

# What makes strikes work?

An analysis of the factors that affect the ability of strikes to influence the policy-making process in Spain and in France

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HOW ARE WE GOING TO GO ON  
STRIKE IF THE STOCK MARKETS  
ARE FALLING????!



El Roto

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To my grandmother,  
Rosario Estévez Castromil (1925 - 2012)

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## **What makes strikes work?**

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Pablo S. del Río Loira

"No strike has ever been lost, and there can be no defeat for the labor movement"

Eugene Victor Debs (1904)

#### **Abstract**

Strikes in the public sector are common in Spain and in France. Despite of their importance, there had been little research done regarding the issue of their effects in the public sector. This master thesis aimed to identify under which circumstances political strikes were more likely to influence the policy-making process in both countries. This exploratory research combined a central qualitative approach, based in the analysis of 21 case studies, and a quantitative analysis, consisting in the use of correlations and regressions. The results suggested that a combination of the pressure put in the government, defined by the size, duration and sector of the strike and the proximity of the next elections, and its ability to act differently, conditioned by the economic scenario, provided a successful framework to analyse the effects of strikes in policies. The importance of the economic cycle was confirmed by correlations and the regressions of the statistical analysis. Due to the nature of this exploratory research, further research should be done in order to confirm the findings.

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 GENERAL APPROACH

Strikes are not what they use to be. Demonstrations, concentrations and action in the social media have gained relevance as we got to the 21<sup>st</sup> century; however strikes still remain a powerful tool for workers to defend their rights. To prove it we just need to read a daily newspaper and several examples can be found.

For instance, a "white wave" has hit Spain since November 2012, getting to the headlines of the main newspapers and opening news reports. The "marea blanca", as it's called in Spanish, a protest movement of public health sector employees, focused in Madrid but that has spread to the rest of the country, aims to stop privatizations of hospitals and outpatients clinics. The protests have consisted so far in several strike days and large demonstrations in Madrid; however the conflict opened in November 2012, was not close by April 2013. The situation in France is not different; it is common to see that SNCF trains are stopped due to a strike at the north side of the Pyrenees' border. These are just two of the many examples that can be found quite commonly in Spanish and French news.

Strikes are considered as one of the traditional means of political participation (Verba & Nie, 1972), an "action by private citizens intended to influence the actions or the composition of national or local government" (Huntington & Nelson, 1976). Strikes have many different faces: from those strikes at a small company level, which aim to prevent a layoff or seek for a salary improvement; to those that take place at a national level aiming for a reaction of the government. These last ones are those so called political strikes, which are the ones this thesis will address. Political strikes are characterized by being intended to act on the political power. French literature traditionally used the concept of political strikes as revolutionary strikes, which aimed for the insurrection and which are actually against the law in France (Dockès, 2006), but this is not the concept of strike it is being used in this thesis. In this research we will be dealing with strikes consisting in temporary stoppages of work that aim for a reaction coming from the government, as it could be a change in a policy.

However, every strike shares a common objective, as they aim to facilitate bargaining; in other words, they aspire to place the workers in a stronger position for the negotiation, either with the government or the employers. The main differences for the case of political strikes when bargaining are 1) that the counterparty is the government, which has different objectives than the mere profits that guide employers; as governments respond before their electors, so they need to be coherent with the social opinion as they seek for re-election; and 2) the people suffering the costs of the strike, because of the nature of the public service, are not only the employees that have gone on strike, but the users of the public services as well will suffer the consequences of the strike. For instance, when the employees of a car factory go on strike, they are the only ones (together with the employer) suffering the consequences in terms of losing their wages, however if public school teachers or public transport drivers go on strike, every user of the public service is affected and suffers the costs of the strike.

But to what extent have these strikes succeeded achieving their objective of influencing the actions of governments? And what factors are key to lead to success or failure? This issue has special relevance in a crises time, when workers face labour market reforms that forfeit some of their rights; therefore in this thesis the impact of political strikes in government action in France and in Spain will be analysed. Both countries have a high degree of industrial disputes, standing first and second in working days lost through industrial action within the European Union between 2005 and 2009 (European Industrial Relations Observatory, 2010), but what factors make their protests successful?



