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Keeping dissent alive under the Great Recession: No-radicalisation and protest in Spain after the eventful 15M/*indignados* campaign

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ABSTRACT: Traditional theories of collective action would predict that, after a triggering event, the trajectory of a wave of protest is determined by the institutionalisation-radicalisation tandem. Based on the Spanish cycle of anti-austerity and against the political status quo protest in the shadow of the Great Recession, this article contends with this approach, as a clear trend towards radicalisation is never observed as the cycle unfolds. An alternative interpretative framework is developed to understand protest trajectories when collaborative inter-organisational strategies prevail. The eventful 15M campaign triggered in 2011 represents the most remarkable turning point in the Spanish socio-political mobilisation scene in recent years and had a transformative capacity over subsequent protest endeavours. Specifically, after the 15M campaign, the combination of downward scale shift and coalition building shaped the trajectory of protest, and allowed for the peak of protest to persist until late 2013, when institutionalisation took over. Data from an original Protest Event Analysis dataset are used to illustrate the main arguments.

1. INTRODUCTION

Protests spread across the world in 2011. Many people mobilised against the political and socioeconomic status quo: outraged crowds took to the streets and the squares in different parts of the globe, from the countries where the Arab Spring campaigns that took place, to the Occupy movements that developed in the US, the Israeli protests for social justice and the student revolts in Chile, just to mention a few examples. Southern European countries were no exception to this. Challengers reacted against austerity measures that governments advanced in response to the Great Recession. Not only were many citizens directly affected by these measures, but they also felt that political decisions on how to deal with the crisis were being made without their consent (Portos and Masullo 2017: 201). They did not, that is, feel

represented by the political classes in power. For some scholars, these actions represented the wake of a new global wave of protest, that of anti-austerity and Occupy mobilisations (Flesher Fominaya 2014; della Porta 2015).

Within the Spanish context, the 15M campaign that gave rise to the *indignados*— “the outraged”— developed since May 2011.¹ Six to eight million people got involved in 15M activities, making these the most crowded contentious performances outside the umbrella of traditional unions and political parties in the country’s recent democratic history (Feenstra 2015; Monterde et al. 2015).² However, the 15M mobilisations marked only the beginning of a long peak of protest. They were followed by a period of heightened conflict across the whole social system with intense interactions between challengers and authorities, with multiple fronts of social confrontation open at the same time, and a wide array of actors involved who followed variable strategies and used multiple repertoires of action.

After a triggering point takes place, traditional contributions from theories of the cycles of collective action contend that the institutionalisation-radicalisation tandem accounts for the trajectory of protest cycles (Tarrow 1989; Jung 2010). As institutional alternatives open, divisions among movement strands follow. While the most moderate sectors embrace more formal routes, the most rebellious movement strands stick to extra-conventional tactics, radicalising their repertoires of action. This article seeks to assess and refine traditional accounts of the cycles of collective action. Based on the wave of protest under the Great Recession in Spain, in this article I propose an interpretative framework to understand the trajectory of a cycle of mobilisation that is not driven by inter-organisational competition.

I argue that traditional approaches are ill-suited to explain the dynamics of protest after a peak is triggered when collaborative strategies between new and old organisations prevail. Contending with the idea that the trajectory of a wave of contention is determined by the institutionalisation-radicalisation tandem, a trend towards radicalisation is not observed— neither during the peak nor in the demobilisation phase of the wave of contention. Although institutionalisation might be important to account for demobilisation, it does not account for

¹ A protest cycle or wave often consists of a set of interrelated campaigns. A protest campaign is the series of thematically interconnected interactions and public claim-making performances for a common aim (della Porta and Diani 2006: 188-189).

² 15M stands for 15 May 2011. Participants tend to adopt this neutral label to the detriment of other terms to refer to this campaign and its activists such as *indignados* (“the outraged”)— Romanos (2016).

the persistence of the peak of protest until late 2013. Specifically, two concatenated mechanisms, downward scale shift and coalition building between new and old organisations, explain the transformative impact that the 15M campaign had on subsequent protest performances. On the one hand, from a general campaign that aimed at changing the political and socioeconomic system, the 15M abandoned the visible occupation of central squares and decentralised through neighbourhood assemblies, and compartmentalised by contending with specific issues. For instance, the so-called *mareas* (“citizen tides”) emerged with the aim of fighting austerity policies being implemented in different sectors, such the *marea verde* (“green tide”) against cuts in the public education system. On the other hand, new movement actors built alliances for specific purposes with more established actors such as unions. These— often informal— coalitions were crucial to keeping standards of mobilisation high during the peak of protest.

In short, radicalisation did not follow after the 15M, but this campaign had a transformative capacity on subsequent contentious activities through the downward scale shift and coalition building tandem. To illustrate the main argument, empirical materials from an original Protest Event Analysis dataset about Spain— collected between January 2007 and February 2015— are used (N= 2,002). This technique, which is based on quantitative content analysis, allows us to analyse, assess the longitudinal occurrence, size and features of contentious claim-making performances that challengers undertake and the media cover— as well as the responses of relevant actors to these protest activities (Hutter 2014). To build the dataset, I used a keyword search through the digitalised printed versions stored in the *El País Archive*,³ and manually coded up to 77 variables per event (Portos 2016a, 2016b).⁴

In the next section the main case study is introduced, the Spanish cycle of anti-austerity protest and against the political status quo in the shadow of the Great Recession. The article is

³ The list of keywords— introduced separately in Spanish— was the following: *protesta, manifestación, escrache, 15M, indignados, marea, movilización, marcha, acampada, sentada, boicot*. I ran a mini-test with the Spanish *El Mundo* to control for possible biases in the primary newspaper source, comparing two months, pre- and post- 15M (April 2009 and November 2013). No substantial differences regarding event coverage were found— overlap between protest events in *El País* and *El Mundo* was higher than 90%.

⁴ As the printed media is a crucial arena for public claims-making, and most actors use it to make their views public, I used newspaper (daily) records. Following Mark Beissinger (2002: 14), the units of analysis in my PEA, events, are defined as “contentious and potentially subversive acts that challenge normalised practices, modes of causation, or systems of authority”. No sampling strategies were implemented: information about size was coded regardless of the kind and size of the event, collecting data neither exclusively on the largest events nor on those strictly associated with the recession, austerity, labour issues and the political status quo. Following Kriesi et al. (1995), opinion and editorial sections were omitted.

then structured according to the overall line of reasoning. In contrast to theories of the cycles of collective action, in the third section I contend that radicalisation is not observed as the cycle unfolds— particularly in the demobilisation phase—. I argue in section 4 that the 15M events transformed the Spanish mobilisation arena and shaped the trajectory of the cycle of protest through the interplay of two relational mechanisms, coalition building and downward scale shift. I conclude by underscoring the main findings of the article in section 5.

2. THE SPANISH CYCLE OF PROTEST, 2007-2015

It has long been recognised that protests are not randomly distributed over time because social turmoil comes in clusters (Tarrow 1989, 2011; della Porta and Diani 2006: ch.7). Accordingly, three main cycles of mobilisation have taken place in Spain since the 1960s (Viejo 2012; Jiménez 2011). The first one concerns the *Transición* from the Francoist regime to democracy in the 1970s. The second cycle refers to the protests against the integration of Spain into NATO, industrial conversions and educational reforms in the mid-1980s. The third wave encompasses collective actions against neoliberal globalisation and the war on Iraq in the 1990s and early 2000s. A fourth major cycle against austerity and the political status quo has developed under the Great Recession, which is explored next.

