

# EL PAÍS

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EL PERIÓDICO GLOBAL EN ESPAÑOL

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## Government says latest raid proof ETA policy unchanged

Nine arrests among leadership of terrorist support group

UNAI MORÁN, Bilbao

A little over a week after ETA announced a new ceasefire, a move the government deemed "insufficient," police have arrested the entire leadership of Ekin, the political organization tasked with ensuring that the terrorist group's guidelines are followed by all its sympathizers in the Basque radical left.

Following the nine arrests, which took place across the Basque region as well as in Aragon and Cantabria yesterday, Interior Minister Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba said the raid proves that the government's antiterrorist policy is not going to change "one iota" until ETA lays down its weapons for good.

The dragnet was coordinated by the High Court, which deployed over 300 Civil Guard officers to search for Urko Asier Ayerbe, Sandra Barrenetxea, Erika Bilbao, Ugaitz Elizara, Egoitz Garmendia, Joxe Aldasoro, Rosa Iriarte, Aniaiz Ariznabarreta and Eneko Compains, the latter

considered the leader of the group by investigators.

The operation against Ekin's new leadership comes a year and a half after the Supreme Court convicted 38 former members of the radical organization for terrorist activities. Last November, another major police raid against Segi, ETA's youth organization, yielded over 30 arrests. The head of the Basque

internal affairs department, Rodolfo Ares, said the operation confirms that "there is no ceasefire for the rule of law."

In March 2006 ETA announced a truce, but broke it in December of that same year with a bomb attack against Barajas airport in Madrid, ending fledgling negotiations between the Socialist government and representatives of the terrorist group.

## Colombian hitmen accused of 200 crimes arrested in Valencia

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Spanish police have arrested two Colombian hired assassins who are thought to have been involved in over 200 cases of contract killing, kidnapping and torture in their home country.

Mauricio Alberto González Sepúlveda, who goes by the nickname of *Husky*, and Henry

Norberto Valdés Marín, known as *Chicken*, were detained by security forces in Valencia and put under the jurisdiction of the High Court, where they will face extradition proceedings. The two had come to Spain to set up so-called collection offices for their drug baron bosses.

The Spanish police were put onto the trail of the two men by their Colombian counterparts.

## Catalan language rule passed for professors

S. T., Barcelona

From now on, university professors who wish to occupy a permanent post at one of Catalonia's centers of higher learning will have to prove their knowledge of the Catalan language by passing a test administered by the universities themselves.

The regional government approved the measure on Tuesday, ahead of the Catalan elections on November 28, and more than a year after drafting the first version, which had to be toned down before universities would accept it. Initial opposition to a law that some educators viewed as a hindrance to attracting new talent resulted in several exceptions, including for professors who already have permanent contracts. Associate and lecturing professors will have two years to prove their language skills if they wish to renew their contracts.



REUTERS

## Times are good as Nadal squares away Grand Slam career feat

Spanish tennis star Rafa Nadal showed off his US Open trophy in New York's Times Square yesterday, just hours after defeating Novak Djokovic in the final and ensuring his place in

sporting history as one of just seven men to have won all four Grand Slam events. When asked if his feat makes him greater than rival Roger Federer, Nadal was typically modest.

"[Roger's 16 Grand Slam event wins] say he's much better than me. I think that will be true all my life. We will see what happens in the future. I am not a genius." SEE PAGE 6

## Royals to tighten belts after budget slimming

MÁBEL GALAZ, Madrid

The Spanish royal family is bracing itself for the first-ever cut in its budget since the monarchy was restored over 30 years ago as part of the government's far-reaching austerity drive to remedy a huge shortfall in its finances.

A reduction of between seven and nine percent has been suggested, although a spokesman at the Zarzuela Palace said nothing has been decided yet. Traditional-

ly, the Royal House draws up its own spending requirements for inclusion in the draft state budget that goes before Congress. Allowances for last year were frozen for the first time at €8.9 million at the request of the Royal House.

The spokesman said members of the royal family's staff suffered the same five-percent wage cut as other public-sector workers under changes introduced by the government as part of a €15-billion austerity drive over two years.

## Chávez unites Venezuelan opposition

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## OPINION AND EDITORIAL

# In search of bank solvency

The demand for greater safeguards in the sector will diminish the cost and impact of crises

THE LESSONS afforded by the financial crisis in the American banking system are beginning to take the form of proposals for concrete regulatory changes. Last week EU leaders met to discuss the supervision of financial institutions and markets, reaching agreement on a regulatory architecture more consistent with the international character of bank transactions, and with the need for coordinated handling of the consequences of the crisis. And now, new technical guidelines have been advanced, aimed at strengthening the solvency of bank operators throughout the world.

The message that has emerged from the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (CSBB), whose conclusions will be submitted to the November G20 summit in Seoul. If the proposal finds favor, a significant step will have been taken not only in the prevention of future crises, but also in the reduction of their costs to the taxpayer and of their impact on world economies.

The process known as Basel III establishes the requirements that will have to be satisfied by banking entities by the end of a set period of transition. A bank's capital adequacy ratio is defined as the quotient of shareholder funds over risk-weighted assets.

The text of Basel III strengthens the two previous versions of the Basel agreement. It does not change the traditional solvency ratio, which remains at eight percent, but it does change its composition, significantly heightening the required quality of shareholder funds, according to primary importance to the makeup of what is called Tier 1 capital, consist-

ing of common equity reserves and preferred shares.

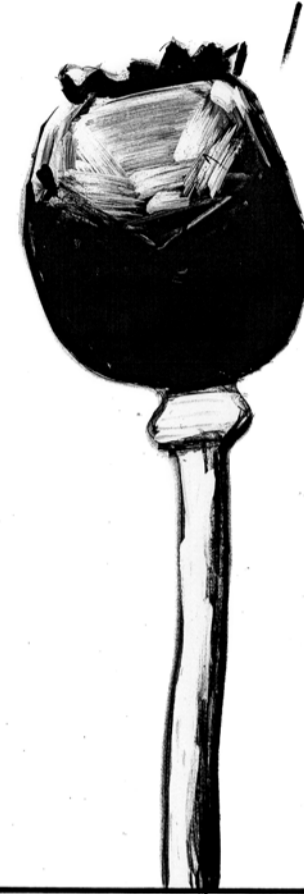
Even in the areas where these solvency demands are most severe, they are merely consistent with the experience offered by this crisis. So far it has not been the bankers who have paid the highest costs of the crisis. It is clear that the irresponsible and technically questionable management of risk, and in some cases deficient supervision on the part of the financial authorities, were chiefly responsible for the crash.

Not only has the urgency of the situation made it necessary for the taxpayer to advance the funds to pay for the handling of the crisis, but unemployment remains at long-term record figures in many advanced economies, Spain among them.

The conclusion to be drawn from all this is the imperative need for better and stricter regulation of banking activity. The transition period set for adaptation, meanwhile, offers a breathing space to most of the entities that are now facing problems. Most of the Spanish financial entities do not fall into this group, thanks to a traditional vigilance that the Bank of Spain has exercised precisely over the capitalization of Spanish credit entities. The definitive version of these agreements will determine the eventual impact on the credit financing of Spanish companies, whose profit-and-loss sheets will surely remain depressed for some time yet, due essentially to the mistakes made by the banks. However, it is true that the conditions for generating profits are now somewhat less heavily weighted in favor of the banks.

