in precarious situations. Given the legal gap in the protection of migrant domestic workers and their rights in most countries, these workers are often overworked, underpaid, and highly dependent on their employers. The most vulnerable group is that of live-in domestic workers, a condition mostly reserved to migrant women in countries like the U.S., Spain and Italy (Gupta, 2003; Parella Rubio, 2003).

This lack of regularization and protection has led to the collective mobilization and organization of migrant domestic workers all around the world. Often, domestic workers are seen within a stereotype of 'passive' maternal women filling the social-constructed paternalistic expectations of caregivers in the household (Tungohan, 2013). Their mobilization has an important meaning as it changes the framing from "laborers of love", where they are seen within this maternalistic fame, to workers with rights (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016).

Gupta (2003) analyzed, for instance, the organization of South Asian domestic workers in New York ⁴ that advocates for fair labor practices, while looking to promote educational campaigns for both employers and employees to inform about existing rights and regulations. Similar examples can be found in other parts of the world, from London (Anderson, 2010) to Hong Kong (Lai, 2018). In London, Anderson (2010) recounts how the

⁴It is important to note that in the United States domestic workers do not have the right to collective bargaining; on the one hand facilitating the exploitation of reproductive labor, and on the other hand forcing domestic workers to find alternative ways to mobilize and claim their rights.

organization of migrant domestic workers came together campaigning for improvements in visa status issues, and as a forum to share legal and social services. Abrantes (2013) accounts for the “fluid motion between agenda of mobilization and producers of policy advise” (p. 324) that immigrant organizations can play. Mansour-Ille and Hendor (2018) provide an analysis on the resistance of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon explaining how the activists became the focal point around which a community of migrant domestic workers (mostly from the same nationality and religion) organized. Their organizations initially started through conversations across balconies – “balcony talks,” and they established support networks that acted as resistance at a meso-level (ibid.).

Despite the success many mobilizations have had in the past, it is important to recognize some structural barriers they may face such as the sustainability of the organizations and mobilizations based on worker identity may face over time; the long working hours, and the fragmented nature of the labor market that often leads to weaker unions in large industrial factories; and the subjective perception of migrants over their working conditions (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016; Tayah, 2016). Moreover, many fear to join these organizations and engage in labor unions due to their migration status, being deported, or being dismissed from their workplace (Tayah, 2016; Parella Rubio, 2003). Datta et. al (2007) argue that sometimes exploitative conditions can serve for migrant workers to develop more suitable strategies, and resort to a range of strategies that allow them to cope with the conditions on a short-term period. In such cases of oppression, Katz (2004) maintains that acts of resistance and resilience should be considered an achievement. Another obstacle migrant domestic and care workers may face when organizing, particularly when they organize together with local workers, are the cultural and language barriers (Tayah, 2016).

As the examples and scholarship of organizations and resistance cited above demonstrate, there are different types of forms of domestic workers’ organizations. Workers can become part of trade unions, turn to the association model through collectives or community-based associations, or experiment with organizations that combine aspects from the association and trade union models (Tayah, 2016, p. 96). The form of association can be determined by contextual factors (e.g., legal framework, and organization policies). The type of policies can determine the probability of the type of organization domestic workers join, as, for example, they are more likely to join trade union in countries where the government extends certain types of labor protection to unionized workers. In contexts where there is little liberty and freedom to organize and form associations, they often find alternative solutions, such as establishing cultural clubs (Bonner, 2010, p. 3), or turning to local organizations or unions with their issues (Kabeer, 2015, p. 42).

Although there is a growing interest in studying the collective organization of migrant domestic workers leaning on preexisting social movement literature, the way in which this highly marginalized group articulates their demands and organizes themselves remains under researched. This thesis aims to contribute to expanding the knowledge on

the political mobilization of migrant domestic and care workers, by the empirical analysis of the particularly relevant Spanish context, which has not yet been fully researched.

3 Migrant domestic workers in Spain: The externalization of domestic work, the immigration law, the employment regime, and the ratification Of the 187 Convention

Since the 1980s, Spain has shifted from being a country of emigration to a country of immigration (Karaboytcheva, 2006). The beginning of the 21st century represented a consolidation of the demographic presence of the migrant population in the country. Currently, Spain is home to approximately 5.417.883 foreigners (INE, 2022), making it the third country in Europe with the largest immigrant population, just after Russia and Germany (Statista, 2022). Overall, the largest foreign groups by nationality are Moroccan (776.223), Romanian (632.859) and British citizens (316.529), followed by Colombians (315.885) and Italians (298.817). Yet, it is important to notice that the populations with the largest increases over the last years have been the Italian, Colombian and Venezuelan, while the Romanian, Ecuadorian and Chinese populations have had the largest decrease (INE, 2022).⁵ Furthermore, Catalonia (1,250,665; 2021), Madrid (955,122), and Andalucía (711.916) are the Spanish autonomous communities with the largest populations of immigrants (INE, 2021).

This section provides a glance at the Spanish context with a short description of the evolution of the domestic and care work over the last three decades in the country; and the legal framework on migration, and on the protection and regulation of this sector in the labor market.

3.1 Private domestic work in Spain

In 2018, domestic workers represented about 3.25 percent of the workforce in Spain (Murillo, Arévalo, & Brey, 2019). This puts Spain in the middle in relation to other European countries, where, for example, domestic workers represent between 0.04 percent of the workforce in the Netherlands and 5 percent in Cyprus. However, according to Eurostat, in 2021 Spain was the second country in the European Union with the highest number of workers (numbered at 554,000) in the sector, close after Italy. Between 1998 and 2007, there was a notorious increase of workers in the sector, coinciding with economic stability in the country and the extraordinary regularization in 2005 (Eurostat, 2022). Furthermore, it is important to note that Spain has low fertility rates and an aging population, besides

⁵Among the main foreign nationalities, the largest increases were in Italian (19,093 more), Colombian (18,203), and Venezuelan (11,481) populations. The largest decreases were in Romania (-25,146), Ecuador (-5,755), and China (-4,516).

having weak public child- and elderly-care services. These shortcomings in social policies have partly led to the externalization of care and domestic work: when the family network is no longer able to provide the necessary care, they can opt for a private solution when they can afford it (Martinez-Buján, 2007). The absence of state support in social policies, such as longer paid parental leave, important gaps and limitations in formal childcare, and a small percentage in elderly receiving home-help assistance, have put Spain into the 'implicit familialism' according to Leitner's (2003) classification of degrees of familialism of European states.

In 2007, Spain witnessed an increase in the number of people working in the domestic sector, with 770,000 workers, out of which 91 percent were women (Murillo et al., 2019). The 2008 economic crisis changed this trend, although the decrease in the number of workers in the domestic sector was rather limited. In 2018, there were approximately 635,300 domestic workers in Spain, out of which 565,000 (88,9 percent) were women (ibid.). The different policies implemented by the Spanish Government to promote the regularization of the sector fostered the affiliation of domestic workers (and their employers) to the Social Security in 2013. One of the policies launched by the Government in that year aimed to promote their labor rights through this registration and fight the informality in the sector.⁶ This, together with the Special Regime for Domestic workers, promoted a higher Social Security registration rate among domestic workers.

Until 2005, the sector of domestic work was dominated by Spanish nationals. In 2005, this trend shifted: the number of foreign domestic workers (around 200,000) surpassed that of Spanish workers in the sector, with the 2005 regularization process being an influencing factor (Murillo et al., 2019). The trend continued until 2013, when the distribution of domestic workers by nationality changed again (Hellgren & Serrano, 2017). Murillo et al. (2019) attribute the rise of native-born workers in the sector to the economic situation in the country and the naturalization rate of immigrants. Although the percentage of Spanish domestic workers was higher in 2018 than that of their foreign counterparts, the number of immigrant domestic workers remained important (168,787; 42,1 percent). When broken down by regions of origin, the vast majority of migrant domestic workers in Spain (affiliated to the Social Security) are Latin Americans (89,395). They are followed by workers originating from Europe (64,201), Africa (17,158) and Asia (13,500). It is interesting to see however, that when looking at the data by nationality, Romanians are the largest group working in the sector, together with Bolivians, Paraguayans, and Moroccans (Ministerio de Trabajo y Economía Social, 2021).

⁶Up to 2018 there were roughly 230,000 domestic workers working under an irregular scheme, most of them being immigrants without working and/or residence permits. This irregularity is one of the main factors promoting the precarity of the sector.

3.2 Legal framework

Hobson et al (2018) argue for the interplay between migration and employment regimes and specific policies that can incentivize and directly affect the domestic labor market. The last two decades have brought several changes to this sector in Spain, from migration law to changes in the employment regime.

3.2.1 Immigration law

Different from other Member States of the European Union, Spain has rather less restrictive migration laws (Beine et al., 2016; Arango, 2012). The country offers three basic paths to regularization for third-country nationals. The first path is for a short and temporary residence status known as *estancia* (*stay*). The second path grants a residence permit (*residencia*) meant for people who will remain in the country for longer periods of time, for instance through family reunification or through the labor market. Finally, the third path to regularization is for exceptional cases, hence through international protection, humanitarian reasons, and collaboration through justice and criminal prosecution, as well as social, labor or familiar roots (*arraigo*).⁷ Table 1 provides a summary to the typologies of regularization process and residency and work permits. Spanish migration law is mainly dictated by the Organic Law on the Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners (Ley Orgánica 4/2000 sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social - LOEX). This law was first adopted in 1985 in the context of Spain's accession to the European Community (EC) and its restrictive character at that time was mainly attributed to the EC's fear of Mediterranean states becoming an entry way for undocumented immigrants (González-Enríquez, 2009).

An *estancia* permit allows third-country nationals to remain in the Spanish territory for a period of less than ninety days (Art. 30 LOEX). This exempts students who usually receive a residence permit for longer than thirty days. Unlike other cases, the time students spend in the country does not count as a period of residence for the acquisition of nationality.⁸ Individuals who enter Spain with an *estancia* permit in order to search for employment must leave the country after three months if unsuccessful in finding said employment.

Most residence permits are sought for work purposes. There are two types of residence permit: temporary – authorized to reside in Spain for more than ninety days and less than five years, and long-term – permission to reside in Spain indefinitely under the same conditions as Spanish people. The former depends on temporal, subjective, objective, and humanitarian factors, and the procedure for obtaining it initially is held in

⁷For the purpose of this thesis and the main interest of the research I only focus on *arraigo* among the exceptional circumstances, as the other circumstances barely apply to migrant domestic workers.

⁸Possible modification to residential status and work directly, without a visa, very strict conditions Art. 199.1 RLOEX will have consideration of initial authorization (subject to high SS = 3 months) + family residence

conjunction with the visa application (incorporating initial residence of one year) after entering. Also, it is required to ask for the TIE - evidence of the legal situation in Spain for more than six months. A temporary residence can be given for family reunification, work as an employee or self-employment, among other reasons. The temporary residence and work employee (Art. 62 LOEX) grants third-country nationals the right to a one-year visa and an inscription of three months since entry. On the contrary, long-term residence (Art. 147-148 LOEX) allows foreigners to reside and work in Spain indefinitely under the same conditions as a Spanish citizen if they have legally and continuously resided in Spain for at least five years.

Finally, the *arraigo*, one of the exceptional circumstances, is meant for third-country nationals, who are in Spain at the time of the application, and grants residence for one year. This unique system, existing since 2005, offers migrants an extraordinary path to regularization through this process called *arraigo social* (social roots). To be eligible, individuals must have lived continuously in Spain for at least three years; have a valid work contract of at least one year, that guarantees at least a minimum wage; and be able to prove social roots and links with other foreigners in Spain. Moreover, the *arraigo laboral* (labor roots) requires two years of residence and work in Spain, during which the person must have worked for at least six months.⁹ Finally, the *arraigo familiar* (family roots) is given out to children of a parent who had been originally Spanish or for a parent of a minor of Spanish nationality. The *arraigo* has been specially relevant for foreigners from former Spanish colonies, including Latin American countries, Equatorial Guinea, Philippines, and Sephardic Jews, who can naturalize after only two years of continuous residence in Spain, contrary to other nationalities who still have to fulfill the ten years requirement (Murillo et al., 2019).

3.2.2 Employment regime

The domestic service in Spain is ruled by a specific labor legislation that is different from other work sectors. Already in 1976, the domestic labor had established itself as a different labor regime (Ley de Relaciones Laborales de 8 de abril de 1976) and was considered as civil law until 1985 (Real Decreto 1424/1985). The 1424/1985 Royal Decree established some key differences from other labor sectors, such as the necessity for a written contract, the termination without cause, and the existence of presence schedules – the time during which the employee is under the disposition of the employer without doing any effective work.

This legislation was valid until 2011, when the Royal Decree 1620/2011 set some improvements and limitations to the sector. Among the improvements, there was the duration of the length of the contract, the social benefits, and the distribution of the

⁹In practice, *arraigo laboral* is very hard to obtain as it also requires presenting a sue against the employer who hired a person without a working permit.