Under heavy pressures from lending institutions including the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the European Commission, national governments— especially in the European periphery— met the 2007-2009 global financial meltdown with a set of austerity policies (Blyth 2013). Neither the levels of public debt were particularly high in Spain nor the “housing and banking bubbles did [...] appear on the radar-screen of the ECB and the Commission” (Hemerijck 2016: 32). However, cuts in public spending and welfare provisions were implemented to keep deficit under control, while standards of inequality increased and life conditions worsened for many sectors of the population. In the Spanish context, Rodríguez Zapatero’s social democratic government first adopted austerity policies in 2010— relatively late from a comparative vantage point. These policies meant reforming the pension system, the labour market, slashing salaries and worsening conditions of public employees, etc. The embracement of a neoliberal agenda marked a dramatic U-turn relative to the government’s initial pro-Keynesian stimuli oriented to counter the recession and its consequences. Besides material deprivation, Spain faced a political crisis during these years due to crisis management, corruption scandals, unpopular policies, revolving doors between

administrations and corporations, etc. (Fernández-Albertos 2015; Miley 2016). Large sectors of the population took a critical stance not only against the incumbent, but against the political status quo more generally. Particularly, discontent toward the two-party system spread, in part because both the conservative PP and the social democratic PSOE “supported austerity measures and have not taken care of citizen needs in the wake of the crisis, instead using public money to socialise private banking debt” (Flesher Fominaya 2014; cited in Romanos 2016: 134). Therefore, both political and socioeconomic dimensions lay at the heart of the intense wave of citizen contestation that unfolded in the shadow of the Great Recession in the country.

Based on my Protest Event Analysis data, we can observe that the Spanish cycle of protest consists of the three traditional phases identified in the literature of collective action: the pre-mobilisation period with early risers, the climax triggered after the 15M shock in mid-2011 and the final (extra-institutional) demobilisation phase since late 2013 (figures 1-2; Tarrow 1989, 2011; Koopmans 2004; della Porta and Diani 2006: ch.7; Portos 2016a).⁵ External data sources, such as the *Anuarios Estadísticos del Ministerio del Interior* (“Annual Yearbooks of the Ministry of Home Affairs”), confirm the above specified trend: while the number of Spanish authorised demonstrations tripled in 2012 relative to 2008 (from 16,188 to 44,233), authorised demonstrations gradually decreased after 2013 (from 43,170 events in 2013 to 32,904 in 2015).⁶ Also, figures on protest engagement in this period are revealing. According to the European Social Survey (6th round), 34% of Spanish respondents responded in 2012 that they had participated in at least one lawful demonstration during the 12 preceding months. In order to find year-round precedents with similar levels of contention, we would need to travel back to the *Transición*, in the late 1970s.

⁵ Calculating the number of protesters in a given event is problematic. Quality of information reported usually depends on the newspaper source, is scant and partial. To tackle this issue, I have gathered information on the three main sources of information on the size of challengers separately (when available). These three continuous indicators are: the number of participants reported by 1) the police or official authorities, 2) *El País* newspaper and 3) the organisers. As police records usually underestimate the number of participants and organisers overestimate them, a coefficient that measures average, over or underestimation was calculated for each variable. Weighted coefficients are extrapolated from cases with full information (N= 45) for all categories to those that only have partial data, and then arithmetic weighted means are calculated on the basis of the values for the (1-to-3) sources available. An additional indicator captures estimations and vague cues on event size (e.g. some hundreds, several thousands, etc.). It was transformed into a 1-10 interval-level scale following the procedures specified in the codebook for *Dynamics of Collective Action* (N=505; see <http://web.stanford.edu/group/collectiveaction/cgi-bin/drupal/node/17>).

⁶ See <http://www.interior.gob.es/web/archivos-y-documentacion/documentacion-y-publicaciones/anuarios-y-estadisticas/anuarios-estadisticos-anteriores/anuario-2012> and <http://www.interior.gob.es/web/archivos-y-documentacion/anuario-estadistico-de-2015>.

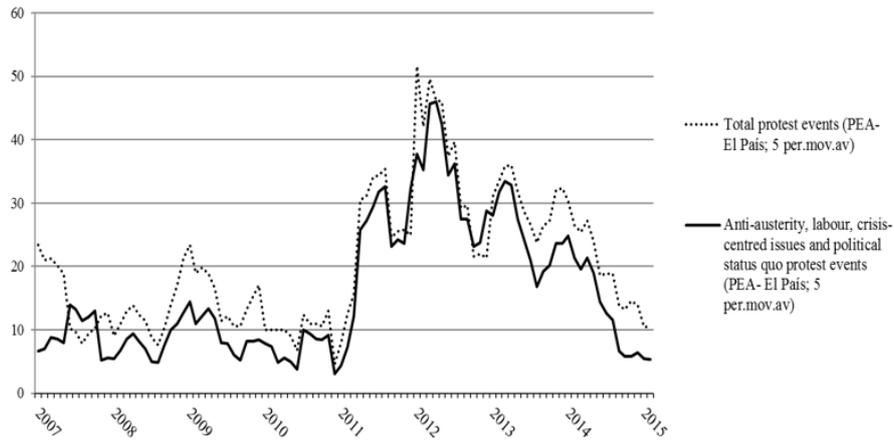


FIGURE 1. Number of monthly protest events in Spain, 01/2007- 02/2015. Y= events. X= months (01/2007-02/2015). Dotted line: all-type protest events, 5-period moving average. Continuous line: anti-austerity, labour, economic crisis-centred and anti-political status quo protest events, 5-period moving average. Data retrieved from a self-collected Protest Event Analysis, El País (N=2,002). Own collection and elaboration. See Portos (2016a, 2016b).

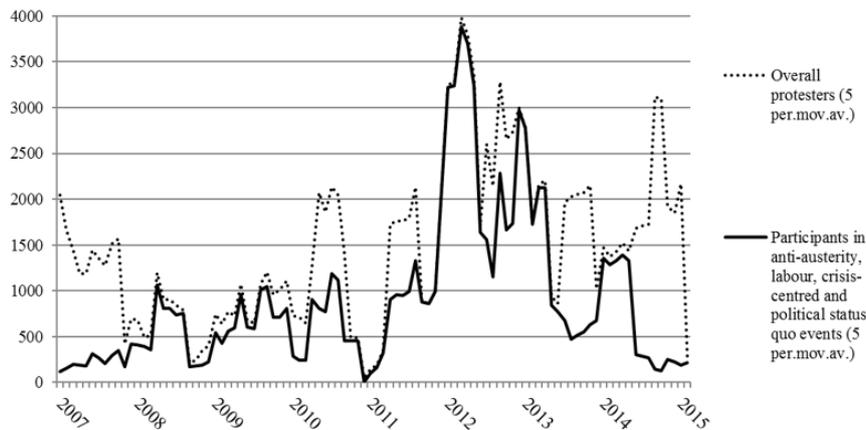


FIGURE 2. Weighted number of monthly participants in protest events in Spain, 01/2007- 02/2015. Y= participants in protests (in thousands). X= months (01/2007-02/2015). Dotted line: participants in all types of protest events, 5-period moving average. Continuous line: participants in anti-austerity, labour, economic crisis-centred and political status quo events, 5-period moving average. Data retrieved from a self- collected Protest Event Analysis, El País (N=2,002). Own collection and elaboration. See Portos (2016a, 2016b).

Generally speaking, levels of public contestation decreased in the country after 2003, “but a multi-layered network of activists with different trajectories and experiences forged spaces for dissent and encounter besides those of the mainstream channels” (Portos 2016a: 192). Activists in the shadow of austerity built on synergies from a number of precursor campaigns

and organisational endeavours such as the Global Justice Movement, the student movement, *Rompamos el Silencio* (“Let’s Break the Silence”) and the movement for decent housing (Díez García 2017; Flesher Fominaya 2015; Zamponi and Fernández 2017). Mass mobilisations against pro-austerity policies and the economic U-turn of the social democratic PSOE government started in September 2010 with the first general strike called for by the main unions and smaller organisations in eight years. Protesters reacted against the Labour Law reform, freezing pensions and cutting back on public employees’ salaries. Traditional actors of civil society, such as unions, other well-established social movement organisations— and also NGO’s and professional organisations— played a leading role at organising dissent during the first momentum that can be distinguished on the basis of protest claims, key organisers and core demands under the Great Recession (table 1). Although this infrastructure was important to build a social climate willing to contest the political and socioeconomic status quo, these agents’ capacity to keep standards of mobilisation high over time was limited.

