

THE CONTRADICTIONS OF UNIDAS PODEMOS IN GOVERNMENT SURFACE.

Elections in Galicia and the Basque Country punish Unidas Podemos in its first electoral test since joining the government • The Monarchy, dogged by scandals involving Emeritus King, Juan Carlos I, is in its most difficult moments • The Spanish state awaits Europe's response and aid to tackle the pandemic-induced crisis



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The Coalition government is now half a year old. Six months have gone by since, for the first time in Spain's democratic period, different parties sat down to agree on dividing up cabinet posts. On this occasion, as we have described in previous articles in this series that analyse the evolution of Spanish politics in this peculiar year, 2020, Pedro Sánchez' second turn as PM in the Moncloa Palace brings together not just ministers from the PSOE and its Catalan sister party, the PSC, but also Unidas Podemos and its minority-national alignments, Galicia En Común and the Catalan En Comú Podem.

In January Unidas Podemos took on ministerial portfolios such as Pablo Iglesias becoming Second Deputy Prime Minister, being responsible for Social Rights and Agenda 2030; Yolanda Díaz becoming Minister of Labour; Irene Montero, Minister for Equality; Alberto Garzón, Minister for Consumption; and Manuel Castells, Minister for Universities. As has been endlessly repeated, this was the first time since the Second Republic that preceded Francisco Franco's fascist coup that there are ministers in parties to the left of the PSOE, Communists included. A term in shared office that has been inseparable from the management of the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the Spanish state particularly hard just a few weeks into the term of the new coalition government. Despite the epidemic and its drastic human, economic, and social consequences, other far-reaching political issues are trying to squeeze into the daily agenda.

[In our first article](#) we analysed Unidas Podemos' entering the government and how the latter scrambled to manage the health emergency and respond in society's interest to the crisis caused by the coronavirus, by introducing key "social shield" measures. We also looked at how the pandemic produced an earthquake in international power structures such as the European Union, which at first was absent, giving a greater role to states as political actors in a messy international panorama.

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In those first weeks a sea change in global politics seemed possible and the most idealistic people announced the time had arrived to proclaim “another world is possible”. Later, [in a second article written in May](#), we explained how Spanish political tensions and the reorganization of the European establishment to block any resolution involving breaking with the current neoliberal model led Unidas Podemos and the government to pursue a political strategy centred on *realpolitik*: the government threw itself into forging a party-political consensus to be able to pass its policies, distancing itself from any radical appearances in order to extend the state of alarm that allowed fully restricting citizens’ mobility as the method to mitigate the ravages of the virus. A goal of this strategy was to be seen as moderate and convince Europe that, despite being a leftist government, it is one in consonance with core European governments. For that reason, the coalition government sought understandings in Congress with Ciudadanos (Citizens), a right-wing party with a strong Spanish nationalist element (which, all the same, is part of the European liberal grouping).

It seems clear now that not only is there no chance of any revolutionary measures to resolve the pandemic-instigated social and economic crisis but that the powers that be are putting the screws on, and that the outcome of the crisis could be broadly similar to that of the 2008 financial crash: reducing social rights and the public sector, socialising losses for private corporations, as well as scrupulously complying with spending rules. This puts Unidas Podemos in a very conflicting situation.



Deputy Prime Minister Pablo Iglesias in his office in April 2020
(photo: Dani Gago, eldiario.es)

Pablo Iglesias, on numerous occasions throughout his public career, has repeated a sentence: “Doing politics is riding contradictions”. The current context puts Unidas Podemos on a slippery slope in which the paradoxes are enormous. We therefore present in this text, a social and political context that is shaped by the primal and transversal trajectories that are a permanent feature of Spanish politics: the national question; the rigidity of the rightist parties, media and employers that have

hardly managed to break with their social origins in Franco’s dictatorship. A further common element: the degradation of the democratic institutions that emerged from the so-called “78 consensus”. In recent days more details have become available on the espionage that different Spanish surveillance bodies have carried out on political dissidents linked to Unidas Podemos or Catalan independence.