## EL ROTO

DE LA AMAPOLA EXTRAEN EL OPIO, DEL OPIO LA HEROÍNA, Y DE LA HEROÍNA EL DINERO, TODA LA POBLACIÓN ES CONSUMIDORA



"From the poppy they get opium, from opium heroin, from heroin money. The whole population are consumers"

## Losses

JOSÉ IGNACIO TORREBLANCA

September, and back to the column, with different feelings of loss. Loss of the lives of two civil guards and their translator in Afghanistan, which makes us wonder if we are not losing a war that was never really ours. Loss of a pen, that of EL PAÍS founder Carlos Mendo, a Homeric personality with a "really surprising" knowledge, as he put it, of the history and politics of the United States. Loss, too, of a layer of our solidarity, as one contemplates the possible reasons for the international community's passivity before the suffering of millions of Pakistanis, in curious contrast to Haiti. Lastly the impending loss, if no one rescues it, of a publication indispensable to an understanding of the world we live in: the Spanish edition of *Foreign Policy* magazine, soon to fall victim to a drop in advertising revenue, which in turn reflects the dwindling interest in international affairs in any country you care to name.

I return from a session in Sussex with colleagues of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), concerned chiefly with the international news situation ahead of us in 2011. The crisis has focused attention on economic matters; less space is given to in-depth reporting and to thorough understanding of the world out there. Every day it gets harder and more expensive to supply good information, and cheaper and easier to accede to it. Since the accounts don't add up, correspondents are fewer and local bureaus smaller. The crisis has also hit the think-tanks, the laboratories where we try to understand the world we live in. Financing from decent sponsors is drying up, obliging many of them to close, or shrink, or sell their independence to less decent sponsors.

As globalization of information goes on apace, the greater volume of available material by no means necessarily results in greater capacity for under-

standing. Information and analysis are substituted by emotion: wars and conflicts or poverty and inequality appear as mere natural disasters, and are portrayed thus. Without a context you cannot understand the motives of the suicide bomber at the Qala-i-Naw base, nor our reasons and options in Afghanistan, or anywhere else.

Some months ago, on leaving the Afghan interpreter who translated my speech to some Afghan soldiers attending a training course in Madrid, I asked where and how he learned such good Spanish. At the Faculty of Philology in Kabul, he said; but the Taliban came and burned the library, so he could not finish his studies. What a sublime, overarching unity of purpose between the Taliban who burned the library, and the Taliban in Florida who wants to burn the Koran.

Hard times for the printed word, I think as I attempt to connect all these losses. What has it got that all the world wants to stamp it out? And when you do not want to stamp it out, but foster it, how hard it is to create spaces where it can survive. We talk about climate change, deforestation and endangered species, but hardly at all about the disappearance of the written word and its habitat: newspapers, magazines, books. Will they survive transplanted into the digital world, or disappear, or turn into something unrecognizable?

In the book *The Third Chimpanzee* Jared Diamond tells how cultures that never attained a written form of their language were always prone to domination or disappearance. And cultures that had a written form, but lost it? What about them? I read that a road construction plan in Andalusia is to be exempted from the budget cutback. Which is fine. But wouldn't it be fine, for a change, to read that some publication was to be saved from the crisis (or even from burning)? Until further notice, the printed word seems to be an endangered species.

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## Letters

### to the Editor

Letters submitted to this section should not exceed 20 typed lines. It is imperative that each one is signed and is complete with an address, telephone number and DNI or passport number of the author. EL PAÍS reserves the right to publish such pieces, either in shortened version or as an extract when it is considered opportune. Unless otherwise stated, original letters will not be returned, nor will information be made available about them by mail or by phone. Email: iht@elpais.es

## Nice little earner

Given that I'll be one of the last people to enjoy the government's soon-to-be-abolished €2,500 tax break for new parents, I have decided to spend it on umbilical cord stem cell storage for my newborn child. The service, I am told, will cost €1,900. A month before the birth, I part with €550 for the kit where the matron will prepare the blood and tissue. The remaining €1,440 will be due after the baby is born. The contractions begin, and the matron arrives. My wife's contrac-

tions are getting worse, when the matron says: "Did I tell you about the €200?" I have no idea what she is talking about. "If you want me to prepare the kit, you have to give me €200." I later find out that the company has nothing to do with this part — and that the €200 are paid in undeclared cash to the matron! If I don't pay it right now, she won't carry out the task of conserving the stem cells. I want to be a matron — but don't tell the tax office. **Jorge González.** Valencia.

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# The online racket that is saving wannabe moms hundreds of euros

Illegal sale of expensive fertility drugs is worrying health authorities

JAIME PRATS, Valencia

This story is, above all else, about the desire to have children. But it is also about the need to save money, about how easy it is to buy things over the internet, and about medicines that cost up to €450. The World Wide Web has enabled women who are undergoing fertility treatment to buy the hormones they need at a low cost from women who choose to sell their leftover doses after getting pregnant.

This black market operates outside any kind of regulatory framework, and can save users hundreds of euros in bills for expensive private fertility treatments — which can set couples back at least €4,000 for each attempt.

The Spanish Drug and Health Product Agency has issued a warning that these transactions are both illegal and risky, given that there is no guarantee of the quality of the medication that is being purchased. The health authorities have already investigated 80 websites for illegally selling these types of drugs.

María, 37, knows the market quite well. After undergoing fer-



María purchased fertility treatments over the internet in an effort to save money. / MÓNICA TORRES

The black market can save users hundreds of euros in medical bills

“I wanted to recoup some of the money I had spent,” says one woman

tility treatment at a public hospital, where the entire process is subsidized, she finally opted for a private clinic in order to avoid the long waiting list. But prescriptions from private centers are not subsidized, so in order to reduce her bills, this Valencian woman bought the hormone treatment she needed from women in Palencia and Madrid. Once she managed to get pregnant, she too sold the excess material on to someone else. “Overall, I must have saved about €1,000,” she says.

The doctor had told María (not her real name) that her ovarian response was slow and that she needed more hormones to guarantee enough mature eggs capable of being fertilized. He prescribed Puregon, a fertility drug that sells for €353.85 at pharmacies. “That day was pure madness,” María recalls. She headed straight for her computer to look for a good price, and soon found a seller. Both women talked on their cellphones one morning and closed the deal. The medication arrived by

## “Medication is very expensive”

Antonio Pellicer know about online sales of fertility drugs in his dual role as head of the gynecology department at the Valencian public hospital La Fe and as co-director of the Valencian Infertility Institute, one of Spain’s most active fertility clinics.

“The first problem is that these drugs are excessively expensive because of the pat-

ents,” he says. “There are some gonadotropins [protein hormones that are used to stimulate ovulation] that can cost up to five times as much as others.”

Pellicer adds that he finds it unfair that sterility is not considered an illness, and points out that in the Catalonia region, for instance, the public health system subsidizes ferti-

ty drugs regardless of whether the woman undergoes the actual treatment at a public or a private center.

The doctor says that even though he has been made aware of the practice of selling fertility drugs online, “it is still hard to believe that two women are going to meet in a cafeteria to exchange boxes of medication.”

express messenger that same afternoon.