However, a protest campaign marked a dramatic turning point. According to Martí i Puig (2011: 209), on 15 May 2011 “the group *¡Democracia Real Ya!* (“Real Democracy Now!”) organised a protest in the centre of [...the Spanish capital], which was met by repression on the part of the authorities. This in itself was nothing new in Madrid, where the police have tended to be rather firm. However, the reaction of many sympathisers was to protest, within a few hours meeting in the heart of the city: the Plaza del Sol”. Adapting some tactics from Tahrir’s challengers, they occupied the square in order to create a camp. The information diffused through online social networks, and occupations spread across most Spanish cities over the subsequent hours. “A non-partisan and heterogeneous campaign gradually took form in open, public and popular assemblies, which set up specific commissions and working groups that ensured grassroots voluntary involvement and horizontal organization” (Portos 2016a: 193). The 15M was a historical revolt because of the numbers, the media salience, the cross-national dimension and popular support— even two years after these mobilisations had been triggered, three out of every four Spaniards showed sympathetic feelings towards the 15M’s core claims (Sampedro and Lobera 2014).

EVOLUTION OF PROTEST DYNAMICS				
	EARLY RISERS	15-M & PEAK		DEMOBILISATION & ELECTORAL MOBILISATION
Main actors	Trade Unions, "new" social movements (ecologist, feminist, student movement), alternative left.	New anti-austerity and for real democracy organisations (Juventud Sin Futuro, Democracia Real Ya!), territorial assemblies.	a) Anti-austerity and for real democracy, 15-M and offspring – PAH, 15-M assemblies and its offspring	Podemos
			b) Traditional actors: – Trade Unions	Ganemos
			c) New Coalitions: – Marchas de la Dignidad, Rodea el Congreso, Mareas Ciudadanas	Popular Unity Candidacies (municipal election)
Main events/ major performances	General strike (29/09/2010)	7/04/2011: Juventud Sin Futuro	Rodea el Congreso (25/09/2012)	European election (25/05/2014)
	Protests against the reform of the pension system (01/2011)	15/05/2011: demonstrations in +50 cities	Citizen tides (2012-2014)	Marcha del Cambio launched by Podemos (31/01/2015)
		Camps in most cities (05-06/2011)	General strikes (29/03/2012 and 14/11/2012)	Local election (24/05/2015)
		19/06/2011: demonstration against Euroagreement (global action)	Marchas Dignidad (22/03/2013)	
		15/10/11: marching against austerity (global action day)	No nos vamos, nos echan (7/04/2013)	
		PAH's ILP, escraches (05-06/2013): anti-evictions		
Demands/ claims	Anti-austerity	Anti-austerity	Anti-austerity	Anti-austerity
	Against unemployment and worsening of working conditions	Anti-corruption	Anti-corruption	Anti-corruption
		Real Democracy	Real democracy	Participatory democracy
			Alternative public policies New institutions, Constituent Process	Alternative public policies New government to change politics-as-usual
Main spatial dimension/scope	National	Local, national, international		Local, national

TABLE 1. Chronological overview of actors, events, claims and scope related to protest under the Great Recession in Spain, 2007-2015.

Importantly, the 15M campaign fostered the subsequent wave of anti-austerity protests—precisely, explaining the persistence of high levels of extra-conventional mobilisation after the 15M events until late 2013 is the aim of this paper. Finally, the third phase of the cycle concerns extra-conventional demobilisation, which unfolds in parallel to a process of institutionalisation. When the latter is triggered since late 2013, certain movement sectors focus on the electoral domain, particularly by creating and supporting new forces that embody and channel some of the protesters’ core claims (Calvo and Álvarez 2015; Feenstra 2015; Martín 2015).

3. NO-RADICALISATION?

Theories of the cycles of collective action usually contend that a wave of protest escalates on top of pre-existing movements, until reaching a peak, as resources become available and opportunities open up (Tarrow 1989, 2011; della Porta and Diani: ch.7). After a triggering point, competition between organisations increases, and demobilisation usually comes about from the intertwined institutionalisation and radicalisation processes, which foster divisions among challengers. On the one hand, increased access to officials and government concessions may whet the appetite of some protesters, making some of these challengers opt for institutionalised routes.⁷ On the other hand, some challengers prefer to stick to extra-conventional forms of action, become more radical and suffer a sectarian involution, “particularly as small political organizations operating on the margins of large public actions try to establish themselves against their competitors” (della Porta and Tarrow 1986: 611-612). Hence, the institutionalisation-radicalisation tandem would explain protest decline: people defect either because reforms and concessions satisfy them or fear of violence prevents them from engaging in further action (Tarrow 1989, 2011; Jung 2010).

Radicalisation of repertoires of contention refers to certain movement organisations’ shift from predominantly nonviolent tactics to predominantly violent tactics in order to achieve articulated political goals (Alimi et al. 2015). This process is understood in a relational way, as a result of a spiral of negative and unforeseen feedback that comes from the interactions between relevant actors (particularly, challengers and authorities)— see della Porta and Diani (2006); Alimi et al. (2015). Accordingly, in order to shed light on radicalisation, not only the protesters’ tactics but the dynamics of policing in contentious activities are to be taken into

⁷ Tarrow (2011: 207) defines institutionalisation as “a movement away from extreme ideologies and/or the adoption of a more conventional and less disruptive forms of contention”.

account.⁸ By considering these two dimensions, in the light of the Protest Event Analysis data used throughout, such trend towards radicalisation cannot be observed for the 2007-2015 period in Spain (figure 3).⁹

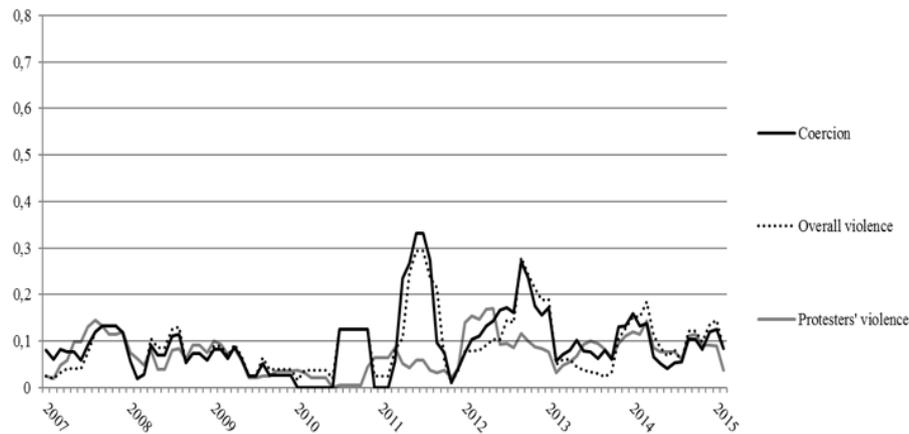


FIGURE 3. Repression and violence in protest events in Spain, 01/2007-02/2015. Coercion refers to the overall degree of coercion, based on the type tactics taken by authorities against demonstrators (measured on a 0-3 scale; dark continuous line). Protesters' violence assesses whether activists used violence at all (light continuous line; dummy variable). Overall violence captures intensity of disorder severity (measured on a 0-4 scale; dotted line). Data from a self-gathered Protest Event Analysis retrieved from *El País* (N=2,002). Own collection and elaboration.¹⁰

Although “non-violence is one of the pillars of the *indignados*” (Romanos 2016), coercion on the side of authorities was more intense and activists' use of violent repertoires was more usual at some specific time points during the cycle of protest. However, these dramatic shocks

⁸ Following Karapın (2007), I distinguish among 1) semi-conventional strategies (if using or promoting routine forms of participation in order to bargain and compromise with opponents), 2) mild or 3) severe disruptive strategies (if disrupting political-economic routines in nonviolent ways through more moderate—e.g. rallying— or more disruptive repertoires— e.g. occupations—), and 4) militant strategies (if using intimidation and coercion by threatening opponents or engaging in violence).

⁹ *Protesters' violence* is a dummy that captures whether protesters resorted to violent tactics of any kind (weapons, physical, other, etc.). *Coercion* is measured on a 0-3 scale: 0) no known coercion, 1) low-level coercion (sporadic arrests and/or injuries, defined as less than ten), 2) substantial coercion (defined as ten to seventy-five arrests or ten to forty injuries), 3) major violence by authorities (defined as more than seventy-five arrests or more than forty injuries). *Overall violence* takes into account human and property damage inflicted by coercion and demonstrators' violence. A five-point interval scale adapted from Spilerman (1976) is used— the maximum category of violence is selected provided at least two of the described items apply: 0) no violence, 1) low intensity (bottle throwing, some fighting, little property damage, crowd size < 125, arrests < 15, injuries < 8); 2) moderate violence (rock and bottle throwing, fighting, looting, serious property damage, some arson, 75-250 crowd size, 10-30arrests; 5-15 injuries); 3) substantial violence (looting, arson, and property destruction, 200-500 crowd size, 25-75 arrests, 10-40 injuries); 4) high intensity-major violence (defined as bloodshed and destruction, +400 crowd size, +65 arrests, +35 injuries).