A critical time for the Monarchy

The Spanish Monarchy is going through a critical time. An earthquake for the Spanish institutional and political superstructure. Every day more corruption cases involving the former monarch are revealed – by means of press leaks and declarations by the former lover of Emeritus King Juan Carlos I, German businesswoman Corinna zu Sayn-Wittgenstein. Swiss bank accounts, cash deposited in them by the Saudi monarchy, front foundations in tax havens, among other aspects. In the middle of the COVID-produced state of alarm, current head of state, King Felipe VI, feigned [renouncing inheritance from his father](#). Meanwhile Corinna kept leaking: “Juan Carlos’ money is in the Zarzuela Palace and he has a device to count it”. During recent weeks, we have also found out that the emeritus monarch brought money from Switzerland to Spain through Madrid’s Barajas airport, and that he took 100,000 euros a month from Switzerland between 2008 and 2012, amounting to a total of 4,800,000 euros. Every day, a new headline.

This is not about giving a brief summary of each ‘episode’ in this ‘serial’ but to get across the enormous importance of the case for the Spanish state. The current head of state, Felipe VI, has the throne for the simple reason of being Juan Carlos I’s son. In the last few weeks, we have witnessed a campaign to make over the present king’s image. This has been by the main media outlets, parties, and the state institutions. Saving the King to save the notorious “78 Regime”... Right now, when we are re-entering serious social and economic crisis, and when politics is still being seriously shaken by national problems and an excessive polarisation between political parties, the crisis of the monarchy adds to the institutional setup a heap of uncertainties from which it will be difficult to leave behind.



Felipe VI being met by protesters in Bilbao and Vitoria-Gasteiz “No hay dos sin tres, República otra vez” (“No two without three. Another Republic”)

The Spanish Monarchy is going through a critical time. An earthquake for the Spanish institutional and political superstructure.

We have explained in other articles how the right and far right has used the pandemic as pretext to try to overthrow the coalition government, as they cannot bear to see Pablo Iglesias and other Unidas Podemos ministers in the government. Faced with the present conjuncture, the right blames Sánchez and Iglesias for the Monarchy’s crisis. Yet, rather, the Moncloa is attempting to put a cordon sanitaire between the current King and the cases dogging his father. A hard job when revelations show that Felipe VI at least partly knew about the rackets in question.

Conversely, Unidas Podemos, the part of the government coalition made up of openly republican parties, has until now limited itself to siding with Sánchez (in Iglesias’ own words). The vice-president has not gone beyond posing the need to reform the King’s immunity against prosecution during his current reign. Unidas Podemos’ openly republican grassroots will be unlikely to tolerate their leaders not taking a harder stance towards the Monarchy if more details are made public about its corruption. Unidas Podemos in government will have to ride this enormous contradiction.

Tourism in the midst of pandemic

We said it before: it is impossible to comment on any aspect of Spanish politics in 2020 without saying that the coronavirus has been an earthquake that has forced all plans to be modified. It has mainly affected the government plan outlined in the Agreement for a Progressive Government by which the cabinet's lines of action were determined, as signed by the two parties PSOE and Unidas Podemos. Managing the pandemic involved going through some very tough weeks in which hundreds of deaths took place each day and a harsh lockdown was applied, and then deescalation in which, bit by bit, Spanish society entered a "new normality", and economic activity and previous lifestyles resumed.