After this first treatment failed to work, María went back to the computer and bought three boxes of Menopur — another reproductive hormone that goes for €223.5 — and one box of Orgalutran — a drug used to delay ovulation, that carries a price tag of €195). When María finally got pregnant, she sold her leftover drugs to a woman from Barcelona.

“I didn’t approach it like it was business, but rather to recoup some of the money I had spent,” she says. María recently finished repaying the 10-month, €567 loan she took out to pay for the fertility treatment. Soon after that, her husband’s business went bankrupt. “If these prescriptions were subsidized, I wouldn’t be buying them online,” she says, in defense of her actions.

The internet is full of offers for fertility drugs. All one needs to do to find them is type into a search engine the desired brand name and the word “buy” or

“sell.” As in the aforementioned cases, a lot of these products are resold by patients who have leftovers from their own private treatments. But there are some individuals who are doing business with prescriptions ob-

“If these drugs were subsidized, I wouldn’t be buying them online”

People who sell these products face fines that can be as high as €1 million

tained through the Social Security system. This is a growing problem for the health authorities, who try to keep tight control over prescriptions. The potential profit, however, can be considerable: the subsidized medication costs under €3,

while the free-market version can range from €223 to as much as €449.50.

The sale of prescription drugs through the mail or over the internet is illegal, according to 2006 legislation. Health Ministry sources say that people who sell these products online face fines ranging from €30,000 to a €1 million. “And if there is criminal responsibility arising from damaging the health of others, it could go beyond that,” says the source, who adds that besides being illegal, this practice involves the risk of buying adulterated or expired products, or even placebos. In the event of a problem, there would be nowhere to turn, given that this is an illegal market.

Despite all of this, María says that she would buy medication online again. “You are buying from other women who have been through what you’re going through, and you trust in their good faith. It is a risk that you accept,” she says. “It would be different if the drugs were cheaper.”

## Environment Ministry to double flow of Tagus and Ebro

EL PAÍS, Madrid

The Environment Ministry has finalized a plan to recover the ecological flow of Spain’s rivers — that is to say the minimal level needed to maintain the ecosystem — say sources close to the project. The move, included as part of the government’s soon-to-be-released “basin plans,” will finally allow Spain to fulfill a European Union directive it should have complied with a year ago.

The project will double the ecological flow at the mouth of the River Ebro and of the Tagus as it passes through Aranjuez, which would require purified water to be brought from Madrid.

As the project affects the transfer of water, it threatens to reopen the so-called “water war” between different regions over supplies. The Ebro and Tagus have been two of the key areas of conflict in past disputes.

The government initiated its basin plans in 2008 to put an end to the inter-regional fights over water. The plans are in their final phase and are soon to be made public.

## Scotland’s first minister meets with Basque premier

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Independence-seeking Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond on Tuesday met with his counterpart in the Basque regional government, the *lehendakari* Patxi López, to exchange ideas about self-government.

Salmond, of the Scottish National Party, expressed interest in the special fiscal powers afforded the Basque Country, an area in which Scotland has limited say.

López floated the idea of Scotland and the Basque Country forging an agreement to collaborate in areas such as education, the environment and industry. The Scottish leader invited López to visit Scotland.

Salmond’s official host was Ignacio Sánchez Galán, the chairman of Bilbao-based power group Iberdrola, which bought Scottish Power in 2007. Salmond also met with Alfredo Sáenz, the chief executive of leading Spanish lender Santander, which recently acquired 318 branches in Britain from the Royal Bank of Scotland. The British Ambassador to Spain Giles Paxman was also present.



## Kirchner doing "very well" after heart surgery

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Argentinean President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner said Tuesday that her husband Néstor Kirchner was doing "very well" after undergoing emergency angioplasty over the weekend, which has raised speculation on whether the former president is healthy enough to run for a second time next year.

"He is doing fine. Kirchner will be around for a long time," said Fernández de Kirchner during a ceremony at La Rosada presidential palace.

Kirchner, 60, underwent the procedure at a Buenos Aires clinic late Saturday to unblock an obstructed artery. The problem was detected after he went in for a routine checkup.

The former president, who served from 2001-2006, underwent emergency surgery seven months ago to unblock a partially obstructed right carotid. Kirchner hasn't said he will run for reelection but many of his supporters believe that the decision has already been made.

Meanwhile in neighboring Paraguay, the health of President Fernando Lugo is also causing concern in that nation's political circles. Lugo, who was diagnosed with lymphatic cancer and is undergoing treatment, has limited his daily affairs but has declined to step down.

Opposition lawmakers have called on Lugo to hand over the presidency, even temporarily, to his vice president, Federico Franco.

## Chávez unites opposition

Venezuelan parties organize common front in bid to recapture legislature

MAYE PRIMERA, Caracas

Hugo Chávez and his electoral laws have united the opposition parties in Venezuela in a way that their ideologies would never have been able to achieve. Twenty-two national organizations and about a dozen regional groups, from all across the political spectrum, have teamed up to form a bloc they have called the Democratic Unity Committee (MUD). It's part of an effort to take on the ruling party in the upcoming September 26 parliamentary elections.

Adopting the motto "to live in peace and to progress," the coalition hopes to win more than 40 percent of the seats in the National Assembly, regain the political ground they lost five years ago, and reestablish a measure of legislative control over the executive.

"Our alliance is not ideological. We agree on a model for the country that is outlined in the Constitution: democratic, decentralized, ruled by law and order," said Deputy Ismael García, secretary general of the party Podemos (We can) and a former government ally. He abandoned Chávez in 2007 for three reasons: he disagreed with the constitutional reform proposed by the president for indefinite reelection; the closure of Radio Caracas Television; and Chávez's demand to dismantle his party in order to join the ranks of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV).

"I believe in democratic socialism that addresses poverty and sectors that are productive. But what Chávez has imposed in Venezuela is state capitalism where the government controls everything from cars to selling arepas [cornmeal bread with



Students hold a protest against Chávez with a placard that reads: "Chávez, you are knocked out." / AP

"Chávez has imposed state capitalism; the government controls everything"

meat fillings]," says García.

This isn't the first time the opposition has tried to come together. In 2002, a plethora of political parties, civil associations and trade unions and NGOs who opposed the government joined to form the Democratic Coordinator. In 2008, these parties also signed an Agreement for National Unity and drew up nominations for gubernatorial and mayoral candidates during the regional elections held that year.

During the last parliamenta-

ry elections in 2005, the opposition did not field candidates. The anti-Chávez parties adopted the idea that withdrawing from the race would "de-legitimize" members of the National Assembly who were elected.

Although 75 percent of voters did not show up at the polls, the government captured the legislature and has since passed a large number of laws deemed necessary to build Venezuela's "21st-century socialism" as ordered by the "commander-president" — the manner in which lawmakers refer to Chávez.

MUD has acknowledged that the strategy of sitting out the election was a mistake. Since its foundation just over a year ago, the new alliance has been discussing the terms of the electoral coalition. The parties have be-

come convinced of the need to oppose Chávez from within an independent legislative branch of government.

The opposition, this time around, has managed to agree on 98 percent of candidates at the national level, through political agreements or primary elections in those municipalities where direct talks broke down. While each party will be represented by its own colors and symbols on the ballot, the votes obtained by each one will be added to the list of candidates previously agreed.

