

## Catalonia workers strike for independence

5th October, 2017



A general strike in Spain's region of Catalonia on Tuesday brought large parts of Barcelona and other cities to a standstill. Thousands of Catalans rallied and blocked roads to protest over Spanish police violence during Sunday's independence referendum. Nearly 900

people were injured at the weekend in a crackdown against voters and referendum staff. The Spanish government declared that the referendum was illegal and ordered the police to break it up. Spain's King Felipe VI has condemned the organizers of the referendum. In a televised address to the nation, he said they had put themselves "outside the law". He said the situation in Catalonia was "extremely serious" and called for national unity.

The mayor of Barcelona told reporters that the Catalan people deserved to have a vote on independence. She said: "What we need is a democratic response. And we need a political solution. And we need an inclusive solution that listens to the cries of millions of people." She also called for the resignation of Spain's prime minister. More unrest could be on the cards. Any declaration of independence by the Catalans could plunge Spain into a further constitutional crisis and risk the break-up of the country. Other regions could follow Catalonia's example and have their own referendum. Spain's president has called on the international community to help mediate between the two sides.

Sources: [cnbc.com](http://cnbc.com) / [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [cnn.com](http://cnn.com)

## Writing

What are the pros and cons of Catalonia getting independence? Which side are you on?

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

general strike / protest / violence / crackdown / referendum / nation / serious / unity / mayor / independence / democratic / solution / resignation / crisis / community

## True / False

- a) Striking workers blocked many roads in Barcelona. T / F
- b) Over 1,000 people were injured by police in Catalonia on Sunday. T / F
- c) Spain's king said the referendum organizers were outside the law. T / F
- d) The Spanish king called for Spaniards to be united. T / F
- e) Barcelona's mayor said Catalans deserved to have a referendum. T / F
- f) Barcelona's mayor said there no democratic response is necessary. T / F
- g) The mayor doesn't think Spain's prime minister should resign. T / F
- h) Spain's president said he would mediate between the two sides. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>region</b>     | a. demonstrate |
| 2. <b>standstill</b> | b. reply       |
| 3. <b>protest</b>    | c. hurt        |
| 4. <b>injured</b>    | d. negotiate   |
| 5. <b>address</b>    | e. area        |
| 6. <b>deserved</b>   | f. disorder    |
| 7. <b>response</b>   | g. emergency   |
| 8. <b>unrest</b>     | h. halt        |
| 9. <b>crisis</b>     | i. had a right |
| 10. <b>mediate</b>   | j. speech      |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What would happen if other Spanish regions wanted independence?
- c) What advice do you have for Spain's mayor?
- d) What damage could this situation do to the rest of Europe?
- e) What is the likelihood of a civil war in Spain?
- f) What advice do you have for Catalans?
- g) How can the international community help?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Catalans?

## Phrase Match

1. A general
  2. Thousands of Catalans rallied and
  3. a crackdown
  4. a televised address
  5. the situation in Catalonia was extremely
  6. Catalan people deserved
  7. we need a political
  8. More unrest could be on the
  9. Other regions could follow
  10. help mediate between
- a. the two sides
  - b. cards
  - c. serious
  - d. Catalonia's example
  - e. to have a vote
  - f. blocked roads
  - g. strike
  - h. to the nation
  - i. solution
  - j. against voters

## Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think of what's happening in Spain?
- b) What do you know of the referendum violence?
- c) Should Spain's government have stayed out of the referendum?
- d) Should Catalonia be able to become independent?
- e) Why do you think Spain is against Catalan independence?
- f) What would happen if Catalonia became independent?
- g) What advice do you have for Spain's government?
- h) How unified is your country?

## Spelling

1. to a iltntldass
2. in a aknwcdroc against voters
3. meocdendn the organizers
4. In a steedvile address to the nation
5. xemreytle serious
6. called for national niuty
7. Catalan people deeerdsy to have a vote
8. What we need is a democratic opsenrse
9. we need an cievsnliu solution
10. teiolcnrada of independence
11. ngpuel Spain into a further constitutional crisis
12. help meaidet between the two sides

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. a	4. c	5. j
6. i	7. b	8. f	9. g	10. d

## Role Play

### Role A – A National Anthem

You think a national anthem is the most important thing for an independent country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): UN acceptance, a strong economy or a strong army.

### Role B – UN Acceptance

You think UN acceptance is the most important thing for an independent country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a national anthem, a strong economy or a strong army.

### Role C – A Strong Economy

You think a strong economy is the most important thing for an independent country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): UN acceptance, a national anthem or a strong army.

### Role D – A Strong Army

You think a strong army is the most important thing for an independent country. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): UN acceptance, a strong economy or a national anthem.

## Speaking – Independence

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things an independent country needs at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- patriotic people
- a flag
- a strong army
- a constitution
- a national anthem
- secure borders
- UN acceptance
- a strong economy

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.