Table 1: Typology of regularization process and residence and work permits in Spain for non-EU citizens

Residence permit	Type	Legal reference	Purpose	Validity	Permission to work
Stay (<i>estancia</i>)	For studies	Art. 37 LOEX	Activities not related to labor	For the duration of the studies	No
Stay (<i>estancia</i>)	For employment seeking	Art. 32(1) LOEX	Activities not related to labor	Up to 90 days	No
Residence (<i>residencia</i>)	Temporary	Art. 45 LOEX; Art. 62 LOEX	Lucrative activities	2 years	Yes
Residence (<i>residencia</i>)	Long-Term Residence UE (Blue card)	Art. 151-152 LOEX; Art. 85 – 87 LOEX	Third-country nationals working and residing in Spain for at least 5 years	5 years (renewable)	Yes
<i>Arraigo</i>	Social	Art. 124(2) LOEX	Social links (undocumented)	1 year (renewable)	Yes
<i>Arraigo</i>	Family	Art. 124(3) LOEX	Undocumented children of Spanish parents; parents of Spanish minors	1 year (renewable)	Yes
<i>Arraigo</i>	Labor	Art. 124 (1) LOEX	2 years employment (undocumented)	1 year (renewable)	Yes

Source: Own elaboration

time the employer is present at work. Additionally, it established that all contracts for longer than four weeks must be written, while further regulating the overnight work of domestic workers. The year 2011 also brought the regulation of Social Security benefits and contributions of domestic workers through Law 27/2011, which obliged employers to pay a contribution for every hour of domestic work. This new law also granted domestic workers the right to sick days as of the first day of employment (before this right only applied after 29 days of employment). Yet, it did not regulate the unemployment benefits of domestic workers. In 2017, the Government adopted a new order to make changes in the tributary system on the maximum contribution rate bases in the Social Security system. This measure included an increase in the contributions made by employers for domestic workers working more than 60 monthly hours (Orden ESS/106/2017). However, “the employer is required to pay social security contributions only if the number of working hours exceeds 20 per week. There is no obligation to draft and sign a written employment contract, but only a mutual verbal agreement, which leaves the employee in a weak position in the event of bad practice on the part of her employer” (León, 2010, p. 415).

The policy changed again in 2020 through the Royal Decree 35/2020 adopted in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This Decree delayed the payment of salaries of domestic workers and the coverage of the pensions until 2023. The Social Security Law however established the Government to match these two aspects as of January 1, 2021. Additionally, as of January 2021 employers must share with Social Security the wages pay to domestic and care workers working full time. In case they do not share this information, they risk undergoing a labor inspection. This campaign was launched with the aim of guaranteeing a decent salary.¹⁰

Figure 1 shows the overall number of the employees registered in the Special Regime of Household Employees between 2010 and 2021. Currently, there are 372,878 employees registered with the Special Regime for Household Employees (Ministerio de Trabajo y Economía Social, 2022). Although there has been a slight decrease in the overall number of employees registered in this Regime, since the beginning of the pandemic there was an increase in the number of non-Spanish employees registered with the Special Regime for Household Employees (Ministerio de Trabajo y Economía Social, 2021, 2020) as

Figure 1: Workers Registered with the Special Regime of Household Employees (2010-2021)



Source: Own elaboration based on data from *Ministerio de Trabajo y Economía Social*

Figure 2 shows. Both figures show the over-

¹⁰<https://www.elsaltodiario.com/laboral/victoria-trabajadoras-hogar-seguridad-social-empleadores-regularizar-cotizaciones-SMI>

whelming overrepresentation of female workers in the Regime.

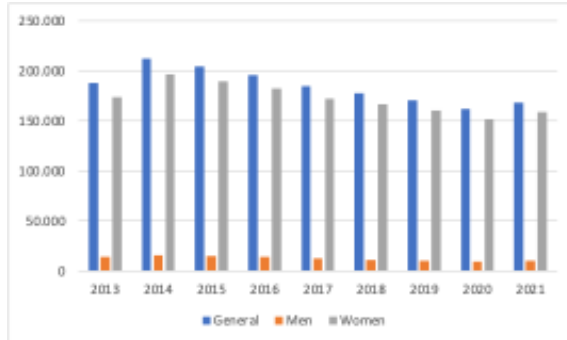
On June 22, 2022, the Spanish Government ratified the ILO C189 - Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).¹¹ The Convention looks to promote the dignified work conditions as part of the United Nations Development Goals and sets minimum standards for domestic work (Ramírez Bolívar & Corredor Villamil, 2022). This ratification meant a further regulation of the labor conditions of domestic and care workers in Spain. This was the continuation of the previous reforms that had already been introduced in 2011 and updated the Special Labor Regime for Domestic Workers. Although civil society had

been asking for years for the ratification of the Convention, it was not until the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruled on February 24, 2022, that Spain was violating the Directive 79/7/CEE and was thus indirectly discriminating against household employees by not recognizing their right to unemployment benefits and protection.¹² Therefore, the ratification was mainly aimed to amend two issues that were not addressed in the laws from 2011: compensation for unfair dismissal and recognition of unemployment benefits.¹³ These two aspects were regularized through the Royal Decree 16/2022. Yet, the new legislation still leaves many gaps as for example the unemployment benefits and retirement benefits are not retroactive, thereby leaving those individuals close to the retirement age without protection.

4 Data and methods

After having presented the theoretical framework guiding this study and the contextualization of the domestic work sector in Spain, this Chapter explains the operationalization used in this thesis as well as the process of data collection and the methods employed for the empirical analysis. The data collection process consisted of two important and complementary steps: first, a mapping exercise of the associations selected for the analysis and second, qualitative fieldwork based on semi-structured interviews with speakers and representatives of grassroots organizations formed by domestic and care workers. In this

Figure 2: Non-Spanish Workers Registered with the Special Regime of Household Employees (2013-2021)



Source: Own elaboration based on data from *Ministerio de Trabajo y Economía Social*

¹¹https://www.eldiario.es/economia/espana-ratifica-convenio-189-oit-amplia-derechos-laborales-trabajadoras-hogar_1_9068990.htm

¹²<https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2022-02/cp220037es.pdf>

¹³<https://www.hayderecho.com/2022/06/21/contexto-y-significado-de-la-ratificacion-por-espana-del-convenio-189-de-la-oit/>

chapter, I also reflect on the limitations of the research and my positionality as a researcher.

4.1 Conceptualization

The concept of 'domestic work' can be quite broad, as it may encompass all domestic and care tasks performed in a private household and purchased through the private market (Hobson et al., 2018, p. 387). Although some studies have applied a more minimalistic definition of 'domestic work' as any "personal care tasks and household chores derived from the needs of such assistance" (Gorfinkiel & Martínez-Buján, 2018, p. 107), others take a more specific understanding of the profession by defining it as an affective labor which entails a social dimension, with the social meaning being attached to the framework of feminization and coloniality (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014). Gutierrez-Rodriguez (2004) highlights how, although sometimes used interchangeably, domestic and care work are perceived differently. While the latter can be perceived as a productive form of labor that encompasses childcare, nursing and caring for elderly, the former is often seen as an unproductive form of unskilled labor that has not been recognized as a professional pathway. Yet, Gutierrez-Rodriguez, notes how it is impossible to isolate the affective dimension of domestic labor.

For the purpose of this research, I use the definition formulated by the Spanish Ministry of Labor and Social Economy:

"Workers who provide services for the private household, which may include any of the modalities of domestic tasks, as well as the management or care of the household as a whole or of any of its parts, the care or attention of family members or persons forming part of the domestic or family environment, and other work performed as part of the set of domestic tasks, such as childcare, gardening, driving vehicles and other similar tasks" (Ministerio de Trabajo y Economía Social, n.d.).¹⁴

As previously mentioned, I use Katz's (2004) definition of agency - resilience, recuperation, and resistance, which provides a thorough understanding of the effect of collective organization on migrant's agency while also responding to the micro-level focus of this research. It shows how people cope with different forms of structures in their lives, and how they come to develop different types of agency in the process of organizing. To understand how the migrant's exercise (or do not exercise) their agency through associations, I look at their migration processes and strategies to maintain their rights and to enact change. This approach is considered appropriate as the reworking (recuperation) category features practices that help migrant workers navigate the labor market (Berntsen, 2016).

¹⁴Author's translation.

4.2 Data collection

For the purpose of this research, I first mapped the associations, collectives, trade unions, and non-governmental organizations across Spain that advocate for domestic workers. The mapping exercise aimed at identifying the organizations that care for domestic workers, identifying the ones self-managed by migrant domestic workers. This step of the research also provided a first glance of organizations' claims, where they were concentrated geographically, and their activity on social media and their website (if they have one). In a second stage, the mapping was complemented by semi-structured interviews conducted with members and speakers of the associations and collectives.

The mapping was conducted as desk research between April and July 2022, based on publicly available data. I used Google as the main search tool to track associations across Spain advocating for domestic workers, identifying the main ones, and listing them. Tags used by relevant associations on social media (on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) often led to identifying other relevant associations. The first interviews I conducted also helped to identify further relevant associations and their contact details. The first list compelled seventy-four entities of interest. I then gathered information on their claims, instruments of mobilizations, services/assistance offered, members' profile, their activity on social media, and their contact information. After carefully reviewing the characteristics of each of the associations, organizations, and unions, I then filtered out those that are self-managed by domestic workers. Migrant-led organizations with a cultural focus were not taken into account. I identified thirty-three associations that are self-run by domestic workers (mostly migrants), and which offer services to fellow workers and/or are engaged in militarism and advocating for their rights. The list can be found in Appendix A.1.

Interviews are considered a key method in migration studies as it permits the collection of "aspects of irregularity, grey economic activities, and the autonomy and agency of mobile people" (Fedyuk & Zentai, 2018, p. 172). Thus, following the mapping, I conducted interviews to gain more in-depth knowledge about the organization and mobilization of migrants in the domestic and care sector. I proceeded to contact self-managed associations and collectives as well as organizations which, although not always run by migrant workers themselves, could offer an alternative perspective on the activism of other associations. Most organizations were contacted by email, while some were contacted through Facebook when no email address was made publicly available. For many organizations a first and a second reminder had to be sent, as many did not reply after one email. Others stopped replying after one or two exchanges. Some interviews led to a snowball effect allowing me to get the WhatsApp contact information of other association members. The contact with the associations was first established during June 2022 and interviews were conducted between July 2022 and December 2022.¹⁵ I conducted

¹⁵No interviews were conducted during the month of August as most of Spain is closed during this month.

six interviews with members of self-organized associations, and two interviews with project coordinators of migrant and feminist associations that run projects for migrant women working in the domestic and care sector. The contact with the associations and the interviews were conducted in Spanish. All of the interviews were recorded, except for one, where the interview started in a very organic way, and I was afraid that interrupting to ask permission to record would affect the interview flow.

The sample of the interviews represents about 30 percent of the organizations identified in the national mapping. Interviews were conducted with five organizations from Madrid,¹⁶ four associations based in Barcelona and surrounding areas, one from the north of Spain (Pamplona) and one from the south of Spain (Seville). While the larger part of the sample consisted of associations and self-called collectives, I included one cooperative and two associations with domestic workers in their member base, although they are not led by domestic workers. This decision was made to gain a better understanding of the role that the type of organization may play in the revindication process of migrant domestic workers. Table 2 shows the characteristic of the interview partners. Most of the people I interviewed (88 percent) hold a bachelor's degree. Only one of the interview partners was Spanish while the rest came from Latin American countries. The interviews were semi-structured, following a set of questions but also trying to give the interview partner the space to be open about their own experience and the work of the association. The semi-structured method was flexible and unobtrusive, asking all participants the same information but also leaving room to adapt the wording to each of the interviews (Donato, Hiskey, Durand, & Massey, 2010). Although unstructured interviews are considered to better allow the respondent to shape the research inquiry (Fedyuk & Zentai, 2018), I wanted to maintain a level of homogeneity and structure across the interviews to ensure that all relevant categories were addressed. At the same time, it allowed for flexibility in the respondents' answer, enabling the sharing of information about their experiences outside and inside of the association, their aims, claims, and strategies. Each interview lasted about an hour, although some of them extended to two or three hours. The interview guides were adapted throughout the research process according to experiences in the field, the organization, and the interview partner. I structured the questions departing from the general ones including broad and open questions regarding the organization, its work, their objectives, and how they used their platform to communicate their messages. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some interviewees addressed their experience at the organization during the lockdown. I also asked interview partners about their relationship with other organizations, as well as the public authorities. I then moved on to ask about their opinion on the current policies and the ratification of the 189 Convention by the Spanish Government. A final set of questions was about themselves, and their journey as individuals,

¹⁶The two interviews with members from organization in Madrid were done with members of organizations that are part of two and three organizations respectively, providing a greater detail on the work of each of the association they belong to.

