

Generations of STEM:

Pilar Careaga

Train Engineer, Politician

Born in Madrid, Pilar studied industrial engineering and surveying at the Technical University of Madrid. In 1929, she became the first female engineer in Spain. While studying, she specialized in railway engineering and pursued an internship as a train driver, becoming the first woman in Spain to drive a train.



However, engineering was not her career. She entered politics in 1933 and at the start of the Spanish Civil War, was put in jail upon siding with Francisco Franco supporters. She was released and later served as mayor of Bilbao from 1969 to 1977, the first woman to hold such an office during the Franco dictatorship. As mayor, she focused on infrastructure improvements and education.

She received an honor from the Pope for her services to Church and society among other recognitions. Pilar also survived an assassination attempt in 1979 when she was shot six times on her way to church with her husband by the ETA (a Basque nationalist and separatist organization). After this attack, she retired from public office. She died in Madrid in 1993, at the age of 84.

Image Source: [Wikipedia](#) Information Sources: [Wikipedia](#), [Magnificent Women](#), [All Together: Society of Women Engineers](#)