The question poses a clear challenge, as a strike must be understood as a part of a comprehensive strategy by the union, as "strike and negotiation belong to the same world of union strategies, they are complementary. The strike is used to prepare a negotiation by changing the balance of power in favour of workers [...] one and the other are instruments in the service of union policies" (Erbès-Seguin, 1971, p. 316). Therefore a strike might be considered a success not only if it ends up changing the policy it is protesting against, but also if it facilitates the access to negotiation or if it creates awareness in the population.

## 1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

The purpose of this exploratory research will be to identify under which conditions a strike is more likely to result in a change in the policy. At this stage in the research, a strike will be defined as a "temporary stoppage of work by a group of employees in order to express a grievance or enforce a demand" (Hyman, 1972). This classical definition has been widely accepted and used in different researches (Scheuer, 2006; Luque Balbona, Cueto Iglesias, & Mato Díaz, 2008), and follows the logic of collective bargaining.

Therefore, in order to assess which factors contribute to the success of strikes in influencing policy-making processes in Spain and in France, this research will seek to answer the following question:

- **What factors affect the ability of a political strike to have an impact in the policy making process in France and in Spain?**

With this question it will be analysed what factors make strikes to be successful. We understand that striking, due to its nature as a form of political participation, produces influence in policy decision making.

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### 1.2.1 SUBQUESTIONS

For methodological reasons several subquestions are going to be asked in order to guide the research. These subquestions aim to understand the details of the research question.

Q1. How can the impact of the strike be assessed?

This first question is key in order to be able to address the other questions. It will be answer in the operationalization phase and it will define the dependent variables.

The other subquestions address the independent variables that are expected to affect the ability of strike to influence policy, and that are going to be theoretically analysed and confronted to the reality of the cases.

Q2. Does the economic cycle have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?

Q3. Does the colour of the government have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?

Q4. Does the strength of the government have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?

Q5. Does the proximity of elections have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?

Q6. Does the strike size have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?

Q7. Does the strike duration have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?

Q8. Does the strike sector have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?

By asking these subquestions, we aim to understand which factors are the ones that will condition the ability of a strike to influence the policy-making process.

### 1.3 COUNTRIES SELECTION

Among the different stereotypes of European nations, French are usually labelled as strike lovers (Normand, 2012), meanwhile many Europeans ask themselves if Spanish do even work at all (Morán, 2012). However, these are not the reasons behind the choice of France or Spain. The choice of both, France and Spain, is not random; it responds to most similar independent variable logic, as both countries share some characteristics that might suggest similar behaviour and outcomes. There are some elements of their industrial relations model that are similar in Spain and in France and that are likely to influence the impact of strikes in policy.

First, in terms of trade union density both countries are under OECD average. France is actually the OECD member with the lowest trade union density, as only 7,59% of the paid workers in the country were members of a trade union in 2008 (OECD & Visser, 2011). However, the turn out for the "prud'homales" elections (the employment tribunals elected by all the employees) in 2008 was 25,5%, which even though it is higher than the trade union density, it has been shrinking overtime from 63% in 1979 (AFP, 2008). In Spain trade union density is slightly higher, however is still one of the lowest of the OECD countries, presenting 15,01% in 2008 (OECD & Visser, 2011).

Second, in both countries the union concentration is low, again being lower and more extreme in France than in Spain. In France, in a 0 to 1 scale developed by the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies, trade union concentration scored 0.119 (Visser, 2011), as up to eight trade unions are relevant in diverse sectors, however CGT, CFDT and FO got over 70% of the votes in the employment tribunals elections in 2008. On the other hand, Spanish trade unions scored 0.236 (Visser, 2011), which is still a low score of concentration, therefore an analogue structure to the French case might be identified, as in the Spanish case seven trade unions are directly recognized by the government as the "most representative" ones (La Moncloa, 2013).

Third, both countries are as well close in terms of working days lost through industrial action per 1000 employees. The French annual average between 2005 and 2009 almost doubles the Spanish average, however the Spanish figure has doubled between 2005 when 40,2 days were lost and 2009, when 82,7 days were lost (Carley, 2010), bringing Spain closer to French conditions.

The last element that allows us to compare France and Spain in terms of industrial relations, is what in the ICTWSS is called authority of the unions, in order to describe the intern and extern authority of the unions. In this measure Spanish and French trade unions are in the middle of the table of results, scoring 0,4 and 0,6 respectively (Visser, 2011).