Table 3: Characteristics of interview partners

ID	Date	Site of the organization	Type of organization	Sex	Country of origin	Location of the interview
I 1	8.7.2022	Seville	Association	Female	Peru	Seville
I 2	14.7.2022	Barcelona	Association	Female	Peru	Province of Barcelona
I 3	26.7.2022	Barcelona	Association	Female	Bolivia	Barcelona
I 4	31.7.2022	Barcelona	Association	Female	Argentina	Barcelona
I 5	13.9.2022	Barcelona	Association and Cooperative	Female	Ecuador	Online
I 6	11.10.2022	Navarre	Association	Female	Spain	Online
I 7	10.11.2022	Madrid	Cooperative	Female	Nicaragua	Online
I 8	7.12.2022	Madrid	Association	Female	Dominican Republic	Online

Source: Own elaboration

migrants, and activists.¹⁷

When contacted, each of the participants was given a consent form that informed them about how the information gathered during the interviews would be handled, guaranteeing a discrete use of the data, their anonymity, and the erasure of the recording once the thesis is submitted. Furthermore, I specified that their participation in the research was voluntary.

When conducting research, especially when conducting fieldwork, it is important to be reflective about how our past and our personality affects the process and the writing (Koobak & Thapar-Björkert, 2014). My fluency in Spanish as a native speaker, and a young Colombian Mexican woman facilitated the communication and trust-relationship with the Latin American interview partners. However, my position as a white person from a privileged economic background, who grew up with a domestic worker in the house and who holds a German passport that grants the right to migrate to Spain regularly and without hurdles, set me in a position of privilege and power during the interviews, and overall, in this research. These attributes prevented me from asking in-depth questions on migrant domestic workers' personal experience of migrating, as well as their relationship to their employers.

¹⁷The final interview guide can be found on Appendix A.2.

4.3 Methodology

This research follows a deductive approach. For the analysis of the data I followed Yin's (2010) guidelines on qualitative analysis following his five steps method: *compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, concluding*. For Yin, the analysis begins when compiling the field notes and all data gathered. This *compilation* results in a database. For this thesis the database consisted mainly of the transcripts from the interviews. Then, the *disassembling*¹⁸ process consists of breaking the data into smaller fragments and assigning labels or codes to the data. The third phase, the *reassembling*, entails going a level above in the conceptual analysis. For this, the data is reassigned into different groups and sequences. Then, this is followed by the *interpretation*. Here, one organizes the reassembled data to create a narrative. Finally, Yin calls to draw conclusions from the whole study.

Following the steps mentioned above, I transcribed all recordings verbatim. This procedure allowed me to familiarize myself with the data and to restructure the interview guide. For the one interview that I did not record, I transcribed my notes in order to have all the data standardized. In the end, my database had eight records. To facilitate the analysis of the data I used Delve, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) tool. Each interview verbatim was transferred to the software. Subsequently, I moved on to the disassembling phase. As I followed a deductive approach, I already had established categories derived from the interview guide: establishment of the organization, agenda, structure of the organization, instruments or strategies used, and obstacles in the activism. Furthermore, taking into account that the central question of this thesis focuses on the agency of migrant domestic and care workers, I also took into consideration the three agency types described by Katz (2004). The first level of the codes in the disassembling phase the pre-set concepts led to the identification of fourteen codes. Table 3 shows the list of codes disassembled and reassembled. The code portions were chunks of the data which made reference to the code in question. Sometimes a chunk could contain two codes. The code entitled "Vulnerability" referred to vulnerable situations that migrant domestic workers face due to their condition as migrants, as women, or as domestic workers. The code on "Discrimination" corresponds to the types of discrimination faced by domestic and care workers. "Mistrust" pertains to snippets of the interviews where a lack of trust in the government was mentioned. The code on "social critiques" covers fragments where a critique on the social attitudes towards domestic and care workers are made, as well as on critiques on the system. All the information on the organization itself was assigned to the codes "Origin/motivation", "Goal", "Information about the organization and its members", "Revindications", "Instruments", "Obstacles", and "frustration". "Origin/motivation" alludes to the reasons that encouraged the establishment of the organizations. "Goal" refers to the aims of the organization, e.g., their main agenda. The code on the "information about the organization and its members" included information

¹⁸The disassembling process is also often referred to in the literature as fracturing or data reduction (Yin, 2010).

Table 5: Levels 1 and 2

Code Level 2	Code Level 1
Domestic and Care work	Vulnerability
Domestic and Care work	Discrimination
Domestic and Care work	Mistrust
Domestic and Care work	Social Critique
Activism	Origin/Motivation
Activism	Goal
Activism	Information on the organization
Activism	Revindications
Activism	Instruments
Activism	Obstacles
Activism	Frustration
Agency	Resistance
Agency	Resilience
Agency	Recuperation

Source: Own elaboration

on the number of members, the year of establishment, and the profile of the members. The codes “Mistrust” and “Frustration” were based on the interview data as they were common topics in the interviews. The word ‘frustration’ was even used several times in different interviews. Then, strategies used either collectively or individually that matched the definitions of “Resistance”, “Resilience”, and “Recuperation” according to Katz were assigned to these three codes.

The third step, reassembling, involved looking for patterns in the data. This led to the creation of larger conceptual categories, Level 2 codes. The Level 1 codes were then assigned and reorganized to the Level 2 codes as Table 3 shows. Three codes resulted from this process: “Domestic and Care Work”, “Activism”, and “Agency”.

Yin (2010) highlights the importance of being cautious of the biases of the researcher during this step. To avoid the bias during the reassembling, he suggests three procedures: making comparisons, looking for negative cases, and engaging in rival thinking (Yin, 2010 p. 196). The procedure of making comparisons consists of observing similarities and differences across the data with the purpose of reflecting on aspects and items that one might have not considered. Watching for the negative cases is to identify items that might have similarities but that, when examined closer, appear to be a subgroup that represents the contrary of the aspect examined. Finally, rival thinking is the process of engaging in identifying alternative explanations. Once I had completed these first three steps, I was able to proceed to the analysis, with the results being presented in the upcoming chapter.

But before I proceed to the presentation of the results, I would like to draw the methodological limitations of this research. First, the sample of the interviews, although

important, is relatively limited, due in part to the difficulties in contacting the organizations and the limited access to the field. Additionally, for this research I mainly interviewed members with an active role in the organizations who are highly committed to the organization and militancy, and who have been in the organization for a long time. This might have affected the results, as I did not interview more members of the organizations. Secondly, due to time constraints in the research process as well as limitations of budget, no ethnographical research was conducted. This limited the access to meetings, closed events and manifestations organized by the organizations. An ethnographic approach to fieldwork could have enriched the research as it could have allowed a better understanding of the meaning of the organizations for its members (Lara, 2020). The ethnographic methods could have also proven useful as I was interviewing a population whose voices might not be adequately represented (Bayard de Volo, 2009). Additionally, this approach might have allowed a better understanding of the composition of the organizations and why they are mainly formed by Latin American women, as this could be a reflection of shared languages, experiences, beliefs, and cultures (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Finally, the coding exercise was only done by one coder, increasing the risk of bias, and the risk of not detecting certain arguments, not distinguishing implicit and explicit arguments, not classifying arguments into the correct coding units, and not guaranteeing intersubjective evaluation positions (Franzmann, 2013).

These limitations could have affected the validity and reliability of the research. In order to counterbalance this issue, I followed Jacobs' (2018) suggestions on categorization in migration studies and I included direct quotations in the analysis.

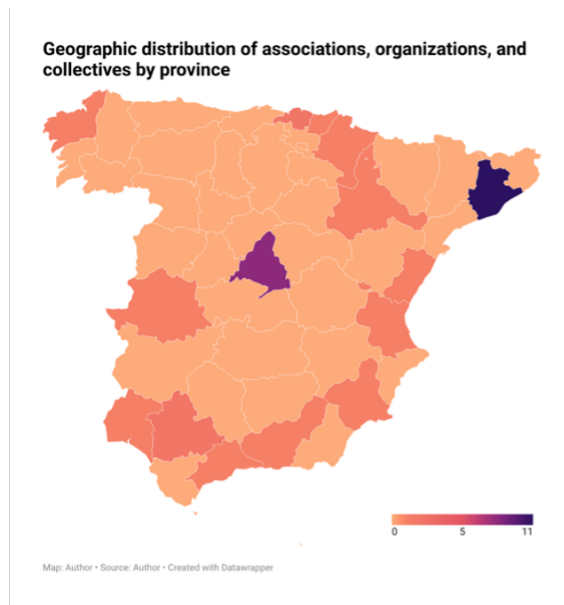
5 The Collective Mobilization Of Migrant Domestic Workers In Spain

In this chapter, I first present the main findings of the mapping exercise, which allowed me to identify the main characteristics of domestic workers organizations in Spain, as well as their revindications, collective aims, and instruments of mobilization. The list of the organizations analyzed in the mapping can be found in Appendix A.1). The second section of this chapter examines the findings from the qualitative fieldwork based on semi-structured interviews. The testimonies showed how through the establishment of the various organizations and the strategies used they are developing different types and degrees of agency. In the third section I look at how the agency of migrant domestic and care workers is built through collective mobilization and how migrants develop a wide range of strategies to not only cope but create changes in unjust employment conditions. In this section I employ data from both the mapping exercise and the interviews.

5.1 Identifying domestic and care workers organizations in Spain

The mapping exercise allowed me to identify 36 domestic and care workers organizations; their concentration in specific parts of Spain; their legal form under which they operate the of their creation; the type and frequency of their claims; the mobilization instruments that they use and the services they offer.

Figure 3: Geographic distribution by province



Source: Own elaboration

The mapping exercise showed that the 36 organizations identified - including collectives, associations, and trade unions - are highly concentrated in the province of Barcelona (see figure 3). This province is home to eleven organizations, out of which eight are located in the capital of Barcelona, two in the neighboring city of Hospitalet de Llobregat, and one in the comarca of Maresme. Madrid is the second province with the highest number of organizations, having eight organizations in the city of Madrid. Next to Madrid and Barcelona, Bilbao (3) and Sevilla (2) are the only two provinces that have more than one association led by migrant workers. This distribution seems to reflect the higher demographic concentration of immigrants in these specific provinces. For instance, the higher concentration of organizations

in Barcelona is not surprising considering that Catalonia hosts the largest migrant population in Spain and that the Catalan capital has a long tradition of neighborhood associations and long-lasting engagement with public urban spaces (Islar & Irgil, 2018). The political engagement of migrants in Barcelona and Madrid has gained force in recent decades, through social movements against mortgages (Gonick, 2016), political rights (Varela Huerta, 2008), and demanding unconditional regularization for undocumented migrants (Varela, 2011). The UGT, one of the largest Trade Unions in Spain, is the only identified organization with presence and impact across the country.

By type of organizations, the mapping exercise showed that associations (25) are the most common type of legal form, followed by trade unions (5), and co-operatives (3) (see Table 4). It is also important to highlight the existence of co-operatives in Madrid and Barcelona: although they are less numerous, they still represent an alternative form of association. Co-operatives self-managed by domestic and care workers seek to offer collective self-employment, establishing their own working conditions and values. Co-

operatives are membership based, and their members are hired under a contract of the general regime, guaranteeing its members access to social security benefits. For instance, a Madrid-based co-operative has two types of membership: workers (*trabajadoras*) and working partners (*socias trabajadoras*). The workers are those who have just entered the organization and are not part of the administrative board. After completing a minimum period of six months, where they learn about the work in the co-operative and are guided by one of the working partners, they can become working partners as well. As partners they officially become cooperationists and join the Executive Board (L7). The co-operative model is an alternative to the trade union and association model, and has not been taken into account as a common model of migrant domestic worker organization (Tayah, 2016).

The vast majority of the identified organizations were established during the decade of the 2010s. According to the gathered data, 15 organizations were established after 2010. This surge can be explained by the increase of foreign domestic and care workers in Spain since 2005 and, especially, the large immigration flows of Latin Americans since 2000. Between 2000 and 2008, Spain witnessed the arrival of over a 1.000.000 Latin Americans, mostly originating from Ecuador, Colombia and Peru (Ballesteros, Basco, & González, 2009).

In this context, it is also important to emphasize the particular case of the Madrid association Servicio Doméstico Activo (SEDOAC) as a pioneer of grassroot organizations of domestic workers. SEDOAC was the first association founded exclusively by immigrant women working in the domestic care sector in Spain (many of them in an irregular situation) that sought to match the Special Regime for Domestic Workers with the General Regime for Workers. SEDOAC soon became a space for the empowerment of domestic and care workers, fighting against their exploitation and discrimination (Sedoac, n.d.). Although the type of associations that worked in this field were rather larger social associations after 2005, with the regularization of migrants, some saw the need to create projects that worked with migrants and started them, such as the Jesuit Migrant Service – Seville (Servicio Jesuita de Migrantes- Sevilla).