Police checks at the exit from Lleida (photo: Publico.es)

However, in July, new outbreaks took place at a faster speed than expected and the government's concern is increasingly clear. Now, managing outbreaks depends on the Autonomous Communities who have responsibility for health matters, coming after months of state of alarm in which the Ministry of Health centralized the handling of the emergency. This change should displace criticisms over the evolution of the coronavirus to the politically heterogeneous Autonomous Communities governments and away

from the Pedro Sánchez government. Especially intense outbreaks have already occurred in Galicia, the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Aragon. New ones are emerging by the day. There has been no rest from controversies over the territorial distribution of power and responsibilities. Recently confinement of parts of LLeida province ordered by the Generalitat (Catalan government) was struck down by the courts. The relevant ruling stemmed from the interpretation that the ability to limit citizens' freedom of movement required the Spanish government and Congress declaring a state of alarm. Despite this initial response, in the end judges will allow the measures to be adopted by the Generalitat. Attempts by the judiciary to intervene in Catalan politics are constant. Polemics between territories over management of this second phase of the pandemic will not cease. For instance, in the recent elections in the Basque Country and Galicia, people with COVID-19 were not allowed to vote, which led to a dispute because a fundamental civil right had been curtailed.

In that distant month of March, when the tragedy was at its height, the Spanish state's lack of productive capacity in some essential areas was laid bare. Its industrial base was exposed as being incapable of covering primary needs. There was not enough PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) even for health professionals looking after the sick; hospital ICUs (Intensive Care Units) lacked ventilators... All of this meant that the response to the health emergency depended on



Face mask (Photo: Álvaro Minguit, El Salto Diario)

international markets that, at the time, seemed like pirate zones. This all showed up the relative backwardness of the Spanish production model, based mainly on tourism and construction, and with reduced industrial capacity. This model had emerged from the re-division of labour between northern and southern Europe after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992.

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During a speech in Congress, the Minister for Consumption – United Left (IU) federal coordinator Alberto Garzón – referred to Spain having “specialized in sectors with low added value such as hotel and catering, and tourism”. The subsequent avalanche of criticisms he received from employers in these sectors – representing 15 percent of GDP – and different right-wing parties was enormous. Subsequent tensions inside the government were palpable. On 1 July, borders were opened between European Union countries to promote continental tourism. Official campaigns by the Spanish government and different autonomous communities and town halls encouraged reactivating tourism as a priority faced with the serious economic crisis developing. Indeed, on 15 June, the first German tourists arrived at a Majorcan hotel as part of a pilot programme. The Dantean image of hotel chambermaids – one of the most precarious groups of workers – applauding the foreign guests as they entered, has been etched on the mind of many Spaniards.



Alcoa San Cibrao workers on protest against plant closure in June 2020.
(Photo: Carlos Castro)

Contradictions are increasing, and so are the outbreaks. Images of tourists in busy areas without masks to prevent contagion are not shown on some major TV programmes but they quickly circulate through social media. To date, having Unidas Podemos in the government has not entailed any imminent change in the production model away from “sun and beach”. It is

yet too soon to judge UP’s decision to enter. All the same, the US aluminium multinational Alcoa is hastily sacking its 500 workers in the Galician province of Lugo. The Nissan car plant in Barcelona is shutting down, affecting 25,000 families. Airbus has announced restructuring that may affect more than 1,500 workers. Sun and beach, tourism as the response to the pandemic... The government, for the time being, beset by the incongruity of not being able to put forward any alternative production.

Elections in the Basque Country and Galicia

Within the political-electoral arena the most relevant marker has been the elections, held on 12 July, in two important northern autonomous communities: the Basque Country and Galicia. It should be noted that both are considered historic nationalities and both are home to alternative national sentiments to the Spanish. They have nationalist and pro-independence parties, their own language, and their own social, cultural, and political ecosystems that are nothing like the atmosphere felt in Madrid. Indeed it is precisely Madrid, as a political concept similar to the centre, and where the

Spanish powers decide on all issues in what is nicknamed ‘the Court’ (*‘la Corte’*), that was the big loser in both polls.

In the Basque autonomous community, right-wing Basque nationalism (included into the European liberal grouping) won the elections and will rebuild its governing coalition, bar any unexpected twist, with the Socialists, who preserved and indeed slightly increased their previous vote. The spectacular rise in support for the pro-independence left, EH Bildu, contrasts with the debacle suffered by Elkarrekin Podemos, the Basque brand of Unidas Podemos, which lost almost half of its Basque parliamentary representation. Less votes also went to the PP, which had never had much presence in the territory and on this occasion stood in coalition with Ciudadanos. For the first time, the far-right Vox entered the chamber, with one MP.