The pro-government parties have also formed a similar alliance. The United Socialist Party of Venezuela, the Communist Party and the Venezuelan People's Union make up the government's ruling bloc.

## Mexican marines capture cartel leader without firing a shot

'El Grande' surrenders to ensure his family's safety

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Just less than two weeks after a notorious drug chief wanted in the United States surrendered to Mexican authorities, about 30 marines stormed an upscale home and captured the reputed leader of one of the country's most dangerous cartels.

Sergio Villarreal Barragán, the leader of the Beltrán-Leyva drug cartel and who is better known by his alias *El Grande* or *King Kong* because of his size, was taken when about 30 Mexican marines stormed the home in an exclusive neighborhood in Puebla without firing a shot.

"I am not going to resist. I will surrender but please leave my family alone," the two-meter-tall Villarreal Barragán told the marines, according to the Mexico City daily *El Universal*.

This was the second arrest of a leading trafficker in under two weeks. On August 30, Villarreal Barragán's rival, Edgar Valdez Villarreal, a US-born trafficker known as *La Barbie*, also gave himself up when he was stopped by police.

Villarreal Barragán, who apparently saw unusual movements outside his home, waited for the marines inside the dining room of his house with his second in command, Jesús Enrique Jurado Torres, and Ramiro Cisneros Aguirre, another member of the Beltrán-Leyva cartel. Both were also arrested.

In a bedroom, Villarreal Barragán's wife and two children, aged seven and nine, took refuge along with a babysitter.

Authorities said that the presence of his family was the reason that *El Grande* surrendered

without firing a shot. "He knew that if he drew a gun that meant putting them at risk of being killed and that is why he didn't resist nor did his accomplices," the source told *El Universal*.

### Following legacy

*El Grande* became leader of the Beltrán Leyva cartel after its leaders, Arturo Beltrán Leyva and Ignacio Nacho Coronel, were killed in separate shootouts with marines and the army in December and last July. Authorities believe that more blood will be shed as members battle among themselves for leadership of the cartel.

In another incident, police in the drug-crime-plagued Tamaulipas state said that at least 85 inmates from a prison near the US border escaped after they got



Sergio Villarreal Barragán is escorted by police in Mexico City. / REUTERS

hold of a ladder. The warden and 44 guards and employees, who were on duty, have been arrested and were being questioned. Authorities said they had no clues as to how the inmates obtained a ladder and why nobody saw them scale a wall.

Since President Felipe

Calderón declared a war on the cartels when he took office in 2007, more than 28,000 people have been killed in drug-related violence. The troubled atmosphere has led to today's independence bicentenary celebrations being more low key than had been planned.



**EDUARDO GALEANO** Uruguayan author and journalist

## “I think that all written work constitutes literature, even graffiti”

ÓSCAR GUTIÉRREZ  
Madrid

Eduardo Galeano is one of the most celebrated writers in Latin America. The author of many books, the Uruguayan made headlines around the world last year when Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez gave President Obama a copy of Galeano's classic work *The Open Veins of Latin America*. EL PAÍS caught up with him during a brief visit to Madrid last week when he took part in a conference organized by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) in order to, in his own words, “have a look at the world; a world that is upside-down.”

**Question.** Mario Vargas Llosa says he still considers himself a journalist. Do you?

**Answer.** Yes, but there is a tradition that sees journalism as the dark side of literature, with book writing at its zenith. I don't agree. I think that all written work constitutes literature, even graffiti. I have been writing books for many years now, but I trained as a journalist, and the stamp is still on me. I am grateful to journalism for waking me up to the realities of the world.

**Q.** You have often said: “They piss on us, and the newspapers say it's raining.”

**A.** I saw it painted on a wall in Buenos Aires once. Walls are the printing press of the poor. Yes, it's still raining and language is the tool of lies: “natural disasters” aren't natural; they stem from our abuse of the environment. And the “international community” is simply a club made up of bankers and warmon-



Galeano says book writing is journalism at its zenith. / S. SÁNCHEZ

gers who control the world.

**Q.** You have called on the media to play a bigger role in “more inclusive development.” How would you assess the reporting of the current global crisis?

**A.** The main players in the media industry played an active role in helping to hide the banks' responsibility for the catastrophe, and in blaming countries like

Greece. But there are alternative voices, such as community radio. They are looked down on and banned in many countries, but increasingly they are finding their place. The voice of the people, without intermediaries, sounds more authentic.

**Q.** In Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia and Ecuador, governments are angry with the media.

**A.** Every time the powerless try to express themselves they are seen as dangerous. Patriotism is legitimated in the North, but in the South is seen as dangerous, even as terrorism. News is manipulated, depending on how you interpret it. The Mapuches' hunger strike in Chile gets no coverage, while a hunger strike in Cuba or Venezuela is given the front page. Who are the terrorists? The pirates who attack ships, or the trawlers that fish in violation of international agreements?

**Q.** Are journalists less ideologi-

“Chávez has been demonized. Before, Cuba was the bad guy”

cally committed than they should be?

**A.** I think we need to hear as many different voices as possible, whatever their source. I believe in the diversity of the human condition. I want to see a world without frontiers, a world that celebrates diversity.

**Q.** Does Venezuela's Hugo Chávez deserve the fierce attacks he receives in the media?

**A.** Chávez has been demonized. Before, Cuba was the bad guy, but less so these days. There always has to be a bad guy. If not, why do we need to spend so much money on weapons? We have a global military industry, so we need enemies. And sometimes, our friends, as in the case of Saddam Hussein, become our enemies. It's all theater.

## Cuba to lay off 500,000 public workers in austerity drive

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Cuba's communist government said that it plans on laying off some 500,000 public sector workers next year as belt-tightening measures become even tighter. The layoffs, which represent 12 percent of all Cuba's government employees, would open the doors for the workers to find odd jobs in the island's small private firms and cooperatives.

The government wants to create new cooperatives, whose activities would include raising rabbits, painting buildings, garbage collection and a ferry service across Havana's bay, according to the Associated Press, which obtained a Cuban Communist Party document.

“It is a part of an intense reform and if it is introduced in the way the government wants, will change the country completely,” a Cuban economist told EL PAÍS.

Meanwhile, former President Fidel Castro said in an interview with a Mexican newspaper that he believed that French President Nicolas Sarkozy had “gone crazy” in expelling Gypsies. In an interview with Mexico's *La Jornada* newspaper, the 84-year-old Castro speculated that Sarkozy could pose a threat to world peace because he carries around a briefcase with the launch codes for more than 300 atomic weapons. “Suppose that Sarkozy suddenly goes crazy, as appears to be happening. What would the UN Security Council do in that case with Sarkozy and his briefcase?” he says.

## Bolivia to confiscate land belonging to Mennonites

Government says property isn't theirs but group charges religious prejudice

M. D., Madrid

The Bolivian government is prepared to evict thousands of Mennonites from their land near the Brazilian border after officials said the religious group had been deceived when they purchased their properties, according to news reports Monday.

Juan Carlos Rojas, the director of the Agrarian Reform Institute (INRA), said that some 200 families were swindled when they brought land that was actually owned by the state. But Mennonite leaders say that the nationalist and pro-indigenous government of President Evo Morales is taking reprisals against them because of their religion.