Each of the organizations had a different start, still they have some commonalities in their agendas. The mapping of the 37 organizations showed the most common aim to be the creation of spaces for the revindication and fight for the rights of domestic and care workers, including an improvement of their working conditions. The trade union Undocumented Female Caregivers (*Mujeres Cuidadoras Sin Papeles*), based in Barcelona,

Table 6: Legal form of organizations

Legal Form	Count
Association	25
Trade Union	5
Co-operative	3
Foundation	1
Observatory	1
Network	1

Source: Own elaboration

uses the emblem “We take care, and who takes care of us?”¹⁹ Similarly, the Association for Domestic and Care Workers of Sevilla (Asociación Trabajadoras/es de Hogar y Cuidados Sevilla) claims the “right to have a decent life and work without violence.”²⁰

All self-managed associations are addressed to domestic and care workers regardless of their nationality or migration status, yet 51 percent of the organizations were established by migrant women employed in the sector.

89 percent of the organizations include revindications as part of their agenda. Coherent with their agenda, their revindications also their interests and rights as domestic and care workers, and as migrants. The analysis of their demands showed that their most frequent claim has been the ratification of the 189 ILO Convention by the Spanish Government. This was followed by better working conditions, access to social and unemployment benefits, equal rights and conditions, the regularization of undocumented migrants, and changes in the migration law. Although some of these claims have been addressed by the Spanish Government in 2022 (such as the ratification of the 189 Convention on 9 June 2022, and the Royal Decree 16/2022 that grants domestic and care workers affiliated to the Special Regime the right to unemployment and the protection of unjustified dismissal), other requests remain current. Several associations also demand for the recognition of fundamental rights for migrants through the regularization of undocumented immigrants, and the repeal of the current Migration Law (*Ley de Extranjeria*). One of the main critiques against the Migration Law is the three year residency requirement for undocumented immigrants to regularize their situation as, during this period, they see themselves forced to work in the irregular economy without any guarantees or rights, thus making them more vulnerable (SINTRAHOCU, 2021).

The mapping exercise further allowed identifying the instruments of mobilization and the services offered by these organizations. The most frequent instruments of mobilization seem to be protests, campaigns, political debates, and workshops. All four types of activism can be identified across associations, trade unions, cooperatives, and foundations, regardless of their legal form. In recent years, some associations have also opted to include some performance in their protests, using aprons, brooms, and pots in their mobilizations. Migrant Witches (*Brujas Migrantes*) and Domestic Territory (*Territorio Doméstico*) even use different methods to revindicate the recognition of their rights as workers through songs, parades, and theater in public spaces to gain more visibility. Cultural expression of immigrants in the public sphere have already been recognized in scholarly work as forms of political expression, as they contain a political message - regardless of whether it is explicit or not (Martiniello & Lafleur, 2008).

The larger and more established organizations like Sindillar (*Sindihogar*) also use their media platforms for media campaigns and create more sensibilization and visibility through podcasts. A large part of the campaigns promote and participate in political

¹⁹Original text: “Nosotras cuidamos, ¿y a nosotras, ¿quién nos cuida?”

²⁰Original text: “Derecho a tener una vida y trabajo digno sin violencia”

advocacy actions to favor the exercise of fundamental rights. Social media seems to be a central mean of communication for the campaigns: 83 percent of the organizations are active on social media, posting about their current events, actions, and projects. The most common platforms are Facebook, followed by Twitter and then Instagram. Likewise, the political debates among members, among associations and trade unions, and with policy makers are also a relevant mechanism of revindication. Finally, several associations, co-operatives, and trade unions offer different practical services. The most common service is vocational training (20). It is followed by informational assistance and legal support (18). The professional legal support is mostly offered by the most established organizations, with only a few of the self-managed organizations offering this service. Some organizations (14) also organize workshops for domestic and care workers; some of them are open making them available for non-members. Workshops are meant to promote and strengthen knowledge on migrant rights, and labor rights, as well as on self-care and mental health, among others. More established associations also provide legal support through either lawyers who offer their support pro-bono, or through legal counseling offered by Trade Unions. Figures 4a and 4b are examples of advertisements for workshops on labor rights organized by the Intercultural Association of Domestic and Caregiving Professionals (Asociación Intercultural de Profesionales del Hogar y de los Cuidados) and the ATH ELE in Bilbao. The last service provided, although also mainly provided by not self-managed organizations, is professional psychological counseling. Eight of the identified organizations offered this service.

5.2 Organization of the invisible? The who, the why, and the how

Beyond the mapping, the core data of this thesis originates from the interviews conducted with members of domestic and care workers organizations. The interviews demonstrate how diverse the approaches of the organizations are and how widely their involvement in political activism can vary. The analysis of the interviews led to the identification of fourteen codes. The identified categories were regrouped into three main categories: activism, agency, and others. In this section, I provide a detailed description of the codes, using examples from the data. It should be noted that the examples used for the description of the codes correspond to excerpts of the interviews, as these entailed the coding unit.

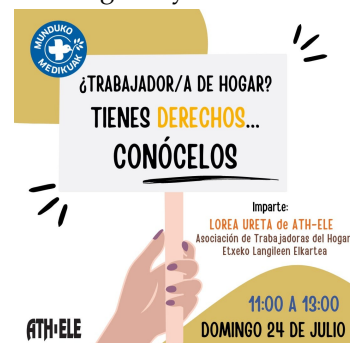
In the first category of activism, six subcategories were identified which mainly reflect the overall information of the organizations. These subcategories were general data of the association; how the organizations came to be, their goals, their revindications, the instruments they use, and the hurdles and frustrations they encounter in their activism.

(a) Poster for a workshop on labor rights by APHYC



Source: Facebook APHYC

(b) Poster for a workshop on labor rights by ATH ELE



Source: Facebook ATH ELE

Figure 4: Posters on labor rights

5.2.1 Migrant employment in the domestic and care sector

The interviews with the six women from self-managed organizations showed very different experiences from their relation to the sector and from the migration experiences.

They arrived in Spain for different reasons. Some migrated to complete their university studies and arrived with a student visa. After completing their program, they decided to stay and without work, they were left undocumented. Others were pushed by the violence in their country of origin, and others migrated for economic reasons. Only one of the interviewees arrived in Spain with her partner, all the others migrated by themselves and have been able to reunify with their children over the years. Similar to what has been documented by other scholars, none of those interviewed arrived with a clear labor perspective (Gupta, 2003). Despite the members of the organizations having very different migration paths, their processes resemble each other in the struggle they undergo to access regularized migration status in Spain. Also, as mentioned in the methodology chapter, most of the interviewees hold at least a bachelor's degree. Interviewee I_2 studied communication science, I_3 is an architect, and I_7 studied theater therapy. Yet, the lengthy nature and high monetary cost associated with validating diplomas and work experience in Spain discourage them from completing these actions.

Moreover, at the time of the establishment of the organizations, the founders had already had their migration status regularized after years of being undocumented

and were in a stable situation. Sixty-three percent of the interview partners have been undocumented in Spain and have had to go through the waiting process to apply for *arraigo social*. It is during this three-year period that many migrants end up working as live-in domestic workers. The live-in system brings them some benefits. Due to the low labor controls in the sector, migrants have a lower risk of being caught by the authorities, besides being able to save more money to send remittances to their relatives. Nevertheless, although it is not always the case, many domestic and care workers go through abuse and have to work long hours without any remuneration.

Working as domestic and care workers, many interview partners talked about the discrimination and vulnerability they experience, especially as migrants. The most common types of discrimination they experience are ageism, and as foreigners. Their ageism is often reflected in the difficulties workers often face to find employment after the age of 50 (I_2; I_7). The participants' experiences of discrimination were related to former places of employment for their immigration status, as employers take advantage of their status, similar to what happens in other sectors (Rydzik & Anitha, 2020). At the same time, their immigration status puts them in a vulnerable position as they cannot report the abuses due to the risk of deportation (I_3). Also, some interview partners described situations in which after completing the three years of working in a household, while being undocumented, asked their employers for help in the application process for *arraigo social*, and they refused. This situation leaves them without another option than looking for other work to start the process again (I_3).

The lockdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic was a situation of high vulnerability for domestic and care workers. Many were let go overnight without any protection as they did not have a contract.

“So, there are people who, because it was part-time, said, “I’ll pay you at the end of the month. I can’t pay you because my mother is gone.” A lot of things, without any security or anything, because you have no papers, you have no contract. They throw you out on the street with nothing.” (I_3).

This situation made them depend more on their networks and the associations as I later show in the section on strategies. Beyond this, the lack of knowledge on the rights of migrants in the workplace is another aspect that contributes to their vulnerability. The previous chapters have portrayed how Spain, similar to other countries like Lebanon, or the UK, has few legal mechanisms that protect migrant domestic and care workers. And as in other countries, they are overworked and, regardless of their migration status, they are highly dependable for their employers (Gupta, 2003; Parella Rubio, 2003). The experiences many foreigners and Spanish nationals working in the domestic and care sector described thus far have provoked indignation, frustration, and have contributed to their motivation in establishing and participating in self-managed associations (Koh et al., 2017).

5.2.2 Establishing migrant labor organizations: from organizations to cooperatives

The reasons behind the creation of the self-managed associations and cooperatives are very diverse. Many of the migrant women had a trajectory of activism in their countries of origin, having already participated in feminist and environmental organizations. Once they arrived in Spain, some women established links with already existing organizations for women and domestic and care workers such as *Abierto hasta el Amanecer*, *Calala*, *Mujeres Pa'lante*, *Sindillar*, among others. As described by Eggers and Pilati (2014), this process of integration with local networks is key in the integration of migrants. Through these networks they were able to continue their activism but after a certain period of time, they wanted to establish their own associations with their own values where they were the protagonists of their own revindication. They wanted to take matters into their own hand and have an organization that represented their beliefs, values, and needs. In other words, wanting "to do activism when I can do a coherent and real activism" (I_2). They wanted to create associations based on their concerns, that often deferred from the ones from local workers (Piper, 2006). In the case of the co-operative, they felt that domestic service recruitment agencies take advantage of them and, therefore they wanted to create an alternative that allowed them control of their working conditions and contracts, while also advocating for their rights. Many of the interview partners were members of the associations since their conception and were aware of how they were forging their identities through the organization (Evans & Boyte, 1986). Within the self-managed organizations there is an important influence from feminist heroes from Latin America, whether it is explicitly shown in the name of the association or in the characters invoked in their artistic representations.

"Then, in the end you find out that one of these companies ends up paying taxes outside the country in tax havens that do not exist, that with the labor of domestic workers they get rich as if rights or care were a privilege. A privilege for a few and not a vital necessity. So, all this has made us reflect and we said NO. We want to be the protagonists of our own work. And so, we studied the model of associationism, of companies, of everything, but that's why I also wanted to start with the roots, with history, with where we come from, with our identity". (I_7).

These ambitions were often linked to the feeling of not being represented by larger unions, or associations, as well as friction with other associations they had previously belonged to.

"Because I realized that I was the only domestic worker there. The others are not domestic workers, and they are pulling the girls who arrive in an irregular situation, looking for help, but nothing else. In other words, there

are no political demands within the sector or empowered workers there. So, I was there for about two and a half years for three years, but I got tired, I got burned out. I got burned out because in the end I was the one who gave the interviews" (I_2).

The segment of the interview with I_2 refers to her experience as part of a trade union. She felt that the real concerns of domestic workers were not taken into account and that there was no real agenda. This feeling of lack of representation in local organizations is similar to the processes described by Eggers and Pilati (2014) and Poros (2008). This also reflects the difficulties of integrating migrant workers into unions (Ford, 2004). Indeed, the most cited reason for the creation of the organizations was the frustration of the abuse of the system, and the lack of recognition of the domestic and care work as a decent work. This desire was not limited to migrant workers, 'native' workers, as they call them, were also striving to do the same. The path to rebelliousness against a system that does not ensure decent protection of the labor rights was specifically mentioned as a main reason for the need of a collective association among domestic workers (I_6).

In the same interview, the participant mentioned:

"No? Well, to work, to be humiliated. Sometimes mistreated. Well, it seemed that it had to be like that. And when I heard that they had made a special law, special, without rights, that they did not treat us like the other workers. Well, by myself, by myself I went to the Directorate of Labor of Pamplona, of Navarre. I went to set up an association" (I_6).

Only a few organizations started organically as a space for migrant domestic workers sharing their experiences and stories.

"Well, in a space in Madrid, in a feminist women's public house called [. . .]. We started to meet there, a lot of women who were doing domestic work and then we started to listen to each other, to ... to see that was happening to many of us. That we had come and what we were finding was not domestic work. We had no network, we were alone...hmm. . . with a lot of fear and then we met some other women, some feminist women from the Lavapiés neighborhood and then we started to talk to each other. And well. That's when the Collective began. Between women domestic workers and feminist women. Well, to talk about what was happening to many of us who were migrant domestic workers. And then to talk about care, which was what we were going through and was the common point that we had found in those conversations. That group of women, right? That throughout their lives many, many of the women who were there, had had their mothers, grandmothers and relatives, or many of them had also worked in domestic service. So that did not, it did not unite us and from there we started to...to...to organize ourselves as a collective" (I_8).