These four indicators, serve us as a prove to be able to assert that the Spanish and French trade union systems, provide us with two most similar independent variable cases, regarding the industrial relations configuration.

But why two most similar cases? The reason motivating the choice of these two countries, from which the cases will be selected, is to understand if under similar industrial relations conditions the outcomes of the research will be the same.

## 1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH

The exploratory research will be based on the analysis of case studies. First, Chapter 2 will consist in a theoretical analysis on the issue, providing the theoretical foundations to the variables and to the research itself. Chapter 3 will present the research design, explaining the research methods and operationalizing the variables. Chapter 4 will introduce the sampling procedure and it will present the chosen cases. Chapter 5 will blend the theory with the cases resulting in the research findings, completed by the quantitative analysis of the data. Finally Chapter 6 will present the conclusions of the research, answering to the research question, discussing the research limitations and opening the door to future research.

## CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

There has traditionally been a certain perception of a black box regarding the functioning of strikes, accompanied by paradoxes, as the Hicks' Paradox, which argues that if the parties in a strike were rational they would not fail to negotiate a Pareto Optimal outcome, as the strike will produce a deadweight loss for the parties, so it doubts of the rationality of strikes (Hicks, 1963). In this exploratory research we aim to discover the content of the black box of political strikes. We aim to understand which are the factors that lead strikes to produce changes in policy. In order to achieve this goal we needed for a theoretical backup.

Therefore, our approach to the issue started by a preliminary literature review, which tracked the main search engines such as Jstor, Google Scholar, Web of Science and ProQuest, paying special attention to the Industrial and Labor Relations Review published by the Cornell University ILR School. In our search we found little literature directly related to our research, there were almost no studies observing the outcomes of strikes in the public sector. One of the only studies with had a similar goal was Chen's research on the power of trade unions in China (2009), however the industrial relations system in the country, where the trade unions are deeply dependent on the Communist Party, did not provide us any valuable experience in analyzing bargaining processes between trade unions and governments.

Consequently, we were forced to resort to the classical industrial relations theories and to the political power theories, to provide a solid theoretical framework to our research, adapting these theories to our research and our variables.

This chapter will present the theoretical framework linked to the different variables that are going to be used in this study. Therefore, we will start with the independent variables related to the context of the strikes, we will continue with the independent variables dealing with the internal elements of the strikes, to follow by addressing the theoretical considerations regarding our dependent variables and we will finish by presenting our conceptual model.

### 2.2 CONTEXT OF THE STRIKES

There are several external elements to the strike that have an impact on it, these factors will be common to any strike taking place at a certain moment in time at a certain location.

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#### 2.2.1 ECONOMIC CYCLE

The first external element that might affect strikes is the state of the economy. This relation might be framed as a economic model, which states that strike's success is related to the business cycle.

The business cycle is measured by the fluctuations of the real GDP, which will lead to expansions and contractions in the economy. These movements of the economy will have effects in other macroeconomic variables, as unemployment, which are important for the outcomes of the strikes, besides the business cycle itself.

But how does the business cycle affect the outcome of strikes? It could be expected that there would be a negative correlation between strikes' outcomes and expansion phases of the business cycle, because, as Kennan (1980) suggests, the total cost of a strike in a recession will be lower, and therefore,

using the Pareto Optimal Tendency hypothesis, which will be further explained later, it could be predicted that there would be more strikes. Adding to Kennan, Rees (1952, p. 371) also affirms that it would be logical to expect a negative correlation, due to the reforms and cutbacks. These conditions that are not acceptable for the workers, are more common during negative cycles, and should lead to a higher level of industrial action and mobilization. But, as Rees proves empirically, they do not; the correlation is positive due to two main reasons:

First, the impact the economic cycle has in resource allocation and its legitimacy. The business cycle directly affects the resources the state has. These resources are more or less scarce depending on the economic situation of the country, and therefore the ease for allocating them for the government varies.

The allocation of the scarce resources is key to understand the motivation of political strikes. After all, political strikes are reactions to political decisions with economic implications. These implications might result in privatizations, welfare state retrenchments or wage related measures for public sector workers.