At the same time, the Mennonites point to stricter migratory laws introduced by the government to regulate the influx of foreigners in Bolivia.

There are between 50,000 to 60,000 Mennonites from Canada, Mexico, Paraguay and the United States living in Bolivia. The estimated 60 colonies focus on farming and ranching, mainly in the eastern departments of Santa Cruz, Beni and Tarija.

In early 2009, the government told the Mennonites that they had to abandon the land in Río Negro in Santa Cruz department, near the three-way border area where Bolivia meets Paraguay and Brazil. The order was given under the govern-



Vice President García Linera wants to regulate Mennonites' status. / AP

ment's new agrarian reform law but the farmers have refused to leave, Rojas said. He claims that the Mennonites have committed various environmental violations, including burning the Amazon forest to clear farmland.

The government had offered the Mennonites financial aid to help them relocate but Rojas said they have refused. Instead, they “have bought” or hired local farmers to defend themselves, Rojas has charged.

Under Morales' controversial reform passed last year, the government is trying to redistribute the land that is considered idle or has been purchased under opaque agreements. The INRA says much of the Mennonites land was obtained through illegal deeds.

Rafael Cervantes, Mexico's ambassador to La Paz, said in an interview with the Efe news agency that some Mexican Mennonites have expressed their concern about losing their residency status in Bolivia.

Bolivian Vice President Álvaro García Linera said last month that the government wanted to “regulate” the legal status of many Mennonites who have entered Bolivia but don't have proper residency papers.

The Mennonite community in Bolivia has gotten bad publicity recently. Last year, authorities arrested seven members of one community and charged them with raping 60 women and young girls. Prosecutors said that the men would sneak into the women's rooms early in the morning and force them to have sex. The case has not gone to trial.



## SPORTS

# “This is more than I ever dreamed”

Nadal beats Djokovic to win US Open and complete set of major tournaments

N. L., Madrid

There was never much doubt about Rafael Nadal being the best tennis player in the world today, but on Monday night he staked his claim as one of the best of all time by becoming only the seventh man in history to win a complete set of four Grand Slam titles.

The Spanish star beat Serbia's Novak Djokovic 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2 in an intense, rain-interrupted match at New York's Flushing Meadows to take the US Open title home for the first time, his ninth victory in a major tournament.

“This is more than I ever dreamed,” said the 24-year-old, moments after collapsing in emotion onto the concrete of the Arthur Ashe Stadium after Djokovic hit wide to deliver him the win. “To just arrive at this final was amazing. To have the trophy here in my hands in a few seconds is going to be unbelievable.”

The world number one has worked hard to master this tournament, the one he admits he has always found the most difficult. Having greatly improved his serve, he reached the final without dropping a service game, demolishing all in his wake.

And when the final eventually started, having been postponed from Sunday to Monday because of heavy thunderstorms over Flushing Meadows, it was Nadal who started the stronger, getting a break in the very first game. After a series of long, tense baseline rallies in the opening few games, though, he lost concentration in the fourth to allow 2007 runner-up Djokovic to break back. But he was back on top in the mammoth next game, finally converting his sixth break point and powering away with his mighty serve to take the first set.



Rafa Nadal celebrates after beating Novak Djokovic in the US Open final. / EFE

“It’s not right to talk about being better than Roger because I don’t think that”

At 2-1 in the second, his focus slipped again, allowing Djokovic to break. Losing nine points in a row to the now dominating Serbian, Nadal suddenly found himself 4-1 down. But Djokovic's failure to convert a game point in the next game allowed him back in and draw level at 4-4, 30-30, before the downpour began.

When the players returned

nearly two hours later, the already intense encounter moved up another gear, with hard-court specialist Djokovic, who confounded expectation by defeating Roger Federer in the semifinals, showing his mettle to level the match without need for the anticipated tie-break.

Nadal came bouncing back in the third as Djokovic seemed to start paying the price for his efforts, getting a break to go 2-1 up. Despite numerous opportunities to break again, he was forced to serve the set out at 5-4 with the 23-year-old Serbian continuing to bravely fend off what was being thrown at him. Nadal held on, though, with an

ace and a winner that seemed to put pay to Djokovic's fight.

After that a double break in the fourth set took Nadal to championship, and career Slam, point. Djokovic knocked wide to hand the Spaniard another opportunity to bite down, in his now characteristic fashion, on a new piece of silverware — surely the sweetest tasting so far.

“I cannot hide the disappointment. I'm not going to cry or complain about that. It's just the way it is,” said Djokovic.

“He has the game now for each surface, and he has won each major. He has proven to the world that he's the best in this moment, so there is no question about it.”

With all four majors now under his

belt, Nadal's new target is surely to beat his great rival Roger Federer's record of 16 Grand Slam victories. The 29-year-old Swiss master may have time to rack up a few more titles before retirement, but at five years his junior, Nadal has time to play catch-up. When quizzed on the subject in the post-match press conference, the Spaniard, who also has an Olympic gold and a two Davis Cups to his name, was being characteristically modest: “It's very far. For me, it's too far to think about that.”

“Being better than Roger — I don't think it's the right moment to talk about that because I don't think that.”

## Five-year story of Rafa's Slam

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Having celebrated his 19th birthday by beating still-dominant world number one Roger Federer in the semifinals at Roland Garros, young Rafa defeated Argentina's Mariano Puerta to lift his first major trophy: the 2005 French Open. Officially installed as the “king of clay,” he has since won four more and lost only one match there — to Robin Söderling in 2009.

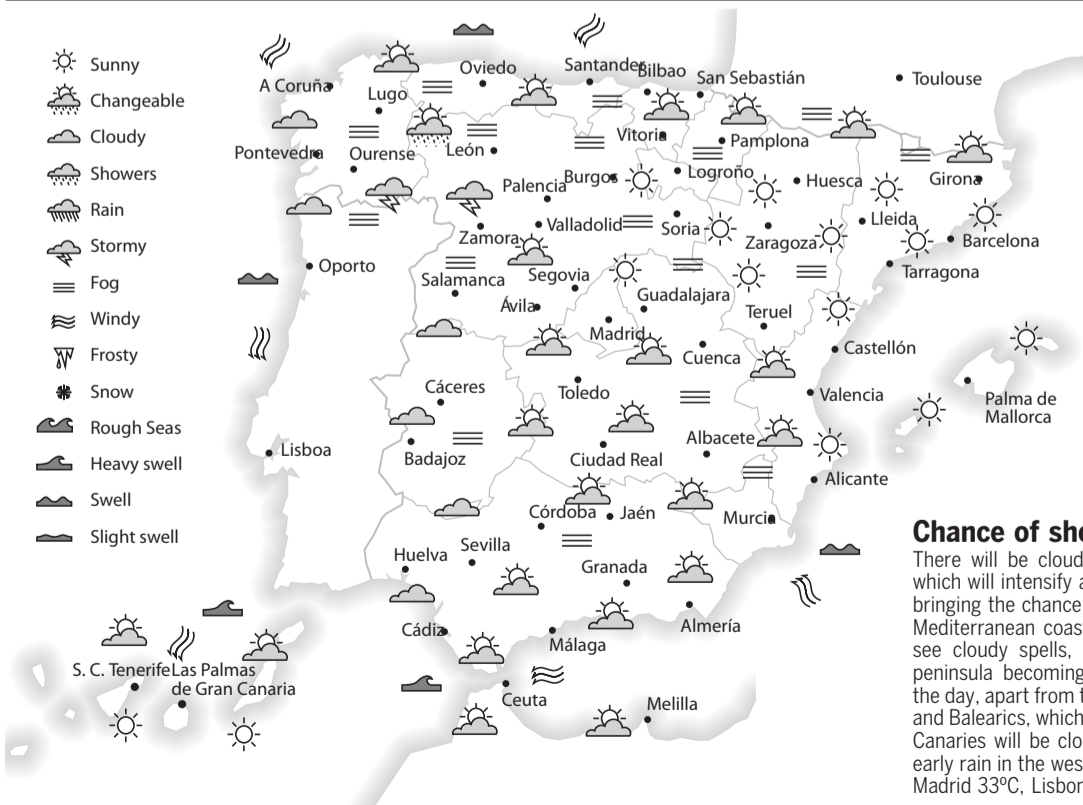
While Nadal frustrated Federer's own career-slam designs in Paris (he did finally win a French Open, taking advantage of the Spaniard's 2009 slip), the Swiss master continued to rule on grass. However, Nadal won the third final encounter between the world's top two, the 2008 Wimbledon showdown that was arguably one of the most exciting matches in tennis history. In the twilight on the Centre Court grass, Nadal won the fifth set 9-7 and soon overtook Federer as world number one for the first time.