The companionship and the support provided by the organization was a trait that undoubtedly proved to be central for members. Not only due to the emotional support provided, as it is shown later on, but because through these spaces they create alliances, they share information, and are a first step in forming a community and finding broader support structures, especially important among migrants, or live-in workers who can become isolated (Aceros, Duque, & Paloma, 2021). Also, the support offered through the organizations can result in a type of resistance as has happened among the community of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon (Mansour-Ille Hendor, 2018).

The interviews proved that the nationalities in the organizations are very diverse, including many Spanish nationals as well, yet the dominant nationalities belong to Latin American countries. As described in the methodology chapter, one of the interview partners was Spanish while all the others were Latin American. The large number of Latin American women working in the domestic and service sector that participate in the organizations can be explained by the knowledge of the language. This is coherent with the establishment of migrant organizations based on shared ethnic and cultural background (Sardinha, 2009). Moreover, the knowledge of the language, as part of their cultural capital can facilitate them relating with 'native' domestic and care workers, relating to already established networks, and in understanding the legal framework to establish an association or a trade union. Still, different to what previous scholars have argued about the segregation of migrants from native networks, it is important to emphasize that all self-managed organizations also have Spanish members, creating spaces for where migrants and locals can interact (Castellani & Roca, 2022).

5.2.3 The agenda: revindicating, supporting, and making visible

The aims identified based on the interviews match the ones identified during the mapping exercise. They address the necessity of creating political spaces for their interaction and their revindication and promoting the visibility and dignity of their work. The goals are the reflection of the two identities that mark most of the members of the organization: as domestic and care workers, and as migrants.

"So, through this program we can make a claim, especially with the issue of migrants' documents...to be immigrants, to have access to job opportunities, and also to the fact of being able to do other formative activities that are not something... that is not something that is boxed in by the fact of being an immigrant because migrant sectors can be captured for cleaning or cooking and so on, so it is a bit like questioning those things, that prejudice, and the type that migrants are cheap labor, that we do not have to dedicate ourselves only to the benefits of the market. That is, to the market niche that is open, which we know is where there is work. So, this is the struggle to make our

fellow migrants recognize conditions and to recognize that Spain can access other studies or put into practice what they did in their countries of origin with equal opportunities. So, our struggle is not only in the sense of being domestic workers, but also in the sense of being migrants." (I_5).

This segment shows the dual conflict and the struggle they face. Most of the organizations want a recognition of the domestic work in the society, they want for it to be recognized as work that helps to sustain the society by taking care of the houses of their employers and caring for their relatives. They want their work to be recognized as a dignified labor. This is why they started their organizations with the aim of revindicating, demanding rights and recognition.

"So, the organization, the beginning of the collective also began with this objective, to demand rights for a job that was very important in life and also to demand recognition, because many women had done it, had done it and had not been given this recognition as such." (I_8).

"So that is our major struggle, which is that we are taken as equal people, that the work is dignified, that working as a housekeeper, that it is not, that it is not taken as an undignified job, that no, that we are not humiliated, that people respect." (I_3).

Yet, different from similar movements in New York (Gupta, 2003) the organizations in Spain do not have concrete strategies to change the general view of the domestic care work.

The lack of recognition, rights, and the discrimination are among the reasons why many organizations also aim to revindicate and fight for their rights, both as migrants and as workers.

"Then the organization, the... the beginning of the collective also started with that purpose, to vindicate... to... to demand rights for a job that was very important in life and also to demand recognition, because many women had done it, had done it and had not and had not been given that recognition as such." (I_8).

In the fight for this common goal, they often emphasize the importance of collaborative work and the need to work together and support each other in order to succeed in their activism:

"So I cannot think of any advance on my own. Either we all advance, or we do not advance at all, either we all make ourselves visible or none of us make ourselves visible" (I_2).

Similar to what has already been identified in the mapping, all the interviewed organizations also seek to create spaces and networks of support and counseling to provide information to other women, specially to those who have newly arrived. This is done mostly with the aim of also empowering fellow domestic and care workers with knowledge, e.g., with informational support (Coleman, 1990). One of the partners said that her association even considers the informational support more important than the political revindications (I_3), emphasizing on their focus of socialization of their members (Eggert & Pilati, 2014).

"But she, for example, this woman who has been creating this group, she used to get information about our rights and everything and every Wednesday we would meet to read. Her dream was to create leaders in different areas that if for example in hospitals they need people, then we can put a point where people can go if they need help. It has not been possible because people are not committed. It's not because they don't want to, but because they have to work, they have children to support and things like that. You can't leave work." (I_3).

One member of a self-managed organization even mentioned the importance of creating a space to mourn the migration process:

"The first years were a lot, a lot of listening, a lot of grieving, a lot of pain, a lot of.... We were going through the migratory issue. Many of us had left our families, our things, and so, of course, we were going through that and that was very important for the Collective. At that time, we were going through that and that was very important for the Collective. That listening, that support, that support among us. And then we began to create networks and we began to create the collective and to fight to give it value, which was one of the things we started." (I_8).

The emotional support during the mourning process helps them in combatting homesickness and loneliness. This is especially important among newly arrived migrants (Wierzbicki, 2004).

The organizations that are not self-managed share mainly the same goals, supporting the revindication and the political fight and offering support and assistance. However, they emphasize their aim of leaving the space and the protagonism to the domestic and care workers.

"But organized women defend very much their protagonism in the social struggle, don't they? So, I think that our role as an entity is a bit of advice and accompaniment. We as an entity are present there, but the protagonism is

theirs and ours, our style must be very respectful with those processes, and they are the ones who have tried to speak in the Board. Recently they did. We do participate in some actions with the City Council, and we will be present to the extent that they request it. But the protagonism is clearly theirs. Our work is a bit like that of service, counseling. We work a lot in defense, in defense because we have legal advice and then, well, we have accompanied cases of denunciation of some women and we accompany processes that are long, but in many cases, they are not favorable to us, but in others they are. There is also a little bit of silent work with the government, directly through them and with the same support" (I_1).

The agendas of the organizations combine aspects of support and political claims, thus aligning with the necessities and concerns of migrant domestic workers.

5.2.4 Revindications

The claims identified in the mapping proved to be very similar to the ones expressed by the interviewed organizations. The claims expressed by the interview partners revolved around the lack of legal protection and rights as domestic workers and migrants. They allowed me to gain further insights on the rationale behind these claims.

First, all interviewed organizations advocate for migrants' rights, fighting for regularization campaigns, the reform and even the complete rescindment of the Foreigners Law (*Ley de Extranjeria*).

"The Immigration Law is another of our demands, because it is something that violates the precariousness and vulnerability of women to endure and accept harsh working conditions. Those are our challenges, for example. I would say, for example, those of us who are on the other side cooking our heads off, I can't take it anymore. But we have to make it one way or another." (I_2).

The changes in the law are considered to be necessary to fight the precarity and the exploitation of migrant workers, especially undocumented immigrants who often do not have a working contract and who have to undergo three years without any kind of protection and often working for less than the minimum wage to fulfill the residency requirement to be considered for the regularization through *arraigo social*.

"The ridiculousness of the catalog of occupation, of the catalog of pensions in occupation according to this reform that says that there is a need for unemployed hospitality professionals. Then, of course, all the immigrants who are here with or without papers cannot be regularized. And I was also a little disappointed, but well, it will be good for the people who need it, but it is

still in that sense. I do not see it in Spain more than a nail of cheap labor and according to their convenience, it does not go justly against what we do, both in regularization already as through the Apol program, as projects a little more sensible, more or...with certain criticisms also to the Court, but which are intended to regularize no..... Not by labor, but by special social conditions." (I_5).

This claim for changes in the Foreigners Law has some parallels with the claims made by organizations in London demanding improvements in the visa statuses of migrant domestic and care workers (Anderson, 2010). Filipino workers in London were working without a contract and without opportunities for regularization of their migration status. Many of the interviewed organizations participated during the last year in a national regularization campaign called Regularization Now! (*Regularización YA*).²¹ The initiative promotes the regularization of the almost half a million of migrants in Spain.

"Because we are involved in the regularization campaign, we are asking people to be regularized. Regardless of whether all of us who are here are working or not, regularization has been done here, it has been done in the past years and now we have seen how things are super easy depending on who, who we want to take in, like what has happened with Ukraine. Well now, all the Latin American women who have demanded family reunification for so many years, that in the Immigration Law there are some criteria that for many women have been very painful and it is very painful to be able to reunite their children or their relatives and then suddenly all the obstacles are over and suddenly it is so easy to regularize in another country" (I_8).

The requests for regularization and papers results central in the mobilization, not only as part of their recognition in the society they have chosen, but also to reduce the precarity caused by the migration (Milkman, 2018).

Furthermore, there is a unified demand for the government to provide the same rights as the General Regime or to completely rescind the Special Regime for Domestic and Care workers, as this regime also strengthens the precarity of workers under it without access to the same rights and social benefits as workers under the General Regime. This claim is not only made by migrants but also by Spanish workers who are also affected by the Special Regime.

"One of the demands is the equalization of rights in the general regime, which we have been reiterating. There is no need of an agreement for Spain to give us all our rights. There is no right to unemployment, there is no right to a remuneration to be paid for the salaries received. In case you did not

²¹<https://regularizacionya.com>

understand, we, for example, do not pay contributions based on what we earn. We pay contributions based on salary tables from 200 to 250, paying the same as 350 to 500 in that range, you pay the same as six, from 500 to 700 you pay the same. So, you can't. A woman earning 700, for example, is not going to be able to, it is not logical for her to contribute the same as a woman earning 500, but that is there. And the government promised to equalize that the same. Three years ago... 3 years ago they promised, and they never did it. From there, CCOO, the UGT, everybody, nobody said anything or said "Yes, yes, here is a promise of equalization and they did not fulfill it. They all adapted to the discourse and to the story of the National Agreement, didn't they? Yes, yes. Ratification, rectification, rectification. Ratification is simply a protocol" (I_2).

The changes in the Regime System are persistent despite the recent changes in the legislation that grants domestic and care workers the right to unemployment and retirement benefits. The persistent discontent is not only due to the gaps in the new legislation that are not retroactive, thus excluding those who have been working in the sector for several decades, but also because there is still a difference in the rights and working conditions under the Special Regime.

The fight for better working conditions also includes the implementation of the 189 Agreement. Many of the organizations originally had the goal for the ratification of the ILO Agreement. Now that it has been ratified, they are expecting to see how the government implements it to secure their protection.

"Our main struggle has been the ratification of Convention 189. We have fought a lot, we have marched a lot and we have united with other entities with the same objective and well, now it has been signed. We have to wait for it to go to Parliament and it will take a while, but we hope that if it is ratified, we can have more rights, because Convention 189, in theory, protects us from many things. It will protect us. We will have the right to unemployment. We will have the right to receive a pension that we currently do not have. We do not have it" (I_3).

Even though the fight for an improvement of the labor conditions contemplates all domestic and care workers, some interviewees highlighted the precarious conditions in which live-in domestic workers often find themselves in, working extra hours and most often being undocumented. This does not mean they seek a complete abolishment of the live-in system, but rather better guarantees.

Beyond the policy and legal changes, several interview partners saw the necessity of social and structural change. One that promotes the recognition of the work they do and the rights they deserve. It is about achieving a social change that includes a structural

change in the way of thinking of society, families, government, and public administration. "I think rather that the conscience that you have as a worker at home is your conscience. It is as if you had a female worker in your company and you thought about better conditions and because the Treasury can pursue you, because the Social Security or whatever. I mean, the same thing happens at home. It should work" (I_5).

Finally, central to the revindications, the interviewees argued for the duty of the government when addressing the lack of assistance in public care. Thus, they ask for a reorganization of the system.

"Those that are sustaining are the most precarious, those in the worst conditions, the migrants. So, of course, it is something very perverse because it is sustained by precariousness. A lot, and I don't know if you have looked. I think that in other countries they are not. The system, which in Spain is quite a lot, is sustained with the employment of the household with this system" (I_1).

"This is the claim that we are making to the State. In the last few years that we have been reorganizing, where right now we are migrant domestic workers and many women taking care and doing this essential work, the work that we call life management and we are doing it that way, we want to turn it around, where we are not only women working, doing this life management because we are women, and that we are not only migrants who are sustaining this. The State has to take charge of this sustainability of life and also men have to take charge once and for all" (I_8).

Change in the State's policy that encourages the law of dependence where the state does not provide a solution for citizens who cannot afford private care, and leaves precarized women to take care of the work for a minimum salary.