¹⁰ The picture for the subsample of anti-political status quo, labour, crisis-related and anti-austerity events do not change substantially (not reported here).

tend to be rare and coincide with the peaks of protest (figures 1-3).¹¹ For instance, a few thousands camped in front of the Catalan Parliament in Barcelona on 14-16 June 2011. Under the motto *Aturem el Parlament* (“Let’s stop the parliament”), protesters aimed at blocking the scheduled plenary session and deterring the deputies from approving a constrained regional budget that will lead to cuts in public expenditure, investment and welfare policies. As a result of the confrontation between challengers and authorities, charges were brought against 19 activists— 8 of them were sentenced by the Supreme Court to 3 years in prison each on grounds of crimes against the State’s institutions (http://www.eldiario.es/politica/Supremo-absolucion-acusados-Parlament-condena_0_367463656.html). Also, thousands got involved in the march organised by *Plataforma ¡en pie!* to “surround” the Congress in September 2012, which aimed at bringing “sovereignty back to the peoples”— although the contentious performance was initially peaceful, incidents and rioting activities followed after the police’s break up of a sitting, which ended up with 34 arrested and 64 injured people (Portos 2016a). Finally, some urban clashes between challengers and police took place in the first half of 2014 in different parts of the country. While neighbours in the underprivileged Gamonal neighbourhood (Burgos) rioted to counter the city council plans to transform a boulevard for pedestrians into a parking area, the eviction of squatters from the Can Vies social centre in Barcelona caused a local uproar (Portos 2016a).

Although some sporadic violent encounters between police and challengers could be observed throughout the cycle’s lifespan, a general trend towards radicalisation did not happen (figure 3). Not only levels of violence on the side of challengers’ tactics were relatively low as the wave of protest unfolded, but also policing strategies did not deploy much direct repression. According to data from the *Ministerio del Interior* (“Ministry of Home Affairs”), police resorted to force in 0.08 percent of the events staged in the period 2013-2015 (Romanos 2016). Even though neither the levels of repression through direct, traditional— and arguably more socially contested— means nor the levels of violent tactics among protesters increased in the demobilisation phase of the wave, policing and surveillance of protest activities became more intense. Not accidentally, in the context of austerity policies, the restrictive 2013 National Budget foresaw an astronomical 1780% increase in anti-riot equipment relative to 2012 (<http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2012/10/30/economia/1351613307.html>; Martín García 2014: 304). In order to avoid public criticism and camouflage toughening of police action, the

¹¹ The picture on repression and violence in the subsample of anti-political status quo, labour, crisis-related and anti-austerity events only do not change substantially (not reported here).

government led by Mariano Rajoy has usually deployed softer, more subtle and less coercive tactics since 2011, such as implementing new legislative measures to constrain protesters' rights, performing identity checks and fining challengers.

Contrary to what data suggest, the government and media often represented (particularly young) people who engaged in both traditional and novel forms of protest as a serious threat to social order. Drawing on time-honoured fears of tumultuous crowds, a major legislative change was enacted in 2015 in response to constraint and restrict the right to protest, the so-called "Law for Protection of Citizen Safety", also known as the "Gag Law"— the draft bill was initially presented in late 2013 (Calvo and Portos 2018). Among the more indirect, incentive-based and less visible— yet effective— mechanisms, conducting indiscriminate personal identity checks and fining participants in contentious performances can be highlighted. While the first makes individuals more vulnerable as fears related to lost anonymity arise, the second punishes a population that is particularly vulnerable to economic sanctions in a context of recession and increasing deprivation. As Martín García (2014: 306) puts it, "in order to avoid paying the fines, activists have to enter a cumbersome 'bureaucratic hell' which diverts energy and means away from active protest to simple anti-repressive resistance. It therefore seems that the authorities have understood that, in a situation of serious economic crisis, a heavy fine can be a better deterrent than a truncheon". Hence, the strategy of individualising repression adopted by the *Ministerio del Interior* ("Ministry of Home Affairs") aimed "to hinder solidarity between those who have been fined and other citizens" (Martín García 2014: 305).

To sum up, neither protesters embrace more radical repertoires of action nor authorities increase repression through traditional coercive means as the cycle unfolds. The level of protest surveillance has been high though, with policing strategies evolving from more direct to softer mechanisms of repression. Contrary to what traditional theories of cycles of collective action would predict, radicalisation did not account for the trajectory of protest after the 15M campaign. New organisational forms would be created as conflict intensifies, increasing competitiveness as old organisations are pushed towards the social movement sector (Tarrow 1989, 1993; della Porta and Diani: ch.7; della Porta and Tarrow 1986). This move leads to a shift of aspirations: whereas some movement sectors suffer a sectarian involution, resorting to more radical tactics, the most moderate groups tend to opt for more routinised channels. As the Spanish case shows, collaborative— i.e. not competitive— strategies might prevail when collaboration is on the interest of both old and new actors. While the first want to keep

dominating the mobilisation arena, the second seek to appeal to broader audiences and keep their constituencies mobilised by delivering mass protests. Neither radicalisation nor demobilisation may follow in the short term. Specifically, I argue that the 15M campaign had a transformative capacity in the field of mobilisation, whose impact on subsequent protest performances (and the persistence of the peak until late 2013) is shaped by the two mechanisms that are explored next.

4. PROTESTING AFTER THE EVENTFUL 15M: DOWNWARD SCALE SHIFT AND COALITION BUILDING

The 15M campaign was a critical momentum within the Spanish cycle of protest. It had a high degree of *eventfulness* (della Porta 2008). The eventful character of protest events or campaigns stresses their transformative capacity, as they become “turning points in structural change, concentrated moments of political and cultural creativity when the logic of historical development is reconfigured by human action but by no means abolished” (McAdam and Sewell 2001: 102; Sewell 1996; della Porta 2008). A transformative event— or campaign— refers to “a crucial turning point for a social movement that dramatically increases or decreases the level of mobilization” (Hess and Martin 2006: 249). This implies that protest events must not be regarded merely as an *explanandum*. According to Meyer and Kimeldorf (2015: 429), events “are also social mechanisms of their own with the capacity to initiate change across multiple registers and levels of explanation”. In other words, events can become the *explanans*.

New subjectivities might be built through events. These events may also influence social relations by intensifying social interaction in action, forging solidarities and changing available resources. Furthermore, events might contribute to loosening and shaping different mechanisms that transform social structures. Building on extant literature, della Porta (2008) distinguishes between three types of mechanisms that mediate the consequences of protest on protestors: “*cognitive mechanisms*, with protest as an arena of debates; *relational mechanisms*, that bring about protest network [and flows of communication]; and *emotional mechanisms*, with the development of feelings of solidarity ‘in action’” and affective ties (della Porta 2008: 31-32; McAdam et al. 2001). Assessing which factors account for the eventful capacity that some campaigns have is crucial to trace protest trajectories. Building on this perspective, I argue that the 15M campaign consisted of a set of transformative events that shaped the trajectory of subsequent collective actions. This campaign was the triggering point of a peak

of protest that persisted over the two subsequent years— until late 2013—, with multiple fronts of collective contention against austerity open at the same time (anti-evictions, citizens’ tides fighting cuts against education, the public health system, etc.). Specifically, two relational mechanisms would account for the transformative impact that the 15M campaign had on the mobilisation sphere, downward scale shift and coalition building.¹²