The government, when adopting these policies in a economic contraction scenario, shifts blame to the business cycle itself, which would make it harder for the trade unions to justify a strike against a government that has framed the issue as if it was not to blame for the cutbacks. This situation makes it harder for the government to justify cutbacks during a expansion cycle, and therefore to have a weaker position in a bargaining process, due to less sympathy it will have among the voters.

The second element is the effect of the business cycle in unemployment and its implications regarding strikes' potential. This second element starts from the negative relation between business cycles and unemployment levels, finding lower unemployment levels in expansionist business cycles. The conditions of a growing economy give workers a more powerful position for bargaining. Research has been done at company level, and proves that strike rates are higher when there is economic growth, due to the configuration of the labour market in the economic conditions, which makes it easy for the employee to find a new job and harder for the company to find replacements (Morris, 2003).

This certitude for the employee in terms of job finding possibilities, allows the "ranks and files" of the trade union to have a stronger voice, forcing the union leadership to a more belligerent position when bargaining, in order to satisfy the higher expectations of the rank (Ashenfelter & Johnson, 1969).

An analogy with the public sector can be established, as the public servants will be in a better off position due to the whole economic situation, so any retrenchments in their labour conditions or in the welfare state, will be fought more fiercely.

So the overall conclusion is that strikes that take place in an economic growth scenario are more likely to produce the desired changes in policy, meanwhile those strikes that occur in economic downturns are less likely to change the policies.

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### 2.2.2 COLOUR OF THE GOVERNMENT

From its early days left parties and trade unions have had a close relationship. This close relationship has continued as the traditional left parties transformed into social democratic parties.

There are two main aspects to this connection between parties and unions, according to Howell (2001), the "nature of the formal and informal tights" and the "left party's conception of the role organized labour should play in the political economy".

The first aspect refers to "institutional connections, union financing of political activity, the mutual influence over each other's policy-making, and the extent to which leaders share common backgrounds and values" (2001, p. 8). These links can be easily observed in both Spanish and French cases. In Spain, UGT and PSOE were both founded by Pablo Iglesias by the end of the 19th century, they have kept close relations, as the leaders of PSOE have always attended to the UGT's general congress that chooses their secretary general, and there have been common the movements from the trade union to government positions in PSOE's governments, as the case of Valeriano Gómez, former Minister of Labour and member of UGT, as the last example. The relationship in France is not as close as in Spain, however there still is a clear link between the PS and CFDT. This link can be observed in the cooperation in the 80's with Mitterrand's government or in members of the trade union, as Jacques Delors, who ended up as a Minister in Mitterrand's government.

The second, addresses the economic and ideological conception of how the relations between labour and business should be organized, and what role should the state play. Basically this second aspect of the relation refers to the common ideological objectives shared by both organizations.

These two aspects resulted in shared interests and cooperation between the two institutions. However, this common ground has been jeopardized by the evolution of social democratic parties, which have moved closer to neo-liberal economic positions, separating their interests from the union's ones. Despite being weakened, the relation between unions and left parties have not been dissolved (Howell, 2001, p. 33).

But how is this relation going to affect strikes? It can be expected that left parties, due to their ideological proximity, are going to be more permeable to unions' demands in strikes. However, it must be reminded that a strike is a last resort solution; therefore it is likely that there was a previous dialogue between the unions and the left parties in government in which they have not reached an agreement. As a result a left government is also more likely to suffer higher electoral erosion in the event of facing a strike.

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### 2.2.3 STRENGTH OF THE GOVERNMENT

As it has already been stated strikes are part of a larger strategy by trade unions, they come along with bargaining processes to reach a final satisfactory agreement for the workers. Therefore it is key for this negotiation process the strength of the counterparty, in this case the government.

The strength of the government can be understood as "the legislative power of a government vis-a-vis the opposition" (Huber, Kocher, & Sutter, 2003, p. 333), which has direct effect in negotiating their policies with other actors. In both of the countries there are frequent scenarios in which the government is in a weak position, due to the political system.