Most often those who lead the revindications and the fight are those who have been in the country for longer. New arrived immigrants are still going through other processes and are more focused on addressing the basic needs for everyday life, like finding a job and establishing new links. But how do these organizations try to promote their agendas? Which strategies and means do they use?

5.2.5 Strategies

The goals and revindications presented thus far are vast and diverse in their nature. In order to achieve them, to make their voices heard, the organizations have developed an array of instruments and strategies. The most common strategies identified across all interviewed organizations are protests, artistic expressions, alliances and networks,

professional trainings, and psychological counseling. This is consistent with the strategies identified through the mapping where, where additionally, campaigns, conferences, and workshops were identified as strategies for claim-making and to participate in local politics.

One aspect that stands out is the difference of the strategies used by migrant-led organizations from those implemented by third-party led organizations. Most of the third-party led organizations had, for example, more resources to provide professional legal counseling and assistance as well as professional psychological counseling. Moreover, despite them also endorsing and fostering the political campaigns led by migrant domestic workers, they do not organize themselves such campaigns nor they participate in protests or in other political activities. Worker-led organizations, on the contrary, mostly share the information that is available to them through their personal experience and that they obtain through the publicly available data, sharing it through WhatsApp groups and from mouth to mouth (I_3). The WhatsApp groups are considered the most efficient way to spread the information. Some associations have WhatsApp groups with more than 100 participants. Although not all of them are members of the association, they use the platform to share the information and make it accessible.

The type of support offered by the organizations is either informational support (Wierzbicki, 2004; Bourdieu, 1986) instrumental support, or practical support. According to the interviews, the trainings offered by the associations are for example to certificate members as professional caregivers, as socio-sanitary professionals, among others.

Moreover, regardless of the type of organization, they all play a key role in becoming spaces and networks of support for all domestic workers but especially among migrants. Whether it is to share their stories, experiences and offer emotional support, to help them navigate the Spanish bureaucracy, or to give them a hand when they need it whether it is through clothing articles or finding a space to live.

“But it’s sharing information, it’s sharing experiences, it’s sharing. And the fact that they understand, isn’t it?... About women’s own experiences. They tell us “Look, I was fired for calling my employer, I asked her for what was established by law to give me this holiday and she said No, you are going to come and ask me, and out. And now what do I do?” Then we go on, we go on sharing perceptions. One says "no, you can’t stand it," another says "no, get out of there, report her.” (I_2).

The practical information offered by the organizations consists mainly in providing information about the process of migration, bureaucratic processes, and preparing curriculums, among others. Some associations provide workshops on self-care, labor, and migrant rights.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many organizations offered practical support by

assisting with sanitary materials, as well as support networks to those who were fired, evicted, or needed any type of help during the quarantine.

The cooperation and alliances with other organizations is also an important factor. The interviewees showed that the alliances were seen as central, as they are fighting for common goals. Still, each of the organizations manage to maintain its identity (I_5). The alliances are built both at a local level in cities with more than one organization and at a national level. It was through the alliances that they managed to organize two conferences with organizations at a national level and with members of the government to discuss their revindications. Some organizations, however, felt that they were not given the space to participate.

The alliances are not limited to self-managed organizations but also to feminist organizations such as Calala, which maintains links with organizations across Spain. At a local level, some associations also build partnerships with the City Council to organize the articulation of their agenda through city programs such as the Acropolis in Barcelona. Moreover, in order to revindicate and also to make their claims visible, many organizations organize protests, participate in the march of 25N and 8M, and organize campaigns and projects with the City Hall.

As the mapping exercise showed, there have been alternative ways to help workers tell their stories and make visible the situations and precarious conditions that many domestic workers have had to endure but also maintaining their anonymity. For this reason, they use music, theater, and public performances. Artistic expressions are sometimes used by migrants as acts of civic movements (Lara-Guerrero, 2021; Lara, 2020). Migrant domestic and care workers put on a wig and glasses to avoid being recognized by their employers and families and use the streets as their stage to tell stories that are sometimes too painful for them to put into words. They use humor to portray some situations. Through the theater performances for instance, they stage situations that members of the associations have experienced, but fear to be judged. One of the associations even does theatrical prayers to express the revindications. They say that these kinds of activities and performances serve for people to reflect for a longer time on what they have seen and heard.

“Well, look, within the Catholic Church there is a thing called the litanies. So, the character of the Witch does the litanies because she has turned it around. She has a basal cachet of a saint and some prayers, which is what we claim according to any theme. People like it because as you can play with that part that we also go, we have sucked.” (I_7)

The artistic expression is not only an instrument for the promotion of visibility and recognition of domestic and care workers but is also a way for undocumented members and members working in a live-in regime to participate in the revindication process.

Is a way for them to be part of the activism, recuperating their rights. Through art-based strategies they channel their fear, their pain, transforming it in glee. Through such acts they also seek to change the narrative that sees them as victims.

“Is also a tool that has allowed us to carry out this struggle with joy, which is, which is what characterizes us, that no, no, we have never liked to see ourselves as victims, but we have a process and that for us has been very important because we have brought out from within that, that joy and so we have carried it through.” (I_7).

The strategies portrayed here are examples of the instruments migrant domestic workers use to seek legitimization for their political involvements. Still, they face some hurdles in their organization and mobilization.

5.2.6 Obstacles and challenges

Although obstacles in the mobilization are not often addressed in the literature on mobilization and organization, there are different issues that interfere with the militancy of the organizations. The obstacles that domestic workers associations face in their activism are mainly related to the limited resource of time, coinciding with Hobson’s (2015) findings. Each project requires time, and they cannot give their 100 percent with their work. This is mainly due to the working conditions, and the lack of flexibility in the work schedules that limit their time to dedicate to their activist activities, and to participate in meetings from the organizations. This also leaves them little time to spend with their families or to participate in other activities after work (e.g., language courses, or professional trainings).

It is important to take into account that the workplace of domestic workers isolates them, making more difficult the establishment of networks. For this reason, most of the reunions of the associations and trade unions are done on Sundays or late at night during weekdays. The extended work hours affect especially live-in domestic workers. Therefore, in many protests they scream: “We are not all here; we are missing the live-in domestic workers!” (I_1; I_3; I_8).²² Interviewee I_7 worked under the live-in regime for four years. During this time, to assist with activities from the Cooperative, she had to find a replacement to fill in for her at work. She said that she did not care as the activism brought her joy.

The time schedule also interferes with the meetings and activities organized by the municipalities. Here the issue is not only the lack of time available after work but also that most meeting and activities are organized during work hours without taking into account the reality of the domestic and care workers.

²²“¡No estamos todas, faltan las internas!”

"The downside, for example, is that I can't go to a meeting and leave my job. I depend on that job because I have to pay. I have to pay for my food, my rent, my food. So, I can't ask permission to go to the city council meeting, where there are proposals, there are many proposals, but we can't participate in everything, precisely because we are still domestic workers. No? So, what then? We stay like this or sometimes they send us a link to the summary. And what happens with the meetings? Well, they do it at 10:30, 11:00 in the morning. And of course, those are key hours. If I go to work from 9:00 to 1:00 a.m., I can't leave work. And of course, I say I would like to participate, but I can't because of the working hours, and I invite a colleague who can go, because we have to invite those who are from the base who can also collaborate with us."
(I_3)

Most organizations make the effort to send one person to the meetings with government officials, but they struggle to make it work. Moreover, the fear among undocumented members of the organizations is another hurdle. Undocumented domestic workers fear in participating in protests and public activities as well as in meetings with the Government. This is strongly related to their high vulnerability as they risk of being deported (Tayah, 2016; Triandafyllidou, 2013). Although they find ways alternatives to make activism reducing the risks of being caught as illustrated in the section on strategies, the fear transcends beyond their work in the organizations and is continuously present in their everyday life (I_1; I_3).

Additionally, some interview partners express their concern about the absence of a formal space to work at, as this limits their activities and makes more difficult the creation of a safe space. The lack of funds is the main reason why small organizations do not have a space of their own to congregate and organize, forcing them to meet in the homes of members or rely on NGOs and civic spaces to have their reunions (I_1; I_3).

The obstacles go beyond the work within the organizations. Although many organizations collaborate with each other and maintain good relationships, there are often conflicts between the domestic worker organizations. The discrepancies are mainly between the associations outside of Madrid and the ones in other cities. Many associations in smaller cities perceive that the associations in Madrid dominate the discourse of domestic workers without leaving the space to other organizations and to express their concerns. The conflict between organizations has led to the dissolution of the networks that the Spanish organizations have tried to create in the past such as the Turin Group (I_8). These conflicts hinder the collective work of the organizations, interfering in collective bargaining and in consolidating horizontally (Tayah, 2016). This is also extended to their relationship with large trade unions, as they often feel that they do not represent them as they do not have specialists on domestic and care work and do not take into account their reality and their concerns.

5.2.7 Frustration

Many of the frustrations overlap with the obstacles and reasons for mistrust that were previously discussed. They are the reflection of the struggles that migrant domestic workers endure. The frustrations come from obstacles in their organization and mobilization, as well as on their experiences as migrants and part of the domestic and care workforce.

“And the frustrations? The frustrations, the fact of seeing this as I tell you, how it feels, how the business of activism has been normalized? How false representation has been normalized? And how is it still normalized and rewarded to the one who can talk the best and not the one who sells the best in networks and not the ones who are more real and coherent” (I_2).

This quote reflects the frustration towards the organizations and specially the dominant trade unions. According to some interview partners, sometimes, the work of their organizations does not receive the recognition it deserves. They do not receive the acknowledgment or the support of the government. They feel that neither their work as domestic and care workers, nor as activists, is recognized enough.

Additionally, their frustration also originates from the perception that they are not represented by the large and dominant trade unions. The latter do not participate in the events they organize and often ignore their concerns and reality.

Finally, members of associations expressed their frustration towards the government, their lack of interest in providing better labor conditions, and the barriers imposed by the Migration Law. First, they feel resentment, towards the government as they have been fighting for the ratification of the 189 Convention for over 10 years. Although many celebrate the rulings from the government after the ratification from the 189 Convention, they still find them insufficient as they are not retroactive. They are frustrated as many of them who are almost at retirement age have not benefited from the law since it is not retroactive (I_3; I_8). They feel betrayed. Ultimately, they feel exploited and utilized by the migration system that pushes them to a vulnerable situation when they arrive undocumented and have to work three years in a highly dependable condition to obtain their residence permit.

“If it’s lower pay, then it’s exploitation. But just like that. We persevere. We keep looking. As long as we don’t... We have nothing to hold on to, it’s going to keep happening. In other words, we are fighting, but we need more.” (I_3)

In other words, it is the system and the overall conditions, that provoke this

feeling.

5.3 Strengthening the agency of migrant domestic workers through collective organization: resilience, recuperation, and resistance

The experiences, labor conditions, and information on the organization of migrant domestic and care workers in Spain on their motivations, aims, claims, and strategies outlined thus far, show how migrant domestic workers have chosen to resist collectively and exploit their capacity to generate changes using different practices in their individual situations, in their employment conditions, and in the overall oppressive employment and migration system, exercising their agency.

5.3.1 Acts and strategies of resilience

First, through acts of resilience, migrants can find coping mechanisms provoking some improvements in their personal situation through autonomous initiatives. These practices that make everyday life more livable can be reflected through the establishment of networks between migrant domestic workers. These networks give them the opportunity to find the emotional support they need to ‘mourn’ their migration process, to deal with homesickness, and to know that they are not the only ones going through the process. Through the networks they establish, they also share information that allows them to better navigate the bureaucratic and legal system – e.g., they learn how to complete registration with the municipality, even without documents, and how to enroll their children at school, among others (I_3). It is not surprising that social networks are central to the support of migrant workers, and they also provide help and assistance (?, ?).

“On the women’s own experiences. They tell us "look, I was fired for calling my employer, I asked her for what was established by law to give me this holiday and she said No, you are going to come and ask me, and out. And now what do I do?" Then we go on, we go on sharing perceptions. One says "no, you can’t stand it," another says "no, get out of there, denounce her."” (I_2).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, these support networks were key, as many were fired or evicted, and relied on other members of the organizations to find alternative housing or pay the rent.

Additionally, due to the participation of migrant workers in vocational training, language courses, and workshops offered by the organizations (regardless of them being self-managed or not), migrant workers consciously gain leverage over their working

conditions and their possibilities of regularizing their migration status if they are undocumented. The participation in the organizations, especially in cooperatives allows them to feel empowered, to feel that they have the control over their situation, as they can set their own working conditions.

“It gives you a plus of self-esteem, because when you are sent to a company that you don’t even know who it is, to take care of someone and.... And this is the only relationship you have, there is no recognition beyond the recognition that comes from being able to manage your own job. We don’t have a boss or a boss, we are own our own bosses. The quality of the work we do is our own reference and that, that implies that all. We women are accompanying each other in one way or another so that things are going well.” (I_7)

These are some of the resilience strategies members of migrant organizations employ to navigate their life abroad. Although not all of them are driven by critical consciousness of problematic employment conditions, most of the acts and strategies presented in the following section are.