Voting slips during the elections (Photo: EFE)

In Galicia, the PP has increased its absolute majority. It is led by Alberto Núñez Feijóo, who could end up overshadowing the conservative national leader, Pablo Casado – currently at a low ebb and more extremist than the Galician. Increasing numbers of analysts see the Galician president as a future PP’s candidate for the Moncloa, in place of Casado. Unidas Podemos’ sister coalition, which was the second biggest of all parties during the last term, has disappeared from the Galician Parliament. It received a spectacular thumping. However, the pro-Galician sovereignty left BNG increased its vote to become the second biggest force in Galicia. The socialists broadly stayed where they were but lost a little ground.

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There are very many interpretations that can be made in terms of the implications of the election results on Spanish politics. First, it should be noted that Spain’s ever-present territorial crisis is only deepening. Nationalist and pro-independence parties will have grown in influence from these elections. Since the last general elections, in November 2019, their votes or abstentions have been absolutely necessary for parliamentary majorities to be attained in Congress and it was the regional melting pot that gave Sánchez enough votes to form his coalition government. This needs to be underlined because, after years in which the Catalan crisis has been a heated one, the coalition government had as an aim to begin a process of de-escalation and dialogue with the pro-independence Catalan parties. After the 12 July results, it is clear that the national question has many fronts and not just a Catalan one. In the Basque Country, the Basque rightist PNV and EH Bildu’s seats add up to 53 out of 75 total seats in the Basque Parliament. If the coalition government does not rise to the challenge and begin a process of territorial reform in Spain, there is the basis for the Catalan front to be joined by other conflicts.



Iñigo Urkullu and Andoni Ortuzar celebrating the PNV's victory at party HQ (Phot: RTVE.es)



The Galician PP's leader Alberto Núñez Feijóo (Photo: RTVE.es)

Another crucial reading from these elections is that that coalition government has not passed the first electoral test it has been subjected to since it was formed. This particularly is the case for Unidas Podemos, which achieved terrible results in ACs with particular symbolism for its convergent forces. In the Basque AC, Unidas Podemos was the biggest force in the repeated general elections of 2015-16. In Galicia, the alliance sometimes came second. Additionally in this second territory different municipalist ‘mareas’ (literally ‘tides’) that emerged around Podemos in 2015 took over three of the biggest town halls in Galicia: Santiago de Compostela, Corunna, and Ferrol. In last year’s municipal elections the left-wing alliances lost those town halls. Moreover, the Minister of Labour, Yolanda Díaz, who was notably visible in the election campaign from the start, is Galician. Neither

her being in the campaign in her land nor Pablo Iglesias’ involvement have helped save face. Not one Unidas Podemos MP in Galicia, turning the party into a extra-parliamentary force.

(..) The coalition government has not passed its first electoral test. Unidas Podemos achieved terrible results in ACs with particular symbolism for its convergent forces.

Much ink has been spilled writing about the reasons for Unidas Podemos’ electoral disasters. My view is that there were several, not just one: Podemos’ lack of organizational and territorial roots, an organization with little grassroots and very centred on its leader, Pablo Iglesias, and, now, its work in the government; the constant internal battles in the purple party and its convergent platforms; political communication based on a Madrid-centred view of the Spanish state and the Madrid media in which

Iglesias and his colleagues do battle, while forgetting the rich territorial and national plurality of the Spanish state; a return to the shares of the vote that IU used to get when standing on its own (before Podemos was created in 2014). Lastly, it goes without saying that Unidas Podemos’ participation in the government has not been endorsed by the left-wing of the electorate in these two important autonomous communities. The moderate trend imposed by governing with the PSOE does not seem to have been liked by the left-wing base, at least in these two autonomous communities, where they have turned to pro-minority-national organizations as alternatives. So Unidas Podemos is in electoral crisis right after joining the government. Contradictions are growing, as we said, but by the second.