Victory for Nadal in the 2009 Australian Open was seen as confirmation of his all-court superiority over the rest, prompting talk of a possible Grand Slam in a year that was eventually marred by injuries and a slip in the rankings back to number two. His five-set victory over Federer in Melbourne was the last time the two met in a major final, Nadal leading the series 5-2.

At Flushing Meadows on Monday night, the 24-year-old became the seventh man and the first Spaniard to achieve a career Grand Slam, joining Federer, Andre Agassi, Roy Emerson, Rod Laver, Don Budge and Fred Perry.

### WEATHER SPAIN TODAY

J. L. RON



#### Chance of showers in west

There will be cloudy spells in the west, which will intensify as the day progresses bringing the chance of light showers. The Mediterranean coast and Melilla will also see cloudy spells, with the rest of the peninsula becoming cloudier throughout the day, apart from the extreme northeast and Balearics, which will remain clear. The Canaries will be cloudy with a chance of early rain in the west. Wednesday's highs: Madrid 33°C, Lisbon 28°C.

### Useful information

All emergencies	112
Ambulance	061
Fire Brigade	080
Municipal police	092
National police	091
www.policia.es	
Civil Guard	062
www.guardiacivil.org	
Catalan police	088
Traffic	900 123 505
Consumer information	900 775 757
Forest fires	900 850 500
Domestic abuse	900 100 009
Coast Guard	900 202 202
Immigration Information	900 150 000
Directory	11818
International directory inq	11825

#### TOURIST POLICE

Madrid	91 548 85 37
	91 548 80 08

#### FLIGHT INFO

AENA (airports authority)	902 404 704
Iberia	902 400 500

#### TRAINS

RENFE	902 240 202
www.renfe.com	
International	902 243 402

#### BUSES

www.socibus.es	
www.avanzabus.com	
www.alsa.es	

#### EMBASSIES

Australia	91 353 66 00
Canada	91 382 84 00
Ireland	91 436 40 93
New Zealand	91 523 02 26
UK	91 714 63 00
US	91 587 22 00

#### CITY WEBSITES

www.munimadrid.es	
www.bcn.es	
www.sevilla.org	
www.valencia.es	
www.ayto-malaga.esa.org	

#### CINEMA, THEATER

www.entradas.es

#### PORTUGAL

All emergencies .....112



## Public Works unveils plan to double rail freight quota

EL PAÍS, Madrid

The Public Works Ministry yesterday unveiled an ambitious €7.5-billion investment joint private-public plan to convert Spain into a global logistics center for rail freight over the next decade.

With the government in the throes of an austerity drive to cut its yawning public deficit, the initiative calls for the private sector to foot 40 percent of the capital expenditure involved, with the rest coming from local administrations and the central government. The figure includes the €1.8 billion already set aside for developing cargo transportation by rail.

Of the government's total contribution of €5.154 billion, €4.354 billion will come from the state budget and the balance from divestments, largely in the form of the sale of land.

Rail currently accounts for only 4 percent of the goods transported in Spain, compared with 22 percent in Germany. The aim of the plan is to increase that quota to 8-10 percent in 10 years.

Apart from solving bottlenecks in the rail network between France and Spain, the plan also includes setting up a network of freight terminals interconnected with ports and other transportation nodes.

Presenting the initiative, Public Works Minister José Blanco said he wants to convert Spain into an "intercontinental logistics platform," taking on the role of a "port of entry and exit between Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia."

## Spanish banks start to wean themselves off ECB funding

Amounts borrowed last month down from record levels

AGENCIES

Spanish banks' reliance on the European Central Bank to cover their financing needs remains considerable, but it did ease last month from record levels after the release of the outcome of the stress tests carried out on European lenders.

The Spanish financial system emerged relatively well from the examination of their ability to withstand a series of theoretical shocks, which helped to increase confidence in their creditworthiness.

Spanish lenders had been virtually cut off from the wholesale funding markets during the sovereign debt crisis earlier this year sparked by Greece's problems, but the tap has started to flow again with BBVA, Santander completing debt issues since the end of July. As a result, the amount of liquidity Spanish banks borrowed from the ECB fell by €20.4 billion, or 15.7 percent, to €109.8 billion in August

from July. The figure, however, was still up 46 percent from August 2009, compared with an annual increase in July of 77 percent.

"After the stress tests in July, confidence in the Spanish financial system has increased, and a process of normalization has begun, which is also being reflected in the fall of the risk premium and the yields the Treasury is offering to place debt," Reuters quoted IG Markets analyst Soledad Pellón as saying.

However, Pellón said while the big banks do not have problems, the ECB's so-called "open bar" remains the only source of liquidity for smaller lenders.

While the absolute amount tapped by Spanish lenders fell last month, it still represented about a quarter of the €428.464 billion disbursed by the ECB in August, far above Spanish lenders weighting in the Eurosystem, but down from a record 29.1 percent of the total lent in July.

Swiss investment bank UBS

said in a report released yesterday that the financial system has yet to fully return to normal, with credit still scarce and expensive. The rate paid on funds accessed from the ECB's special liquidity fund is only 1.75 percent.

### Weak GDP growth

UBS yesterday joined a growing list of experts who believe the government's predictions about the pace of the economic recovery in Spain are optimistic. The Swiss bank predicted average GDP growth next year of 0.5 percent after a slight contraction this year and 1.0 percent in 2012. The Spanish administration expects the economy to grow 1.3 percent in 2011 and over 2 percent in 2012.

UBS said the government's plan to cut its public deficit to 3 percent of GDP in 2013 from 11.2 percent in 2009 is feasible, but added it will need further spending cuts and higher taxes to insure it achieves its target.