In Spain, as a parliamentary system, the Parliament is the one in charge of electing the Prime Minister (President of the Government). Therefore in those cases when there is a hang parliament, the position of the Prime Minister is weakened. Two different outcomes might come from a hang parliament a coalition government, where several parties agree to form a government, and a minority government, where the government does not have a majority in Parliament. Spain has always opted for the latest, as are the cases of governments of 1993-1996, 1996-2000, 2004-2008 and 2008-2011, which besides of support agreements with other parties, were minority governments (Capo Giol, 2003).

On the other hand, France has a semi-presidential system, as the President of the Republic and the National Assembly are elected in different elections. This circumstance leads to the so called cohabitation, when the President and the Prime Minister, who has to be appointed by the President and

voted by the National Assembly, are from different parties. This situation has occurred three times in French history, 1986-1988, 1993-1995 and 1997-2002. The result is that both will have to get to an understanding, weakening their bargaining position.

The weakness of the government has an impact on the outcome of the strike. Potters and Sloof (1996) argue that the less powerful a government is, the more vulnerable it is to the pressures of interest groups. Roubini and Sachs (1989) prove how coalition governments have bigger expenditures and that they rise debt, which is likely to be coherent with the goals of the union, supporting Potters and Sloof point.

All in all, the strength of the government seems to be a key aspect in influencing the outcome of the strike, likely to relate negatively to its success.

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#### 2.2.4 PROXIMITY OF ELECTIONS

As it has been already stated, political strikes need to be understood as part of a bargaining process, where the specific characteristics of both parties, workers/unions and government, play a key role. As in any negotiation, the issue that is being disputed is not the only element that will affect the outcome; it is important to focus in the factors that condition the behaviour of the parties, as in this case the proximity of elections.

The importance of the proximity of elections is a result of the nature of government. As Downs (1957) stated, politicians in government always try to maximize their votes to stay in power. As a part of this strategy to stay in power, politicians tend to be more permeable to the demands of the electors in electoral years, rather than in non-electoral years (Kuklinski, 1978).

This logic can be extrapolated to strikes, as they can be understood as demands of electors, establishing a positive relation between strikes potential to success and electoral year proximity.

#### 2.3 STRIKE INTERNAL ELEMENTS

Besides those elements that are external to the strikes, which have just been explained; there are characteristics of the strike itself that might influence its final outcome. Beside the external factors, there are elements characteristics of each strike that must have explanatory force. Otherwise all the strikes taking place at a certain moment would be successful or not, which is not the case. In these section we try to identify some of these elements and to analyse them.

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##### 2.3.1 STRIKE SIZE

The right to strike, recognized by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, is an individual right but that has to be exercised collectively. The collective sense means that the holders of this right, the workers, cannot individually decide to go on strike, as doing so would represent a breach of contract. They need the union to call the strike for exercising their right. However, they will individually decide if they follow the call of the union or not. That is the dual nature of the right to strike.

This dual nature has two important implications regarding the success of the strike, as it will contribute to define two key elements that affect the strength of one of the two parties in the negotiation. On the one hand, the number of trade unions that get involved in the protests, which represents the collective dimension of the strikes; and on the other hand, the number of workers that go on strike, individually deciding to exercise their right. Both of these elements are the ones that

determine the size of the strike, which directly relates to the strength of the protesting party, that will confront the government (2.2.3) in the bargaining process. But how is the size important?

The number of trade unions is relevant, besides the fact that they call the strike, because they provide with the necessary resources for it to occur. As Giraud (2006, p. 947) puts it, the previous research on strikes has led to prove the "crucial role played by trade unions when making available the needed resources for the construction of this way of collective action".

The resources trade unions have are of two types, both economic and political, and both have an impact in the outcomes of strikes. First, trade unions both in France and in Spain, find their main income in the quotas paid by their affiliates, receiving a very limited part of its budget from the public sector as well, adding up to a budget of an average of over €100 million in the main trade unions (Hadas-Label, 2006; CC.OO., 2012). These funds are key to support and to organize the strikes.

Second, the trade unions have a key role when negotiating with the government. As it has repeatedly been stated, strikes are one tool of a whole strategy, in which trade unions are a key player. The trade unions have become the agent that takes part in the bargaining with the government. Actually, this institutionalized scheme, where government and trade unions negotiate, or employers and trade unions do so, has even been used by some scholars to explain the reduction on the number of strikes (Sirota, 2002). However, the importance for the institutionalized relations between trade unions and government for this thesis refers to the fact that without the support of the main trade unions, which have direct contact with the government, the possible success of the upcoming negotiations after a strike are smaller, due to the institutionalized scheme.