4.1. Going back to the roots? Downward scale shift after the 15M

Similar to the 1965-1975 Italian cycle of protest, the Spanish wave did not rise “like a volcano on a plain consent, [contention] was like a rolling tide that engulfed different sectors of society at different times” (Tarrow 1989: 339). As mobilisations unfolded across sectors, the bases of social conflict shifted. Not only dissent spread across layers of society, but contention diffused to different levels of the polity, with new institutional settings and additional actors coming into play. Precisely, scale shift is a mechanism associated to diffusion processes that refers to the “change in the number and level of coordinated contentious actions leading to broader contention involving a wider range of actors and bridging their claims and identities” (McAdam et al. 2001; Tarrow 2011: 193). Normally, scale shift in political contention would be upwards, from local to translocal (even transnational) spheres. As a policephalous, decentralised network of actors gradually integrates and coordinates, it brings about changes in the actors and their interactions. In contrast to this, downward scale shift is at play when coordinated contentious activities fragment— e.g. the local level takes up national issues, as it happened with anti-austerity protests after the 15M triggering campaign.¹³

Despite the mobilisation success, right after the May-June 2011 occupations, the 15M underwent a period of transition, as it took on a more active role at the local-level (Portos 2016a). From a general campaign that aimed at changing the political and socioeconomic system, the 15M abandoned the visible occupation of central squares and decentralised through neighbourhood assemblies. As Perugorría and Tejerina (2013) highlight, by *going back* to neighbourhoods, the 15M might have lost media visibility and overall participants in the short term. However, this transformation helped activists reconnect with its grassroots public, the

¹² Relational mechanisms are those that “alter connections among people, groups, and interpersonal networks” (McAdam et al. 2001: 26).

¹³ Although downward scale shift might increase in contentious performances through direct social action and solidarity initiatives, such as cooperatives, markets, etc. (Bosi and Zamponi 2015), consistent with available literature on cycles and my PEA dataset, I emphasise the protest dimension throughout.

everyday problems and pressing needs of citizens, beyond the ideational and pre-figurative type of practices that were carried out in the 15M camps. As they decentralised, the *indignados* also specialised and compartmentalised in diverse areas (e.g. fighting for decent housing conditions).

Generally speaking, social movement decentralisation is meant to be detrimental for further mobilisation prospects, as it might “inhibit learning, constrict resources, and inhibit strategic coordination” (Ganz 2010: 559). However, I argue that the decentralisation and specialisation in specific fronts of contention contributed decisively to the persistence of the peak of protest, as they allowed to set more easily attainable goals and enhance rewards from action involvement. It is well-known that activism is resource demanding, in terms of time, social and psychological commitment, and so on (Tarrow 2011; Fillieule 2013). The “exhaustion of the rewards of involvement”, together with the evaporation of the initial euphoria of the *springtime of peoples*, would usually contribute to demobilisation (Fillieule 2013). However, focusing on specific strands of contention, allowed Spanish anti-austerity activists to give priority to fighting specific, smaller battles and to set more easily attainable goals. As the scale of contention decreased, the— actual and expected— rewards from involvement tended to be better defined. For instance, citizen mobilisations were key for stopping the government attempts at privatising some public hospitals’ management on the grounds of efficiency, such as *La Princesa* in Madrid. Also, the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (“Platform of Those Affected by Mortgages”, PAH) managed to stop more than 2,000 evictions and rehoused about 2,500 people in occupied buildings all over the country, according to their own figures (<http://afectadosporlahipoteka.com/>; updated 09/2017).

The efforts at decentralising have engendered some spill over effects. On the one hand, as activists increasingly aim at redressing pressing circumstances, building alliances with sector-specific agents became more plausible. On the other hand, new anti-austerity actors, their strategies, and frames gained public legitimacy as they tended to specialise in arenas and conflicts widely supported across society. For instance, *escraches*, which are a type of low-intensity disruptive performance that consists of publicly condemning and putting pressure on relevant actors such as policy-makers in order to expose them and push them into a certain course of action, have enjoyed high popular support during the cycle— almost 90% of Spaniards approved these tactics, according to some polls (Romanos 2014: 299).

4.2. Dancing a loosely coupled together tango: coalition building between unions and new actors

Although coalitions are among the most vital tools social movements have in their tactical repertoire, research on social movement alliances is “surprisingly small relative to the significance of the topic”, as Isaac (2010: 22) concedes.¹⁴ A social movement coalition “exist[s] at any time two or more social movement organisations work together on a common task [...while] partners maintain separate organizational structures” (van Dyke and McCammon 2010: xiv-xv). Therefore, coalitions are agreements between organisations to collectively address a given set of political objectives or policies (Heaney and Rojas 2008). By forming coalitions, activists and organisations pursue establishing specific goals, rules of interaction, boundaries and bringing stability on what are more typically multipurpose, unruly, unbounded, and dynamic structures (Heaney and Rojas 2008: 42). As coalitions integrate the work of myriad organisations that mobilise individual participants, they may contribute to meso-mobilisation of social movements (Gerhards and Rucht 1992). By joining a coalition, partner organisations may benefit from increasing and sharing resources, gaining expertise, efficiency and enhancing their political influence.¹⁵ These alliances may have varying duration (collaborations may be occasional and short-lived or persist over time), encompass different interests (pursuing more or less similar goals), involve divergent degrees of formality (as regards to the nature of the links between organisations), resources, etc.

Importantly, neither a high degree of agreement nor dense exchanges of information between actors are required to form coalitions. Actions between allies could be very loosely coordinated provided that ties between them are informal, and may be established on an *ad hoc* basis for a specific protest event but not pursue further collaboration (van Dyke and McCammon 2010: xv; Heaney and Rojas 2008). Based on extant literature, we know that coalitions often dissolve prematurely. Longevity of alliances is endogenous to the political process, as they might dissolve due to changes in the political opportunity structures and dwindling resources (van Dyke and McCammon 2010; Heaney and Rojas 2008; Staggenborg 1986). Also, they are more likely to fail when they become plagued by ideological and personality conflicts, when framing disputes occur and when individual members of the

¹⁴ Note that the terms “coalitions” and “alliances” are used interchangeably throughout.

¹⁵ Note that joining a coalition may also engender risks and costs for organisations (e.g. loss of autonomy, potential conflict with partners, alteration of strategic choices, compromise identity, etc.), as Heaney and Rojas (2008) argue.

coalition pose sufficient resources to operate independently (Jones et al. 2001; Staggenborg 1986). However, I contend that specific performative campaigns such as the 15M might have an impact on the formation of coalitions within a cycle of protest, positively contributing toward alliance building and toward keeping high levels of mobilisation.

On the one hand, only well-established actors such as the major unions have organisational resources (in terms of experience, money, status, networks, access to officials and media) that allow to perform mass contentious activities in the long term and, therefore, contribute to the persistence of the peak of protest. On the other hand, the 15M campaign changed the power balance between actors within the contentious politics' arena. In the months following May 2011, new organisations proliferated. As Romanos (2016: 139) puts it, “mobilization has caused a change in the field of social movements with the rise of new actors (e.g., local assemblies, collective self-management initiatives such as consumer cooperatives and food banks, the so-called ‘tides’ on labour sectors such as health and education) and the strengthening of existing ones (among others, the Platform of those Affected by Mortgages and the wider movement against evictions)”. More than 1,000 new organisations, the 15M’s offspring, were active at fighting austerity across the country in early 2012 (Gómez 2013). They showed a huge mobilisation capacity and gained popular support. Importantly, unions started to lose the lead in the social mobilisation field in favour of these new anti-austerity grassroots actors such as the 15M assemblies (figure 4).

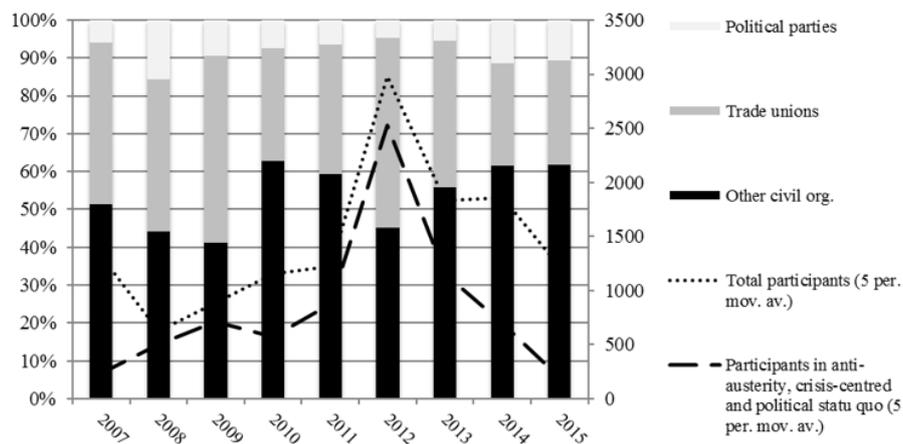


FIGURE 4. Participants and organisers of protest events in Spain (PEA, 01/2007-02/2015). Annual level of aggregation, monthly averages. Y-axis (left): (weighted) number of participants (in thousands, 5-period moving averages, monthly prorated annual data; continuous variable). Y-axis (right): percentage of events. X-axis: time- years. Columns: percentage of events organised by political parties, unions and other civil society organisations. Multiple choices were possible. Data were weighted by the number of events and adjusted to a 0-100 scale. Dotted line: participants in all type of protest events.