Gamesa

## Wind-turbine maker to boost Chinese investment

Spanish wind-turbine manufacturer Gamesa plans to invest €90 million in China in the 2010-2012 period with a view to doubling its sales in the Asian giant. Gamesa has already invested €42 million in production facilities in China.

Iberia

## Leading Spanish airline's load factor rises in August

Iberia said Tuesday its load factor in August rose 3.1 points from a year earlier to 85.5 percent as the increase in traffic volumes outpaced that of capacity. The load factor in the eight months was up 2.9 points at 80.1 percent.

Solaria

## Renewable energy firm in German solar power project

Spain's Solaria Energía y Medio Ambiente said it had started work on a photovoltaic solar power plant in the German state of Bavaria. The facility will have installed capacity of 6.1 megawatts.

New firms

## Company start-ups rise for seventh month in a row

The number of new firms set up in Spain in July rose annually for the seventh month in a row in July, rising 9.2 percent after a hike of 7.0 percent in June, the National Statistics Institute said Tuesday.

## Home prices continue to drift lower as market seeks recovery

A. S., Madrid

Spanish house prices continued their slow downward spiral in August as market forces sought to address a mismatch between weak demand and a glut of unsold homes.

Leading appraiser Tinsa said Tuesday its Spanish real estate markets index in August de-

clined 4.6 percent from a year earlier after a drop of 4.3 percent in July and is now down 17.9 percent from the end of 2007, which marked the peak of a decade-long boom that turned to bust. The biggest falls were in larger cities and provincial capitals.

The pace of the declines has picked up again in the past two

months but Tinsa said the summer months are atypical, and the latest figures do not as yet constitute a shift in trend.

According to figures released Monday by the National Statistics Institute (INE), home sales in July rose for the seventh month in a row, accelerating to an annual 16.4 percent from 7.0 percent the previous month.

## Back above 10,800 points

A. S., Madrid

The Spanish stock market closed modestly higher on Tuesday after early gains on Wall Street on the back of some favorable economic news. US retail sales climbed 0.4 percent in August beating analyst forecasts. That was the second month in a row sales had increased, and represented the biggest rise since March.

Yesterday's gains were sufficient to push the Spanish blue-chip Ibx 35 back above 10,800 points. The benchmark index eventually closed up 0.38 percent at 10,806.60 points after trading in a range of 10,6894-10,835 points. The Ibx Medium Cap put on 0.98 percent, while the Ibx Small Cap lost 0.05 percent. The Madrid general index was up 0.44 percent at 1,116.50 points.

In the rest of Europe, Paris' CAC 40 advanced 0.19 percent, the DAX in Frankfurt gained 0.22 percent, while the FTSE

100 in London was up 0.03 percent. The PSI-20 in the Lisbon Euronext exchange added 0.25 percent.

Turnover in the Spanish continuous market came in at about €1.7 billion. Gainers outnumbered losers in the Ibx 35 by 24 to nine, with two stocks unchanged.

Wind-turbine manufacturer Gamesa stole the limelight after announcing it would be tripling its investment in China to meet large new orders. The stock was also buoyed by speculation of consolidation in the renewable energies sector. Its shares gained 9.60 percent after having previously been down over 55 percent for the year as investors sold off stocks in the renewable energies sector.

The big banks continued to advance, with Santander up 0.60 percent, and BBVA adding 0.20 percent. fellow heavy-weight stock Telefónica also lent support to the Ibx 35, with a gain of 0.50 percent.

### IBEX35

EQUITY	LATEST PRICE	DAILY VARIATION		YESTERDAY		ANNUAL VARIATION %	
		EUROS	%	MIN.	MÁX.	PREVIOUS	CURRENT
ABENGOA	20,245	0,135	0,67	19,995	20,370	-	-9,5
ABERTIS	13,755	0,035	0,26	13,645	13,800	-	-5,9
ACCIONA	63,280	0,640	1,02	62,400	63,500	-	-28,3
ACERINOX	13,285	-	-	13,160	13,400	-	-6,0
ACS	35,010	0,030	0,09	34,610	35,010	-	7,1
ARCELOR MITTAL	25,200	-0,430	-1,68	24,880	25,780	-	-21,5
BANCO POPULAR	4,931	0,031	0,63	4,862	4,946	-	-2,6
BANCO SABADELL	4,000	-	-	3,958	4,019	-	5,2
BANCO SANTANDER	10,035	0,060	0,60	9,888	10,065	-	-8,7
BANESTO	7,409	0,057	0,78	7,310	7,470	-	-9,6
BANKINTER	5,484	-0,031	-0,56	5,406	5,576	-	-21,0
BBVA	10,220	0,020	0,20	10,080	10,250	-	-17,9
BME	20,400	0,190	0,94	20,000	20,450	-	-3,0
CRITERIA	3,888	0,009	0,23	3,852	3,897	-	24,6
EBRO FOODS	15,075	-0,070	-0,46	14,955	15,160	-	5,3
ENAGÁS	14,910	0,200	1,36	14,645	14,960	-	0,3
ENDESA	19,925	-0,140	-0,70	19,720	20,060	-	-12,4
FCC	20,345	0,105	0,52	19,960	20,410	-	-26,6
FERROVIAL	7,196	0,074	1,04	7,078	7,206	-	-6,2
GAMESA	5,699	0,499	9,60	5,210	5,740	-	-50,9
GAS NATURAL	11,640	-0,055	-0,47	11,560	11,740	-	-18,0
GRIFOLS	10,390	0,020	0,19	10,265	10,450	-	-13,6
IBERDROLA	5,760	-0,005	-0,09	5,667	5,772	-	-13,6
IBERDROLA RENOV.	2,584	0,018	0,70	2,531	2,595	-	-21,5
IBERIA	2,814	0,004	0,14	2,786	2,835	-	48,2
INDITEX	58,020	0,250	0,43	57,370	58,100	-	35,5
INDRA	14,150	0,135	0,96	14,010	14,230	-	-9,6
MAPFRE	2,386	-0,001	-0,04	2,373	2,410	-	-15,4
OHL	21,115	0,505	2,45	20,600	21,170	-	14,2
RED ELÉCTRICA	34,820	0,270	0,78	34,165	34,990	-	-6,0
REPSOL	19,030	0,045	0,24	18,800	19,120	-	4,2
SACYR	3,876	-0,018	-0,46	3,821	3,967	-	-51,6
TÉCNICAS REUNIDAS	39,180	-0,090	-0,23	38,840	39,315	-	0,9
TELECINCO	8,889	0,104	1,18	8,665	8,933	-	-10,9
TELEFÓNICA	18,140	0,090	0,50	17,990	18,225	-	-3,4

### CONTINUOUS MARKET

#### BIGGEST HIGHS

	%	EUROS
GAMESA	9,60	0,499
AZKOYEN	7,57	0,185
ENCE	6,64	0,160
PRISA	5,88	0,100
ALMIRALL	5,76	0,460
CIE AUTOMOTIVE	5,43	0,185
RENO DE MÉDICI	4,63	0,010
NATRA	3,32	0,065
FAES	2,71	0,090
CAM	2,52	0,160