Calviño's European failure

Exiting the current pandemic-produced economic and social crisis largely depends on the reconstruction policies that are decided in Europe and the financial support reaching the affected states. In this regard the coming days will be crucial. Top-level negotiations are taking place in different European offices. The European Union has a lot at stake; some say even its survival. It is hard to predict the future but it is clear that faced with the financial and social drama currently emerging, if the EU does not dare respond to the expectations of its most hard-hit south, euro-scepticism could take hold in the affected societies. After Brexit and the advance of the ultra-right in in the Visegrad (eastern European) countries, if this sentiment grows stronger in the south, it could mean the emergence of a new dangerous front for the Union.

In this context, until now, the signs have not been very promising in recent weeks. In the last few days, Prime minister Sánchez has visited several European prime ministers attempting to convince them of the plan endorsed by Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron. This aims to assign a fund of 750 billion euros to the economies most hit by the coronavirus crisis, of which 140 billion is expected to go to Spain. The summit, which will be held on 17 and 18 July, will be essential to get to know the EU's involvement in resolving the crisis and thus the very fate of the Union itself.

Due to the urgency of the event, taking place days after writing this article, it is probable that the piece will be published after the summit takes place, so we will avoid speculating about what might happen. There will be time later to analyse European matters as hypotheses become confirmed. However, as a foretaste, it is worth sharing a few broad ideas on the perception by at least much of the Spanish left of what is being expected. The figure of the Dutch PM Mark Rutte is seen



EU leaders deciding the future of the European budget and pandemic compensation fund in Brussels, 17 July 2020 (photo: François Lenoir, Reuters)

increasingly badly due to his constant claims that the Spanish state has not done the reforms required after the previous crisis, and due to his advice that funds reaching the south should be accompanied by a new programme of reforms. The latter suggests that the “men in black” that caused havoc – especially in Greece – could return to play a leading role, and that the cuts and imposition of fiscal discipline could mean that the coalition government is not able to apply a progressive programme. Unidas Podemos' position towards Europe since it has been co-governing is not clear. What is plain to see is that if European pressure requires Unidas Podemos to administer cuts through the executive, the political contradiction will be major and the discontent of its voters also, and at least much of the social movements will break with Unidas Podemos.

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There has been an episode prior to the summit worth mentioning: the failure of the Spain's Economics Deputy PM Nadia Calviño in her attempt to become president of the Eurogroup. In the vote in this supra-national club, on 9 July, by those in charge of EU member-state economies and finance, the Irish liberal Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe was chosen by a margin of just one vote. In these latitudes the news was taken as a slap in the face. The government and big media had previously peddled the view that the conclusion was foregone and that it would be Calviño presiding over the Eurogroup in the following years. This will not be so. Sánchez had poured his efforts into ensuring Calviño had the support needed to win. According to the hopeful herself, someone voted differently from what they had promised. Another interpretation of the deputy PM's fiasco suggests that there will be a hardening of conditions required from the southern countries, such as Italy and Spain, when they receive the reconstruction funds.



Nadia Calviño, Third Minister and Minister for Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation (Photo: EFE)