Dashed line: participants in anti-austerity, labour, crisis-centred and political status quo events. Source: data retrieved from my PEA, El País (N= 2,002). Own collection and elaboration.

It should be noted that new and more established actors often cohabitated amidst tension: while new organisations tend to regard major unions as part of the status quo that they were born to challenge, traditional civil society actors would not normally see new actors as credible and potential partners. However, new actors shared many reasons and claims for contestation with the unions, and many events resulted from the collaboration between old (e.g. major unions) and new organisations born during the wave of protest. Furthermore, some encompassing, mass— yet arguably intermittent and occasional— contentious performances jointly organised by unions and new organisations account for most peaks of protest throughout the cycle’s lifespan (figures 1-2, 4; Portos 2016a).

For instance, more than 1.5 million Spaniards, called by the largest unions (CCOO, UGT) in collaboration with new anti-austerity organisations marched against the conservative PP government’s Labour Law reform in February 2012 (figure 4). The involvement of anti-austerity challengers was key for mobilising hundreds of thousands across the country in the two general strikes that were held later in March and November 2012. Many of these new organisations formed critical sectors both in the performances against the Labour Law reform and the general strikes— they even carried banners against the slow and mild reaction of the unions at countering pro-austerity policies. Another stance of collaboration concerns the coal miners’ marches in July 2012 against the government’s policies in relation to the coal mining industry (figure 4). Sectorial committees and unions coordinated the marches— which lasted for weeks— along hundreds of kilometres from the main catchment areas (Asturias, León) to Madrid. Thousands of anti-austerity activists welcomed and supported the miners along their way and upon their arrival in the Spanish capital.

Other— arguably the most important— joint endeavours concern the *mareas ciudadanas* (“citizen tides”). These are broad networks and platforms of anti-austerity activists created to defend public services in specific issues, which usually accepted support from unions. Moreover, the unions’ involvement, I contend, was crucial to delivering their most transversal, mass and encompassing performances. The two most rebellious *mareas* have been the *verde* and *blanca* ones (“green” and “white tides”), which stood for defending the quality and conditions of the public education system and health assistance in the light of cutbacks in public spending— note that more than €10 billion were slashed in each of these two sectors since the

onset of the recession. While the *marea blanca* in Madrid encompassed activists, patients and professionals, in Catalonia it was “more atomised and fragmented, without any clear central nodes, very closely linked to neighbouring and union *petit fights*” (Portos 2016a: 201). Given that major unions neither strongly contested the cuts approved by regional governments in the educational sector in 2012-2013 nor countered the government’s intention to pass the bill of education (LOMCE),¹⁶ the *Red Verde* platform (“Green Network”) and various transversal teachers’ assemblies (that involved students, parents, smaller unions and other organisations) took the lead, which union actors ended up endorsing. All in all, unions were necessary for multiple mass events to succeed. My data show that traditional actors such as unions have been crucial for organising dissent throughout the cycle of protest (figure 4).

5. CONCLUSION

This article updates and refines traditional accounts of the cycles of collective behaviour. Internal divisions between moderate factions and radical strands are supposed to lead to the radicalisation-institutionalisation tandem, which bring the cycle to an end. Contending with this approach, I find that the trajectory of a wave of contention is not determined by the institutionalisation-radicalisation pairing when collaborative— to the detriment of competitive— strategies between new and old organisations prevail. A trend towards radicalisation is never observed in the cycle of protest against austerity and the political status quo that unfolded in the shadow of the Great Recession in Spain. In this case, the 15M campaign transformed the realm of contention after the initial occupations and the peak of protest persisted until late 2013 thanks to, on the one hand, decentralisation and specialisation of challengers in specific issues at the local-level and, on the other hand, the ability of new grassroots anti-austerity actors and more established organisations, such as the major unions, to cohabit and forge— arguably informal— alliances. Institutionalisation (mostly through new party formation— e.g. Podemos) comes into play since late 2013, as protest declines.

To what extent the account developed throughout can help us to understand the dynamics of contention in other scenarios remains an empirical question. Drawing general statements from case studies raises legitimate concerns. In fact, some discontinuities can be observed in similar scenarios. Whereas Portugal’s anti-austerity protests might have never experienced

¹⁶ This bill was heavily contested by different actors on the grounds of individual schools’ loss of autonomy, change in the university access system, discrimination of minority languages, etc.

downward scale shift after the March 2011 *Geração à Rasca* (“Desperate Generation”) events, there has been some degree of radicalisation of the Greek *indignados*’ action repertoires and police responses (Diani and Kousis 2014). However, a key argument developed throughout is consistent with some preliminary findings in these contexts: the main unions and labour mobilisations have been key to sustain protest over time in Greece and Portugal (Accornero and Ramos Pinto 2015; Kanellopoulos et al. 2016). According to Diani and Kousis (2014: 401), “we should note the persistent role of union-related events (in particular, general strikes) in weaving together different phases of contention, and in providing an occasional bridge to the actions promoted by the movement of the squares, despite the latter’s principled hostility to established political actors”. The interplay of coalition building and downward scale shift, as well as their potential to shape trajectories of protest, present a promising avenue for inquiry in scenarios that saw mass dissent organised under the Great Recession— and beyond—, which should be further explored.

Also, two additional topics warrant further investigation. On the one hand, we know that radicalisation did not happen in Spain and that both old and new organisations adopted collaborative strategies. However, we ignore how these strategies are configured in the first place, and which (contextual, cultural, organisational) factors determine no-radicalisation. Specifically, researchers can try to identify common patterns in the bargaining processes that make different actors adjust their preferences at the intra- and inter-organisational levels. On the other hand, we know little about which specific mechanisms shape movements’ institutionalisation dynamics. Looking at institutionalisation processes embedded in processes such as coalition building between social movement organisations and unions— or triggered at different points in the cycle (other than during the demobilisation phase and from a longer-term perspective)—, might be ways to overcome deterministic thinking around institutionalisation and extra-conventional demobilisation (Bosi 2016). In fact, given that competition, divisions and radicalisation do not necessarily follow after a turning point in protest, as this article has tried to show, the trajectories of contention remain open-ended and relational processes.

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7. APPENDIX

	<i>varname</i>	description	measurement
1	<i>newsname</i>	Name of newspaper.	Always entered as EP (that stands for El País)
2	<i>dayre</i>	Day of report.	Range: 1– 31
3	<i>monthre</i>	Month of report.	Range: 1– 12
4	<i>yearre</i>	Year of report.	Range: 06– 14
5	<i>link</i>	Web link of report.	URL.
6	<i>paragraph</i>	A count of the number of paragraphs in the article. When an event is covered in multiple articles, this count is updated to reflect the total coverage across all articles.	Continuous.
7	<i>artev</i>	Number of articles that cover a given event.	Continuous.
8	<i>title</i>	Full title of coded article.	Nominal.
9	<i>austeriteconomicsit</i>	Is this event related to austerity, labour issues, unemployment and against policy-political status quo issues?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
10	<i>policystatusquo</i>	Is this event related to the political status quo or specific policies?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
11	<i>auslabpol</i>	Is this event related to labor issues or unemployment?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
12	<i>terrorism</i>	Is this event related to terrorism or political violence?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
13	<i>minority languages and nat</i>	Is this event related to nationalist issues or minority languages issues?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
14	<i>education</i>	Is this event related to education?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
15	<i>health</i>	Is this event related to health or the health system?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
16	<i>housing</i>	Is this event related to housing?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
17	<i>neighbor-urban-ecologist</i>	Is this event related to neighbour, urban or ecologist issues?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
18	<i>other</i>	Is this event related to other issues?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0= no.
19	<i>dayev</i>	Day of event (starting point).	1– 31.
20	<i>monthev</i>	Month of event.	1– 12.
21	<i>yearev</i>	Year of event.	07– 15.
22	<i>evID</i>	Event ID.	Event ID is set in the form yymmnnn, where yy is the two-digit year, mm is the two-digit month, and nnn is an integer incremented for each event in a given month. For example, 1107001 represents the first event for the month of July, 2011.
23	<i>duration</i>	Number of days event lasted.	Continuous.