5.3.2 Acts and strategies of recuperation

Through recuperation, or reworking acts, different from resilience, migrant workers do not focus on the coping mechanisms that they can develop to make living abroad and employment conditions more livable, but rather focus on producing changes in the conditions and situations. As the name says, they are focused on reworking and reconfiguring certain conditions without trying to change the status quo. Rather than at an individual level, reworking acts occur through collective work. The establishment of the migrant organizations is the principal act of recuperation. Through their establishment, they are creating the spaces they want not only for themselves, but for fellow workers from the sector. They are filling the gap that large trade unions are not filling, and doing it under their own conditions. Also, through associations that hire their own members to clean and cooperatives that set their own working conditions for their “users,” migrant domestic workers improve their working conditions by having a contract under the General Regime, even if they are only working part-time (I_5; I_7). These acts, for instance are marked by a strong level of consciousness of overcoming aspects of the oppressive system (Katz, 2004).

In the section on the motivations, I cited some interview partners that left feminist organizations and larger trade unions to establish their own associations and collectives (I_2; I_5). Within Katz’s framework, such acts of mobility that responds to problematic conditions are also considered a type of reworking strategy. As migrant activists left organizations that saw no longer fitting to their values, beliefs, and concerns they found other collective strategies.

Another important reworking strategy used by migrant worker associations is the creation of networks and alliances. As associations, they are not part of the negotiation tables that trade unions belong to. Through these networks they try on the one hand to establish closer ties with their government but also to strengthen their own mobilizations. Through such actions they are pursuing longer-term objectives (Datta et al., 2007), and they turn constraints into opportunities similar as domestic workers organizations have also done in the UK (Anderson, 2010).

5.3.3 Acts and strategies of resistance

Resistance might be the most common expression of agency. Through resistance, individuals aim to change the oppressive and abusive system and structures. Resistance acts are in their majority built on consciousness (Katz, 2004). Through their revindications, campaigns, protests, and public performances, migrant domestic and care workers try to make powerful changes in the Spanish system, centering on the way their work is perceived, on the Migration Law and regularization policies, and on the employment conditions and legal framework. Through their revindications, they fight for their recognition as persons, to be regularized without having to go three years without papers in the informal economy and in anonymity, in a house without rights (I_7). Strategies of agency include, for instance, alliances and joint projects with local governments to promote regularization (I_5), and even with local media to make their organizations visible.

“Well, it is true that they helped us in Navarre to get the ball rolling a little bit, you know what I mean? To make people visible to us. Yes, well, no, on New Year’s Eve. We dressed up with wigs, costumes and we went out there in the Christmas pine tree. So, we went there and read a text with music, loudspeakers. It was the newspapers, the media. And little by little, we have been opening doors (I_6).”

Additionally, members of the organizations recognize the existing gaps in the system, such as a platform that shares the information with workers from the sector on the legal framework, changes in policy, among others. They thus share this information in an accessible way through their social media platforms and WhatsApp groups as done by organizations interviewed and identified through the mapping exercise. These acts of resistance, and at the same time of resilience, that require knowledge and time resources, allow other workers from the community who are not necessarily members of the organizations to have access to information. Such acts are especially important for live-in domestic and care workers that not always can assist to the meetings and workshops.

6 Concluding remarks

This thesis sought to understand how migrant domestic and care workers strengthen their agency through collective organizations and mobilizations. This thesis looks to further contribute to the literature on migrant agency that thus far has been mainly studied as coping mechanisms, and recuperation (Berntsen, 2016), but only little has been written on the on their collective action (Alberti, 2014; Anderson, 2010). Drawing from a mixed-methods qualitative approach, the research shows how migrant associations, trade unions, and cooperatives promote their agency at different levels. Additionally, the analysis shows the how the variety of migrants experiences through their migration process and in the labor, market contributes to different forms of organization and mobilization strategies to overcome the constrains they find in the labor market and in the migration regime.

The analysis of the Spanish context presents an important case study as Spain is one of the countries in Europe with the highest numbers of domestic and care workers. Until June 2022 the Government still had not ratified the Domestic Workers Convention, No. 189, still after its ratification, domestic workers are still working under precarious conditions under the Special Regime. In the introduction I argued that migrants working in the domestic and care sector have had to find creative alternatives to claim their rights through self-organization due to the absence of support from the Government. Through the analysis I identified that the main motivations behind the self-organization are the lack of protection under this regime; the challenges for undocumented migrants to regularize their situation; and the lack of representation of the constrains of migrant workers in the domestic and care sector have led to organization of migrants. Central in the results of this research is the desire of migrant workers to use their voices and be the protagonists of the claim-making process highlighting the concerns that affect them. As social actors, they want to be legitimized for their political claims, and as deserving workers.

Katz's (2004) disaggregated framework on agency allowed to analyze the agency of migrants through collective action and organization by including the conceptual category of 'recuperation.' The recuperation emphasized the conscious strategies used by migrants to make activism. Moreover, through the cooperative scheme, migrants have found a way to navigate the labor market and legal system, being able to be employed under the General Regime. Different from the mobilization of migrant workers in construction and hospitality sectors in the UK, the acts of recuperation of migrant domestic workers in Spain do not necessarily aim at disrupting power relations (Berntsen, 2016; Alberti, 2010).

Furthermore, the collective organization empowers them, and grants them networks of support, highlighting the importance of migrant associations. Through the networks established through migrant associations, they form spaces of participation (Tilly, 1999) and of emotional support (Wierzbicki, 2004). The case of the organization of domestic and care workers proved to be different from other cases previously studied.

Most organizations proved to be very varied in the constitution of their members, hosting both Spanish and foreigner, thus creating spaces of connection and collaboration based on their common identity as domestic and care workers (Castellani & Roca, 2022). Despite this diversity, the Latin American community is overrepresented among the leadership of self-organized associations of domestic and care workers in Spain. This is coherent with the number of Latin Americans workers affiliated to the Social Security. Yet, low participation of other nationalities, such as Romanian and Moroccans, can be attributed to the language barriers and cultural differences. It is important to highlight that many of the members had a previous trajectory in activism before engaging in the associations.

Although in most cases they were exclusively constituted by domestic and care workers, some organizations are also configured by former domestic and care workers. Although for them they still felt they represented the concerns of the sector and thus of the collective, this caused frictions with members of other organizations who felt that former workers no longer represented them.

Conceptually, this research does not take into consideration the effects of the political structure on the agency of migrants. Future research should look at the possibilities and constrains that immigrant associations endure within the context of discursive and institutional opportunity structures in Spain. Future research should also look more deeply into the work of the associations through participatory research to expand the contributions done by this thesis.

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A Appendix

A.1 Organizations

1. Calala Fondo de Mujeres - Barcelona
2. Cooperativa Mujeres Pa'Lante - Barcelona
3. Mujeres Migrantes Diversas - Barcelona
4. Colectivo Micaela - Barcelona
5. Mujeres Unidas Entre Tierras - Barcelona
6. Mujeres Pa'lante - Barcelona
7. Asociación Mujeres Migrantes de Cataluña (AOMICAT) - Barcelona
8. Comisión Obrera Nacional de Catalunya (COOO) - Barcelona
9. Mujeres cuidadoras sin papeles - Barcelona
10. Sindiillar (Sindihogar) - Barcelona
11. Las Libélulas - Barcelona
12. Trabajadoras NO Domesticadas - Bilbao
13. ATH-ELE Asociación de Trabajadoras de Hogar Etxeko Lanilen Elkarte - Bilbao
14. Emakume Migratu Feministak-Sociosanitarias - Bilbao
15. Asociación de empleadas de hogar, cuidados y limpieza - Cáceres/ Asociación de Personas Trabajadoras del Hogar de Extremadura - Cáceres (Extremadura)
16. Asociación de personas trabajadoras del hogar de Castellón - Castellón (Valencia)
17. Asociación de Movilidad Humana - Ferrol (Galicia)
18. Nosotras Granada - Granada
19. Plataforma de las Trabajadoras del Hogar de Huelva - Huelva
20. SEDOAC - Servicio Doméstico Activo - Madrid

21. Brujas Migrantes - Madrid
22. Abierto hasta el Amanecer S. Coop. Mad - Madrid
23. Grupo Turin - Madrid
24. Observatorio Jeanneth Beltrán - Madrid
25. La Comala Coop. Mad. Servicios del Hogar - Madrid
26. Sintrahocu (Sindicato de Trabajadoras del Hogar y los Cuidados. Equiparación) - Madrid
27. Territorio Doméstico - Madrid Eskalera Karacola
28. Plataforma de Trabajadoras del Hogar y Cuidados de Málaga - Malaga
29. Asociación Empleadas de Hogar de Murcia - Murcia
30. Asociación de Empleadas de Hogar de Navarra - Pamplona
31. Asociación Trabajadoras/es de Hogar y Cuidados Sevilla - Seville
32. Asociación Claver - Servicio Jesuita Migrante (SJM-Valencia) - Seville
33. UGT - Spain
34. Aiphyc (Asociación Intercultural de Profesionales del Hogar y de los Cuidados) - Valencia
35. Asociación Trabajadoras del Hogar y Cuidados de Zaragoza - Zaragoza
36. Asociación Malen Etxea (Guipuzcoa) - Zumaia (Bilbao)

A.2 Final interview guide

Preguntas de la asociación:

- Trabajo de la asociación (¿qué hacen? ¿cuál es su misión? ¿Cómo lo ejecutan? ¿Con qué métodos?)
- Cuáles son las reivindicaciones actuales de la asociación?
- Año de fundación
- ¿Cuál es la estructura jerárquica de la asociación?
- Número de integrantes
- ¿Quiénes son las integrantes?

- Nacionalidades de las integrantes
- ¿Hay miembros rumanas o de otras regiones?
- Si son particularmente latinoamericanas, ¿por qué?
- Significado del colectivo para la identidad como trabajadoras y como migrantes
- Formas de apoyo
- ¿Reciben fondos o subvenciones? - ¿Cómo se financia la asociación?
- ¿Cuál es su relación con las ONG y su percepción del activismo actual de trabajadoras domésticas en España?
- ¿Cómo es su relación con los sindicatos?
- ¿Cómo es su relación con las instituciones del gobierno?
- ¿Qué retos presenta la falta de regularización de las migrantes para su movilización?
Qu´
- ¿Qué beneficios ven en el activismo y la movilización?
- ¿Qué limitaciones u obstáculos ven en su movilización?
- Cómo difiere la participación de derechos de mujeres y laborales del trabajo hecho en sindicatos.

Políticas públicas

- ¿Cómo percibe la ratificación de la Convención 189 OIT y que efectos esperan en el futuro?
- ¿Qué viene después de la ratificación?
- ¿Qué cambios buscan en la Ley de Extranjería?

Preguntas biográficas

- Trayectoria individual
- Como llego a España y a trabajar de trabajadora domestica
- Tiempo trabajando en el sector
- ¿Cómo llego a la asociación?
- Tiempo en la asociación
- Ha tenido el activismo algún efecto en tu trabajo como trabajadora doméstica y/o de cuidado?

A.3 Original interview quotes

“Entonces, a través de este programa nosotras podemos hacer reivindicación, sobre todo con el tema de los papeles de migrantes...de ser inmigrantes, de acceder a la oportunidad a oportunidades laborales, también al hecho de poder hacer otras formaciones que no sean algo que nos enajena el hecho de ser inmigrante porque a sectores migrantes puede ser capturado por limpieza o cocina y tal, entonces es un poco como el cuestionar esas cosas, ese prejuicio, y del tipo de lo que los migrantes somos mano de obra barata, que no nos tenemos que dedicar únicamente a los beneficios del mercado. O sea, al nicho del mercado que está abierto que sabemos que es donde hay trabajo. Entonces eso, un poco la lucha por hacer que las compañeras y los compañeros migrantes reconozcan condiciones y reconocer para entonces España que puedan acceder a o a otros estudios o poner en práctica lo que hicieron en sus países de origen en igualdad de oportunidades. Entonces nuestra lucha no solamente va en el sentido de ser trabajadoras del hogar, sino también en el ser migrante.” (I_5).

“No, queríamos ir más allá de hacer una reivindicación frente a, contra el Estado, frente a la sociedad. Haciendo incidencia de esta problemática que nos atraviesa, que es el racismo, la colonialidad que hay en nuestro cuerpo discriminado, el racismo en sí y toda esta interseccionalidad de discriminación tenemos y cómo el capitalismo necesita de nuestra mano de obra prefabricada para sostenernos.” (I_2).

“Entonces la organización, el... el empezar en el colectivo también empezó también con ese objetivo, de esa reivindicación de... de... de exigir derechos para un trabajo que era muy importante en la vida y además también exigir reconocimiento, porque muchas mujeres lo había, lo habían hecho y no y no se le había dado ese reconocimiento como tal.” (I_8).