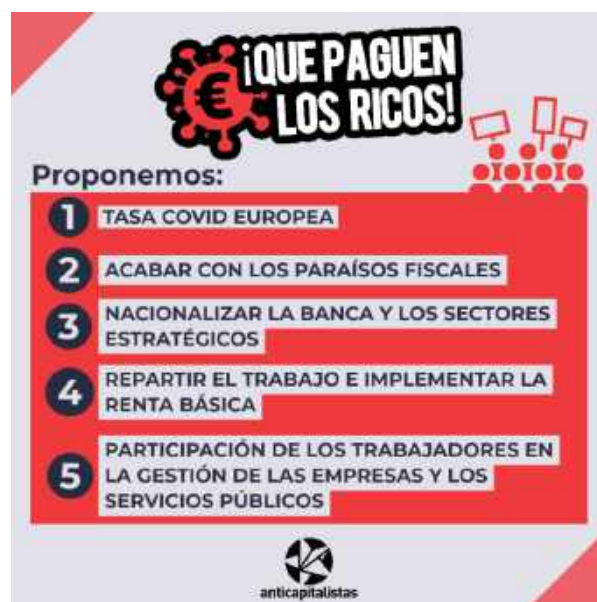
Calviño is a controversial figure. For Unidas Podemos the Economics Deputy Prime Minister is the main force inside the cabinet holding back proposals of greater social impact and public spending and investment. Calviño was, it is worth remembering, one of the government members most against confining the population in March, pointing to the economic consequences that a measure of that kind would have. The person currently in charge of the coalition government's economics portfolio is, despite her Socialist membership, a friend of the neoliberal-type economic

doctrines that have dominated the European Union in recent decades, such as that prioritising controlling the deficit and paying the debt. Calviño is well regarded in the EU forums because, before joining Sánchez' first government, she worked as a top EU official in different European Commission directorates. In the last of these, the Directorate-General for Budgets, where she had been an official since 2014, when the previous crisis was still in its harsh phase, she worked under the German commissioner Günther Oettinger.

When, in 2018, Calviño joined the first Sánchez government, then only including the PSOE and not Unidas Podemos, she was constantly criticized from the left. Calviño represented, for Podemos and IU's central leaders, the purest expression of neoliberal orthodoxy. When, on 25 June, the Minister for the Economy announced she would be standing to preside the Eurogroup, both Yolanda Díaz and Alberto Garzón, two Communist party members, praised Calviño's profile in the media. Pablo Iglesias and Irene Montero also did so, later. Some leading members of the left-wing spectrum, such as IU's economics spokesperson Carlos Sánchez Mato did not hesitate in publicly criticising her candidature. The contradictions, in the government, are deepening.

For the time being, the rich are not paying for the crisis

Unidas Podemos had been pressing in recent weeks for a tax on large fortunes to help pay for the increase in public expenditure in response to the economic crisis caused by the pandemic. Different left parties and movements have been pushing for this in the previous months. IU (a member of Unidas Podemos) had presented a reconstruction plan that included increasing existing taxes in such a way that the richest 3 percent of the country would pay more. The Anticapitalistas party, which left Podemos months back largely due to disagreeing with the strategy of co-governing with the PSOE, launched the campaign #QuePaguenLosRicos (#TheRichShouldPay), picking up a good following in the social media. In Congress, different left parties, such as the Catalan ERC, EH Bildu or Más País, the green-colour party led by Podemos' former number two, Íñigo Errejón, defend a "COVID tax" or tax on large fortunes.



anticapitalistas.org's campaign #QuePaguenLosRicos (#TheRichShouldPay)

Yet despite all this, on 24 June the Congress' Commission for Reconstruction came to a resolution on the matter and Unidas Podemos had adopted the PSOE's position. PSOE and Unidas Podemos presented to Congress a joint document that brought together the aspirations of both parties on how to tackle reconstruction. The text included no mention of a tax on large fortunes. The PSOE accepts that it will have to increase some tax rates, but not to introduce a new tax on the richest, arguing that such a tax would go against the EU line of easing taxes. Once again, a conflict for Unidas Podemos. The next day, the leader of the Unidas Podemos parliamentary group in Congress, the Catalan Jaume Asens, tried to be hard from the podium: "We are not going to renounce the tax on large fortunes, everyone should be clear about that". But the document had already been officially handed in and included no reference to such a tax.