(CONTINUED)

24	<i>initiat</i>	Events are coded as having been initiated by members of identifiable social, racial or ethnic groups.	Categories: 0) undefined-heterogeneous, 1) unemployed/precariat, 2) youngsters and students, 3) women, 4) immigrants, 5) professional groups, 6) medical patients, 7) people living in a specific neighbourhood.
25	<i>who</i>	Which social groups participated in the event (narrative).	Categories: 1) unemployed/precariat, 2) youngsters, 3) women, 4) immigrants.
26	<i>orgcivil</i>	Whether mobilisations were civil society-led or exclusively organised by more or less established intermediary institutions of representations (e.g. political parties, unions). This groups involves: neighbour and ecologist associations, foundations, minority groups.	1= civil society-led, 0= only driven by intermediary institutions.
27	<i>orgunion</i>	Was the event driven by trade union-driven organisations?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0=no
28	<i>orgparty</i>	Was the event driven by political party-driven organisations?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0=no.
29	<i>orgparticip</i>	Were specific organisations mentioned as participating in the event?	Dummy: whether specific organisations were identified as actually being involved in the event (not observing, not commenting, but participating), regardless their type (i.e. more civil society or intermediary institutions-led).
30	<i>orgname1-orgname3</i>	What is the name of the organiser(s) (I)	Nominal. Examples: DRY, JSF, specific trade unions (e.g. UGT, CCOO), parties (e.g. IU, UPyD, PSOE).
31	<i>what1-what3</i>	What happened at the event (repertoire of actions).	1=human chain, marching and demonstrating; 2=mass meeting or gathering inside or in a public space/square or in front of a public institution or party (involves escraches and caceroladas); 3=gathering inside or in front of a private enterprise or house (involves escraches and caceroladas); 4=occupation/sitting or camping/setting tents in public areas or private facilities, besiege; 5=obstruction of roads-public spaces and infrastructures-transport; 6=rioting/uprising; 7=hunger strike; 8=symbolic/theatrical performance; 9=boycott; 10=strike; 11=petition/letters/lawsuit/self-accusation/leafleting; 12=hanging banners/placards on public or private buildings; 13= hostile confrontations, sabotage, assaulting, beatings, attacking people or facilities; 14= self-harming and chaining; 15= non-binding vote.
32	<i>disrup</i>	Degree of actions' disruptiveness.	Following Karapın (2007), I distinguish among semi-conventional (=1; =11 & 15 in the <i>what</i> variables), mildly disruptive (=2; =1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12 & 14 in the <i>what</i> variables — except escraches in 2 & 3), severely disruptive and (=3; =escraches, 4, 5, 6 & 9 in the <i>what</i> variables) militant (=4; =13 in the <i>what</i> variables) strategies. The conventional strategy consists of promoting routine forms of participation, such as petitions, and hearings, with a willingness to bargain and compromise with opponents. The disruptive strategy entails the disruption of political or economic routines in nonviolent ways in order to get public attention, gain public support, influence elites, seize control of important resources, spur broad policy debates and gain policy reforms.
33	<i>where</i>	Exact location of the event.	Categories: 1) square, 2) streets, 3) (inside or in front of) official building/ public infrastructures, 4) (inside or in front of) private company/location, 5) sea/river .
34	<i>town</i>	Town or city where it took place.	Nominal.
35	<i>region</i>	Region of event.	Nominal.
36	<i>townoth0</i>	Whether the event took place in another town or city.	Dummy: 1= yes, 0=no. Note that 589 events (i.e. 29.4% of the total
37	<i>townoth1-townoth2</i>	Another town or city where it took place.	Nominal. If more than 3 locations are reported, "multiple" is introduced plus the categorical information (e.g. "54 towns", "17 regions", "in every province", etc.).
38	<i>popn</i>	The exact population of the city, town or village in which the event occurred.	Data from census.

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39	<i>purpose</i>	Description of the purpose of the event.	Narrative.
40	<i>against</i>	Whether the target (the party against which the event was directed) was clearly identifiable.	Dummy: 1=yes, 0=no.
41	<i>target1-target2</i>	Main target of protests.	1= national government/state/parties; 2= European public institutions; 3= local public institutions/parties; 4= foreign government/state; 5= private/business; 6= university/school; 7= specific politicians; 8= other/unclear.
42	<i>participrep</i>	Whether numbers of event participants is taken from reported figures or not.	1 if exact number of participants is reported or estimated (otherwise= 0).
43	<i>particippol</i>	The exact number of participants reported as taking part in the event, as reported or estimated by the police, government or official authorities.	Continuous.
44	<i>participnews</i>	The exact number of participants reported as taking part in the event, as reported or estimated by the newspaper.	Continuous.
45	<i>participorg</i>	The exact number of participants reported as taking part in the event, as reported or estimated by the organisers.	Continuous.
46	<i>participest</i>	The exact number of participants is inferred from textual clues ("several thousands", "many hundreds", "some dozens", "a few", etc.) or estimated thanks to other sources.	Range:1-11. The following categories were used: 1) <100 participants; 2) 100–999; 3) 1,000–4,999; 4) 5,000–9,999; 5) 10,000–19,999; 6) 20,000–49,999; 7) 50,000–99,999; 8) 100,000–199,999; 9) 200,000–499,999 and 10) 500,000 or more participants. When the cues are too vague to give it a specific category, a range of categories is created (e.g. "hundreds of thousands" would be 9-10, "some" or "a few thousands" would be 4-5; "several thousands" would be 5-7, "many hundreds" would be 2-3, etc.)
47	<i>participest_cont</i>	The variable <i>participest</i> is transformed into a continuous indicator. Average values are assigned within each of the categories, unless more specific clues are provided for specific cases (e.g. "two tens", so a 20 value in <i>participnews</i> is given).	Continuous. Category 1 in <i>participest</i> is translated as 50, 2 as 500, 3 as 2500, 4 as 7500, 5 as 15000, 6 as 35000, 7 as 75000, 8 as 150000, 9 as 350000, 10 as 700000. When hints are ambiguous and various categories are reported simultaneously, the following guidelines are used: 1500 is used when the categories in <i>participest</i> are 2-3, 11250 if 4-5, 19167 if 4-5-6, 25000 if 5-6, 41667 if 5-6-7, 55000 if 6-7, 112500 if 7-8, 250000 if 8-9, 566667 if 8-9-10, 600000 if 9-10. In those cases where estimations of participants were reported along with more specific values for at least one of the categories, only (penalised) values from <i>particippol</i> , <i>participnews</i> and <i>participorg</i> are used, without taking into account (arguably, less reliable) estimates from <i>participest-participest_cont</i> .