“Entonces esa es nuestra mayor lucha, que es que nos tomen como personas iguales, que el trabajo se dignifique, que trabajar de limpieza, que no sea, que no se tome como un trabajo indigno, que no, que no se nos humille, que la gente respete.” (I_3).

“Pero ella, por ejemplo, esta señora que ha ido creando este grupo, ella cogía información sobre nuestros derechos y todo y pues todos los miércoles nos reuníamos para leer. De ella, su sueño era crear líderes en diferentes zonas que si por ejemplo en hospitales necesitan gente, pues entonces que podemos poner un punto que la gente pueda ir si necesita ayuda. No se ha podido hacer porque la gente no se compromete. No es porque no quiera, sino porque tienen que trabajar, tienen hijos que mantener y cosas así. No se puede dejar el trabajo.” (I_3).

“Los primeros años fue mucho, mucho tiempo de escucha, de de duelo, de dolor, de... Estábamos pasando por el tema de la migración. Muchísimas de nosotras sin que, haber dejado a nuestras familia nuestras cosas y entonces y claro. En esos momentos estábamos pasando por eso y eso para el Colectivo fue muy importante. Esa escucha, ese

apoyo, ese sostén entre nosotras. Y ahí comenzamos a crear redes y comenzamos a crear el colectivo y a luchar por a darle valor que eso fue una de las cosas que empezamos.” (I_8).

“Pero las mujeres organizadas defienden mucho su el protagonismo de la lucha social, no? Entonces creo que nuestro papel como entidad es un poco de asesoría y acompañamiento. Nosotros como entidad estamos ahí presentes, pero el protagonismo lo tienen ellas y somos nosotros, nuestro estilo debe de ser muy respetuosa con esos procesos y ellas son las que han intentado hablar en la Junta. Hace poco lo hicieron. Sí que participamos en alguna acción con el Ayuntamiento y vamos ahí estando presentes en la medida que ellas lo soliciten. Pero el protagonismo lo tienen ellas claramente. Nuestra labor es un poco de eso de servicio, asesoría. Trabajamos mucho en defensa, en defensa de porque tenemos una asesoría jurídica y entonces, bueno, hemos acompañado casos de denuncia de algunas mujeres y acompañamos procesos que son largo, pero, pero en muchos casos no nos salen favorable, pero en otros sí. Hay también un poquito silenciosa labor con el gobierno, directamente a través de ellas y de apoyo así igual” (I_1).

“La Ley de Extranjería es otra pata de las reivindicaciones de nosotros, porque es algo que que violenta precarizar vulnera a las mujeres para aguantar y aceptar condiciones ingrimas de trabajo. Esas son nuestros retos, por ejemplo. Yo diría, por ejemplo, los que estamos en la otra punta cocinando la cabecita, no puedo más. Pero tenemos que lograrlo de una manera u otra.” (I_2).

“La ridiculez del catálogo de ocupación, del catálogo de las pensiones en ocupación según esta reforma que dice que hace falta profesional de hostelería en paro. Entonces, claro, todos los inmigrantes que estamos aquí con o sin papeles no se puede regularizar. Y también me decepcionó un poco, pero bueno, a las personas que les venga bien pues les vendrá bien, pero sigue siendo en ese sentido. No lo veo en España más que un clavo de mano de obra barata y según su conveniencia, no se va justamente en contra de lo que nosotros hacemos, tanto en regularización ya como a través del programa Apol, como proyectos un poco más sensatos, más o..con ciertas críticas también a la Corte, pero que van destinados a regularizar no.... No por mano de obra, sino por condiciones sociales especial.” (I_5).

“Porque estamos metidos en la campaña de regularización, pues pedimos que la gente que a la gente sea regularizada. Independientemente que esté trabajando o que no todos los que estamos aquí, aquí se ha hecho, se ha hecho regularización, es en años atrás y además ahora mismo hemos visto como las cosas son súper fácil dependiendo de quienes, de a quienes queremos acoger, como lo que ha pasado con Ucrania. Pues ahora, pues todas las las mujeres latinoamericanas que hemos exigido la reagrupación familiar por tantos años, que en la Ley de Extranjería tiene unos criterios que para muchas mujeres has sido súper doloroso y es súper doloroso el poder reagrupar a sus hijos o a sus familiares y luego pues de repente se acaba todas las trabas que se ponen y de repente a otro país se es tan fácil hacer la regularización” (I_8).

“Una es una de las reivindicaciones, es la equiparación de derechos en régimen general, que nosotros ya lo hemos venido repitiendo. No hay necesidad de un convenio para que España nos den todos nuestros derechos. No hay derecho al paro, derecho a una retribución a cotizar por los salarios que se perciben. Por si no lo entendías, nosotros, por ejemplo, no cotizamos en base a lo que cobramos. Nosotros cotizamos en base a tablas salariales de 200 a 250, cotizando lo mismo que te cobran 350 a 500 en ese rango, cobrando cotizas lo mismo que cobras de seis, de 500 a 700 cobra lo mismo. Entonces no puedes. Una mujer de 700 que por ejemplo no va a poder, no es lógico que cotice igual que una mujer que gana 500, pero eso está. Y el gobierno prometió equiparar eso igual. Hace... hacer 3 años prometieron y nunca lo hicieron. De ahí, CCOO, la UGT, todos, nadie opino nada ni dijo "Sí, sí, aquí una promesa de equiparación y no lo cumplieron. Todos estos se adaptaron al discurso y al cuento del Convenio Nacional. ¿No? Sí, sí. Ratificación, ratificación, ratificación. La ratificación simplemente es un protocolo” (I_2).

“Nuestra principal lucha ha sido la ratificación del Convenio 189. Hemos luchado un montón, hecho muchas marchas y nos hemos unido con otras entidades con el mismo objetivo y bueno, ahora se ha firmado. Hay que esperar que vaya al Parlamento y que tardará un poco, pero esperemos que si se cumpla así podamos tener nosotras más derechos, porque el convenio 189, en teoría nos protege de muchas cosas. Nos va proteger. Vamos a tener derecho a paro. Vamos a tener derecho a cobrar una jubilación que actualmente no tenemos. No tememos” (I_3).

“Yo creo más bien que la conciencia que tiene como trabajador en casa es su conciencia. Es como si tuvieras una trabajadora en tu empresa y pensaste en mejores condiciones y porque Hacienda te puede perseguir, porque la Seguridad Social o por lo que sea. O sea, lo mismo ocurre en la casa. Debería funcionar” (I_5).

“Eso es la la demanda que le estamos haciendo al Estado en. En los últimos años que estamos a reorganización, donde ahora mismo estamos las trabajadoras de hogar migrante y muchas mujeres cuidando y haciendo este trabajo esencial, el trabajo que nosotras le llamamos gestionar la vida y lo estamos haciendo de esa manera, queremos darle la vuelta donde no solamente estemos las mujeres trabajando, haciendo esta gestión de la vida por ser mujeres y que que tampoco seamos solo las migrantes las que estemos sosteniendo esto. El Estado se tiene que hacer cargo de de esta sostenibilidad de la vida y además los hombres tienen que hacerse cargo de una vez por todas.” (I_8).

“De hecho, no sé si no nos gustan las redes sociales, sabemos que es una ventana y que deberíamos explotarla más, pero creo que el trabajo de hormiguita da más resultado. Por eso no somos una asociación sexy, como les digo a las compañeras de otras compañeras que están muy al día con Twitter y Facebook. En esa nota les resultan más sexys de cara a la sociedad, pero nuestro trabajo es más de concienciación y hacia adentro. Entonces no sé cuál es más importante, sin restarle la importancia a las otras compañeras que hacen otras cosas. Pero nosotras es como el cuidado con las chicas o con los cursos o pasando toda la

semana en charlas sobre la comida o también sobre el trabajo en el hogar. Entonces creo que si es verdad no explotamos las redes sociales, deberíamos sacar una fotito, al menos eso." "Pero más a todo lo que viene del Ayuntamiento que a mí me envían un Correo para decirle al Ayuntamiento que quieren hacer algo, que va a haber una reunión. Yo le hago un descargo al documento y le hago un Screenshot y le envío por WhatsApp para que la gente lo pueda ver y leer. Pero a veces, cuando es un documento, tampoco lo leen. Y yo pongo siempre este documento se trata de esto. Miren, por ejemplo, la subida de los sueldos." (I_3)

Sobre las propias experiencias de las mujeres. Nos dicen "mira, yo por llamar a mi empleadora me echaron a la calle, le pedí lo que estaba establecido en la ley que me diera este día de fiesta y me dijo No, tú me vas a venir a pedir, y fuera. Y ahora qué hago?" Entonces vamos, vamos compartiendo percepciones. Una dice "no, no aguantas," otra dice "no, que salgas de ahí, denuncia" (I_2)

cuando ya tenés 50 años ya te dicen esta vieja está como para que la cuiden y no te dan trabajo entonces (I_7)

Las que están sosteniendo son las más precarias, las que están en peores condiciones, las migrantes. Entonces, claro, es algo súper perverso porque se sostiene con la precariedad. Mucho, y yo no sé si ha mirado. Creo que en otros países no están. El sistema, que en España es bastante, se sostiene con el empleo del hogar con este sistema. (I_1)

Lo malo, por ejemplo, yo no puedo ir a una reunión y dejar mi trabajo. Yo dependo de ese trabajo porque tengo que pagar. Tengo que pagar mi alimentación, mi alquiler, mi comida. Entonces no puedo pedir permiso para ir a la reunión del ayuntamiento, que hay propuestas, hay muchas propuestas, pero no podemos participar de todo, justamente porque seguimos siendo trabajadoras del hogar. ¿No? ¿Entonces qué? Nos quedamos así o a veces nos mandan algún enlace con el resumen. ¿Y qué pasa también con las reuniones? Pues que ellos lo hacen a las 10:30, 11:00 de la mañana. Y claro, son unas horas claves. Si entro a trabajar de nueve a una no puedo dejar el trabajo. Y claro, digo me gustaría participar, pero no puedo por las horas de trabajo y yo invito a alguna compañera que pueda ir, porque tenemos que invitar a los que son de la base también que nos puedan colaborar." (I_3)

Y las frustraciones? ¿Las frustraciones, el hecho de ver esto como te digo, cómo se siente, cómo se ha normalizado el negocio del activismo? ¿Cómo se ha normalizado la falsa representación? Y cómo se sigue normalizando y premiando a la que mejor sabe hablar y no a la que mejor se vende en redes y no a las que son más reales y coherentes. (I_2)

Si es un sueldo inferior, entonces es una explotación. Pero así de frente. Seguimos viendo. Seguimos viendo. Mientras no... No tengamos de dónde agarrarnos va a seguir pasando. O sea, vamos luchando, pero necesitamos más.

Entonces que haya gente que como era medio tiempo decían , yo te pagaré a fin de mes. No te puedo pagar porque mi madre ya no está. Muchas cosas. Sin ninguna seguridad ni nada. Porque como no tienes papeles, no tienes contrato. Te echan a la calle sin nada.

no negociamos porque nosotras como trabajadoras de hogar no entramos en el sistema de negociación sino que son los sindicatos grandes los que hacen esas negociaciones y los sindicatos grandes siempre nos han dado de lado a estos colectivos que ya estamos articulados (I_8)

Sobre las propias experiencias de las mujeres. Nos dicen "mira, yo por llamar a mi empleadora me echaron a la calle, le pedí lo que estaba establecido en la ley que me diera este día de fiesta y me dijo No, tú me vas a venir a pedir, y fuera. Y ahora qué hago?" Entonces vamos, vamos compartiendo percepciones. Una dice "no, no aguantas," otra dice "no, que salgas de ahí, denuncia." (I_2)

"Te da un plus de autoestima, porque cuando te manda a una empresa que no sabes ni quién es, a cuidar a alguien y... Y solamente es esta tu relación, no hay más allá de un reconocimiento que te lo da el poder ir a gestionar tu propio empleo. Nosotros aquí no tenemos jefe ni jefa nosotras mismas. La calidad del trabajo que hacemos es nuestra propia referencia y eso, eso implica que toda. La la las mujeres estamos acompañándonos de una u otra manera para que las cosas vayan saliendo" (I_7)

No te reconocen el derecho de ser personas, de circular porque te obligan tres años sin papeles. Entonces directamente te mandan a la economía sumergida porque no tienes papeles, pero tienes hambre, tienes necesidades que cubrir. Terminas en una casa sin derecho. Y en el anonimato. (I_7)

Pues es verdad que que ellos ahí en Navarra, pues nos ayudaron a sacar el rollo un poquito, ¿me entiende? A que nos visibilizar a la gente. Sí, pues no, el día de Nochevieja. Nos disfrazamos con pelucas, vestimentas y salimos allí en el pino de Navidad. Pues hicimos allí y leímos un texto con música, altavoces. Fueron los periódicos, los medios de comunicación. Y poquito a poquito, pues hemos ido abriendo puertas. (I_6)