Social measures with Unidas Podemos' stamp

The coalition government, ever since the virus spread, has been developing a range of social policies that we have been describing in previous articles. Collectively named the "social shield", these policies have tried to lessen the ravages of the crisis so that "nobody is left behind". Among them, the most relevant have been the Ministry of Labour setting up of a furlough (ERTE) scheme to avoid sackings due to the crisis. The national [Minimum Income Guarantee](#) or the prohibition of evictions during the state of alarm, the moratorium in paying rent or avoiding basic utilities being cut in those homes not able to pay for them also has been driven adopted through the cabinet. All of these measures clearly bear the Unidas Podemos imprint. In recent weeks these policies have been extended. On 7 July, the government stretched the application of the shield to until late September. The emergency measures that tentatively will continue until the autumn are the extension of the moratorium on regular-housing rent payments and mortgage debt, and both a social subsidy and guarantee to ensure homes are supplied with water, gas, and electricity.



Image for Minimum Income Guarantee campaign by Ministry for Inclusion, Social Security and Migrations

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Furthermore, on 14 July, the cabinet set up a loan package to provide autonomous communities with 100 million euros for different schemes. These include: tackling child poverty and protecting families at risk of destitution; guaranteeing the right to food, leisure, and culture of children during school holidays; maintaining the network of town-hall social services; preventing the exclusion and social integration of Roma people. A notable measure is that the government will allow town halls to spend their surplus – a step that has been demanded by municipal institutions and movements in recent years.

Social mobilization

Since COVID-19 reached the Spanish state, social protest has declined notably for obvious reasons. Measures to prevent contagion involve maintaining significant inter-personal physical distance. Even so, different social mobilizations have appeared over these months. In the previous article in this series, we explained how in some wealthy Madrid neighbourhoods protests had been held against the government and confinement (following the route of denying the pandemic led by other far rightists such as Donald Trump in the United States or Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil). These spread to other Spanish cities and demanded that the government resign. Such protests, in most cases encouraged by the extreme right, ebbed once bars and terraces were opened. Some minority mobilizations have continued, such as concentrations of extreme rightists in the surroundings to the house of Second Deputy Prime Minister Pablo Iglesias.

Left-wing social protests, however, have dwindled during these months for the reasons described. Nevertheless, there have been some mobilizations worth describing, such as that by the Nissan factory workers in Barcelona who have been on the streets of the Catalan capital for weeks to demand, at first, that their plant not be closed, and, later, for public intervention for them to keep their jobs. Similarly, workers from the Alcoa plant in the Lugo province also have led some of the most significant recent protests, demanding public intervention to avoid the closure of the plant.

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Measures to prevent contagion involve maintaining significant physical distance*

Noteworthy in the Madrid region is the strike in recent days called by junior doctors (Resident Internal Doctors, MIR). They are protesting against abusive conditions, low wages, and large amounts of overtime in response to the pandemic. This is taking place under the Madrid government governed by President Isabel Díaz from the most neoliberal and far-right wing of the PP – as we explained in our previous article. This situation contrasts precisely with the increased

symbolic value society has given to doctors and all other health professionals for obvious reasons. The dismantling of public services in the Madrid Autonomous Community, governed by the PP for 25 years, would be a case worth studying.



Reading of manifesto on the Madrid demonstration (photo: El Salto Diario)

Lastly three other protests should be mentioned. On 7 June, included in the wave of international mobilizations by the Black Lives Matter movement in response to the murder of George Floyd by a US police officer, hundreds of people in Barcelona and thousands in Madrid went onto the street in

solidarity with BLM. Notable in the Madrid case, at least, was the amount of racialised young people leading the march. We may have the embryo of a movement that, also in the Spanish state, will have a lot to say in the future. Additionally, on LGTBI Pride day on 28 June, events were held in different cities. In Madrid, where the mainstream activities were suspended, the anti-capitalist Critical Pride event took to the streets in the centre. Lastly, the platform for a Social Emergency Plan protested on 20 June, joined by thousands, to demand public services in opposition to the privatized model.



#LGTBIPride rally in Valladolid on Sunday 28 June 2020 (Photo: Redes Sociales de Anticapitalistas Valladolid)