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48	<i>particip_final</i>	Range of number of participants.	For those events which had precise estimates in any of their three sources (as calculated by the police, newspaper and organisers), this range was determined simply by taking the arithmetic penalised averages across the two or three various sources. If only one of them was available, I use its penalised value. To calculate the penalised values, a coefficient that measures average over or underestimation was calculated for each variable: Coef_police= NParticippol/NParticipAv(1-2-3); Coef_newspaper= NParticipnews/NParticipAv(1-2-3); Coef_org= NParticiporg/NParticipAv(1-2-3). For example, if 100, 500 and 1,000 people are reported to have participated in the event (according to the police, newspaper and the organisers), the penalised coefficients would be 100/500= 0.5; 500/500= 1; 1,000/500= 2, respectively. The average coefficient of cases with full information was calculated and extrapolated to cases with partial data (i.e. with information from at least one of the sources: police, newspaper, organisers). If the number of participants was only estimated (N=505), this was considered the final size, using the average value of the range of the size category [for a further description of these procedures, see <i>particip</i> variable]. The variable was weighted by the duration of the event. In those cases (a relatively small proportion of the sample) for which information on the size of a demonstration was still missing, a search was made in the database for the closest similar events in time that occurred in the same city, were organised by the same group and put forward the same demands. The size category of that event was used as the basis for the size category of the demonstration in question. Given the size and scope of the database, analogous events were almost always available for comparison. In the very rare cases (only 3) when no information whatsoever was available, a size category of "1" was assigned.
49	<i>whyclaim1-whyclaim4</i>	The most salient reasons for the event or issues that caused protesters to take part.	These were either voiced in speeches at the event, implicit in the nature of the event itself, listed in a formal list of demands presented by the demonstrators, displayed on placards or banners, or implied by the behaviour of demonstrators at the event. Categories: 1=economic status quo/cuts/austerity/poverty-inequality (gen.); 2= unemployment, dismissals, ERE; 3=privatisation, liberalisation, bad quality of public services; 4=financial/banking system; 5=globalisation/capitalism; 6=housing; 7= deliberative/inclusive democratic measures-reform electoral system system-voting; 8=supranational and foreign instits; 9=political parties and politicians; 10=unions; 11= corruption and clientelism; 12=education/academia/research (policies/services); 13=health (policies/services); 14= LBGTT rights; 15= civil rights, non-discrimination and freedom (include prisoners, minorities and linguistic rights); 16= disabled rights; 17=migration/refugee, race and borders' issues; 18 =urban planning/policies.; 19= environment, activs. in nature (gen.), animal rights; 20= salaries/payments (decrease), rising costs and working conditions (bad, unequal, precarious, intrusism) 21= specific infrastructures/constructions; 22= specific policies/laws (Citizen security-gag, abortion); 23= terrorism and war; 24= self-determination/independence and minority languages; 25= defaulting, squandering, debts; 26= preferred shares and bonds/financial products' owners; 27= luggage and belongings; 28= judge Francoist regime's crimes; 29= monarchy; 30= relationship religion-politics; 31= management sports' clubs.
50	<i>val1-val4</i>	Valence of claim, or orientation of protesters to the issue.	Each claim has a valence, or orientation of protesters to the issue. Claim1 corresponds to val1, claim2 to val2, and so on. Coding: 1) Protesters are acting for or in favor of the issue represented by the claim; 2) Protesters are acting against or in opposition to the issue represented by the claim code; 3) The valence of the protesters' relationship to the claim code is unknown or not applicable.

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51	<i>demviol</i>	Did protesters use violence?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0=no.
52	<i>violtype</i>	If protesters were violent, what violent activity they engaged in?	1) weapons (rocks, bombs, guns, firebombs, bricks, stones); 2) physical or hand-to-hand violence; 3) other; 4) weapons and physical violence; 5) weapons and other; 6) physical and other; 7) weapons, physical, and other types of violence.
53	<i>counterdem</i>	Were counterdemonstrators present?	Dummy: 1=yes, 0=no.
54	<i>police</i>	Records whether police were reported to be at the event.	Dummy: 1 if police were present, 0 otherwise.
55	<i>policeact</i>	Whether police directed protesters behind barricades, dispersed protesters, made arrests, confiscated goods or engaged in	Dummy: 1 if police clearly engaged in any activity beyond simply being present, 0 otherwise.
56	<i>overunderreact</i>	Explicit reference to overreaction/underreaction of police.	3-categories: -1= under, 0= neutral, 1=overreaction.
57	<i>policeforce</i>	Whether police engaged in any violent tactics such as attacking protesters, or used equipment such as guns, tear gas, nightsticks or riot control equipment.	Dummy: 1= yes; 0= no.
58	<i>injur</i>	Was anyone injured?	Dummy variable reporting if any injuries are reported to have been incurred in the event; 1= yes; 0= no.
59	<i>muprotestinj</i>	Number of protesters injured.	Coded if the number of injuries to protesters is known or can be estimated.
60	<i>nubystandinj</i>	Number of bystanders injured.	Coded if the number of injuries to bystanders is known or can be estimated; 1= yes; 0= no.
61	<i>nupoliceinj</i>	Number of policemen injured.	Coded if the number of injuries to police is known or can be estimated.
62	<i>propdam</i>	Was there any property damage reported?	Whether property damage (broken windows, burnt buildings, etc) took place in the course of the event. Coding 1= property damage is reported, 0= otherwise.
63	<i>arrests</i>	Were there any arrests?	Dummy: 1= yes; 0= no.
64	<i>arrpros</i>	How many protester were arrested?	Continuous.
65	<i>nuarrests</i>	Number of arrested people, if reported	Continuous.
66	<i>totalcoerc</i>	Overall degree of coercion (based on measures taken by authorities against demonstrators).	The following coding was used: (0) unknown coercion, 1) low-level coercion (sporadic arrests and/or injuries, defined as <10), 2) substantial coercion (defined as 10-75 arrests or 10-40 injuries), and 3) major violence by authorities (defined as >75 arrests or >40 injuries).
67	<i>overallvio</i>	Intensity of disorder severity.	A five-point interval scale adapted from the study by Spilerman (1976), which analysed the human and property damage inflicted by mass violence. Coding: 0) no violence. 1) Low intensity-rock and bottle throwing, some fighting, little property damage, crowd size < 125, arrests < 15, injuries < 8; 2) rock and bottle throwing, fighting, looting, serious property damage, some arson, crowd size 75-250, arrests 10-30; injuries 5-15; 3) substantial violence, looting, arson, and property destruction, crowd size 200-500, arrests 25-75, injuries 10-40; 4) High intensity-major violence, bloodshed and destruction, crowd size >400, arrests>65, injuries>35. All data are proportionally calculated.

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68	<i>govtreact</i>	Has any representative of the government (central or local-regional, depending on the target) reacted in any way or taken any official positioning?	Dummy: 1= yes, 0= no.
69	<i>govsupport</i>	Claims (not policy actions—this would be concessions) in support of or against the claims proposed by protesters.	Scale (-1, 0, 1; interval 0,5): 1= clear support, 0= neutral, -1= adverse reaction.
70	<i>conces</i>	Policy substantive concessions to specific claims. This means that authorities make concessions that favor the interests of protesters or their constituents and—often because of their timing—appear to be in response to particular protests. Substantive concessions increase protesters’ perceived success chances and hence encourage participation in the movement generally and specifically in the methods that appeared to be successful (McAdam 1983: 743; Tarrow 1994: 156; Kriesberg 2007: 177).	Scale (-1, 0, 1; interval 0,5): 1= major concession; 0,5= partial concession; 0= neutral; -0,5= mild adverse reaction to concession; -1= strong adverse reaction to concession.
71	<i>reform</i>	Implementing procedural/ad hominem reforms. This means that authorities increase protesters’ or the public’s routine access to officials. This may involve creating new institutions and legal frameworks, or merely making existing procedures more inviting to potential participants. Procedural reforms reduce the costs of taking action, which has the effect of promoting participation in the movement (especially routine participation) and providing regular access to elites who may increase their support for protesters (Tarrow 1989b: 310-23, 1994: 86-87; Karapin 2007: 99-103). This also implies dismissals or discharge of officials.	Dummy: 1= yes; 0= no.
72	<i>elitereact</i>	Has any elite actor reacted in any way or taken any positioning besides the government (e.g. political parties, trade unions, other institutions)?	Dummy: 1= yes; 0= no.
73	<i>whoelite1-whoelite3</i>	Which actor(s) have reacted?	Nominal. Examples: UGT, CCOO, IU, UPyD, PSOE, etc.
74	<i>elitesup1-elitesup3</i>	<i>elitesup1</i> is associated with <i>whoelite1</i> , <i>elitesup2</i> with <i>whoelite2</i> , and so on. Degree of support. Claims and actions in support of or against the claims proposed by protesters.	Scale (-1, 0, 1; interval 0,5): 1= clear support, 0= neutral, -1= adverse reaction.

TABLE 2 Codebook of my Protest Event Analysis for Spain, 01/2007-02/2015. Data retrieved from *El País* (N= 2,002 events).