#### BIGGEST LOWS

	%	EUROS
NYSEA	-4,35	-0,050
GAM	-4,31	-0,090
EZENTIS	-3,22	-0,019
MIQUEL Y COSTAS	-3,06	-0,550
CORP. DERMOSTÉTICA	-3,02	-0,065
FERSA	-2,80	-0,035
LINGOTES ESPECIALES	-2,59	-0,090
EUROPAC	-2,49	-0,085
INPSA	-2,44	-0,045
PULEVA BIOTECH	-2,35	-0,020

### FOREIGN CURRENCIES

	BUY	SELL
US DOLLAR	1,3015	1,3014
JAPANESE YEN	108,0000	107,9800
STERLING POUND	0,8353	0,8352
AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR	1,3788	1,3783
HONG KONG DOLLAR	10,1073	10,1060
SWISS FRANC	1,2955	1,2952
NORWEGIAN KRONER	7,8498	7,8458

UNITS PER EURO AT 18:00





A clubber at the one-year anniversary of Zombie Club, on every week in the Heineken nightclub in Madrid. / CLAUDIO ÁLVAREZ

## How the children of the 'movida' took over Madrid's night scene

New generation has brought a fresh approach to the serious business of partying

INIÑO LÓPEZ PALACIOS, Madrid

On the dance floor of the Heineken nightclub in central Madrid, hundreds of people are dancing like it was their last day on Earth. But it is, in fact, very late on a Wednesday night. People sweat, jostle for space, cheer when they hear the next song, and throw their hands in the air in the direction of the stage. It might sound like a punk concert, but it's actually a DJ session.

The Zombie Kids are in charge of the music, which mixes up everything from hip hop to Nirvana. Tonight is the first anniversary of the Zombie Club, the hottest night in the city right now. "This is the club that sets the bar at the moment," says Popy Blasco, a kind of unofficial chronicler of the capital's clubs who has spent six years blogging about the Madrid night scene.

"I think that we have managed to give Madrid what it needed," says Edgar Candell Kerri a few hours before the party gets started. This 31-year-old from Barcelona is the spokesman for Zombie Kids, the collective of nighttime agitators behind Zombie. "Madrid's scene was kind of stagnant, and pretty boring. We wanted to do something different."

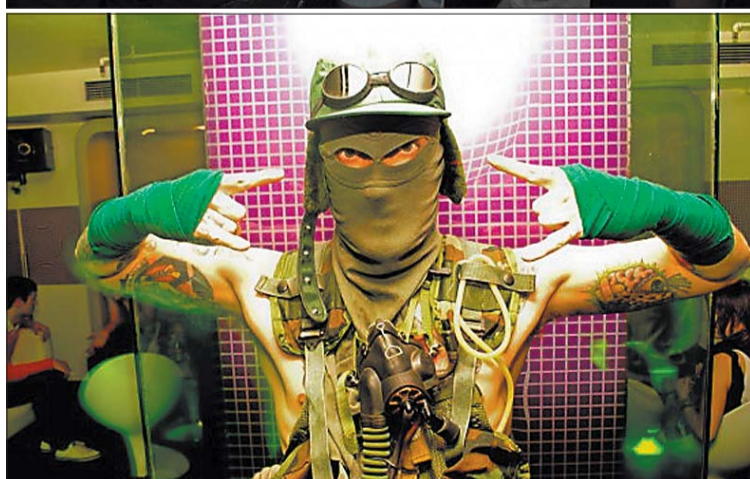
It all started back in the spring of 2009 with a club night called Aguacate in Boite, a small venue just off Gran Vía with a capacity of just 300 people. "The word soon got around about the club, which was rammed right

from the start," says Edgar. "People loved it. They say that we're not professionals. That's fine. But we get people dancing. That is what being a professional is as far as I'm concerned. Being focused on the dancefloor and making sure people have fun."

Just a few months later the night moved to a club with twice the capacity, and was renamed Zombie Club. It turned out to be just as successful. When the venue was closed temporarily, the team took a big step: moving to Heineken. "We bring in between 1,200 and 1,500 people every Wednesday," explains Edgar. "There are regulars, but people have to work the next day so not everyone can make it every week."

The success of Zombie has seen other nights get going. "The club scene is much better now," says Bali Valiente, who has been working handing out fliers and getting punters into clubs for 15 years, and voices a popular opinion: something has changed. Given that very few licenses are granted for new venues, it is the nights that change rather than the clubs themselves. New ones are popping up constantly, such as Campamento Dorado, V, Pony, Pop & Dance and Boombox.

These are new times on the night scene, and a new generation, according to Popy Blasco. "Everything started with a fire," says the blogger. "The iconic Windsor building from the Madrid *movida* went up in



Clubbers in Boombox (top) and Stardust (above). According to blogger Popy Velasco, this is the fourth wave in Madrid nightlife. / G. E. / STARDUST

flames," he says, in reference to an apparently accidental blaze in 2005 that saw one of the Madrid business district's most famous buildings completely destroyed. "It was the end of speculation, and we became the post-Windsor generation."

According to this interpretation, we are in the fourth wave of Madrid nightlife. The first was the *movida*, the 1980s explosion of culture that followed the death of General Franco in 1975 and the end of dictatorship. After that came the house culture of the

1990s, symbolized by the Morocco nightclub spearheaded by a star of the *movida*, singer Alaska. The end of the 20th century saw the arrival of the indie scene, which is still in effect today. This month sees the 10th anniversary of two of the stalwarts of that scene: Nasti and Ochoymedio. Also hitting a decade of existence is Intromúsica Productions, the nightclub promoter behind Low, a formerly weekly party that has now become the once-monthly Low Day. The current generation of party people is the fourth.

"The people who brought club culture to Spain in the mid-1990s don't relate to what's happening in club culture right now," explains Popy Blasco.

"Madrid's scene was kind of stagnant. We wanted to do something different"

"Those who brought club culture to Spain don't relate to what's happening now"

"That's a sign of the handover from one generation to another. It's not about the *movida* these days — it's the children of those who were in the *movida*. These days you don't bump into [photographer] Ouka Lele in a nightclub, but her daughter, María Rosenfeldt."

But of course there are those who miss the old days, such as the cartoonist Mauro Entrialgo. "There used to be a lot more variety," he says. "You had whatever you wanted whenever you wanted it: rock bars, clubs playing funk, or acid jazz... And lots of after-hours clubs. [...] Of course, if you're a kid who has only known today's theme-park opening hours, today's scene must seem like some kind of huge party."

That kind of opinion is common among the "veterans," who yearn for a less-mainstream nightlife; one that's wilder and more heterogeneous — and much more out of control. "One thing is for sure," says David Pardo, from Ochoymedio. "Everything has changed an awful lot in 10 years. But people are not going to stop going out. It's a way of blowing off steam after a day at work or a day of studying, but the crisis has affected us all and people are spending less money."

Meanwhile, at Zombie, the last thing that María is thinking about is the crisis. A student from Asturias, she has returned to Madrid before the official start of the semester. "I told my parents I'd come to look for an apartment," she explains. Wearing a serious pair of heels, a very short skirt and deep red lipstick, she has caught the eye of Juanjo, who is 21 and works in construction. "I start work in four hours, but I don't reckon I'll be sleeping beforehand," he says. "You come here to dance, to have fun and to flirt with hot women. I'll sleep another day."