On the other hand, the number of workers following the call of the unions is crucial as well. It is simple to understand that a protest with few workers is less likely to move the government, than one where the support is massive. Harrison and Stewart (1993), who research on the impact of strike size on strike duration in the private sector, point out a common limitation on the research on strike size. They notice that most of the research done lately only considers large strikes (over 500 workers), due to the lack of data in small strikes (less than 100 workers). In this case due to the special conditions of the counterparty of the workers, the government, I will focus as well in large strikes, which can reach the attention from the public.

The influence given to the number of workers going on strike responds to two reasons; first the representiveness of the protest, and second, the costs of the strikes. Both factors point in the same direction, as their importance is relevant as long as they can put pressure in the government by increasing awareness. The former, refers to the relative success of the strike among the workers of the sector or sectors. The absolute number of workers going on strike is important, but so it is their relative number, especially in sensitive sectors as health, education or transports. Their relative number is what can stop a whole sector from working, and this would have a large impact in the users, who would be unable to use these services. However, the so called skeleton staff, which is a bound to the right to strike imposed by law, limits the possible impact of a total support for the strike by the workers. The costs of the strikes have a direct relation with the former, as it is based in the number of services that users will see going on strike. The more workers supporting the strike, the more services will be affected, and the costs will not only be suffered by the workers, but by the citizens that are deprived of the services. Both of these factors affect the impact the strikes have in the balance of powers regarding the whole bargaining process the strike is related to and produce results in form of changes in policies, as den Butter & Koppes explain it for the French case, " in France it is the political elite that decides about policy matters without much consultation. It will withdraw or adapt the policy measures when they evoke too much protest and lead to conflict" (2003, p. 9).



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### 2.3.2 STRIKE DURATION

As it was already advanced, strike duration has been closely linked to the size of the strike. Harrison and Stewart (1993) observed and proved the relation between the two variables with strike data of Canada. In their paper they classify, following Kennan's (1986) previous work, the theories of strikes, which will determine strike duration.

First, Ashenfelter and Johnson (1969), depart from the incorporation of the rank and file of the trade union to the bargaining process in their model, in which they ignore the rationality of their behavior, and base it in their wage expectations. Ashenfelter and Johnson deliberately ignore the issue of the rationality in order to break with Hicks paradox (1963). From this model they are able to determine the incidence and duration of strikes, as well as the terms of settlement. It is important to bear in mind, that Ashenfelter and Johnson (AJ) model was formulated to be used in the private sector, where the strikes are focused mainly in wages disputes, a situation that differs from the public strikes.

And the second main theory is the so called joint-cost theory. This theory was introduced by Reder and Neumann (1980) and by Kennan (1980), and it states that the key element to understand strikes is the cost for both parties, as parties will follow a Pareto Optimal Tendency. Kennan uses the example of the effect of a public subsidy to strikers to highlight the difference between this theory and the AJ model. The AJ model would find it hard to integrate this economic determinant, meanwhile the joint-cost theory would incorporate it in the model, as it would be consider when calculating the costs of the strike for one of the parties, which would be reduced, making the strike duration would increase (Kennan, 1980, p. 78). Again this model was produced for the private sector, where the costs are only economic; however in political strikes, the government does not only pursue economic ends, that it does as well, but to be re-elected, as it was already mentioned.

Despite the previous theoretical analysis there is no clear evidence on the direction of the relation between duration and ability of the strikes, however, based on the ability to create higher pressure in the government due to the produced costs in economic and electoral terms, we can expect longer strikes to be more successful than shorter strikes.

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### 2.3.3 STRIKE SECTOR

Among the elements that characterize every strike, it is important to refer to the sector the strike takes place in. It seems simple to understand that a strike in the health system will have different impact than a general strike or a strike in the judicial system, but how can this difference be explained? What are the elements that make the sector of the strike to have an impact in the outcome? In order to answer these questions, we need to go back to the nature of the strike as a part of a bigger bargaining process between two parties, but where third parties are affected as well and they have the ability to influence the other two. Therefore, an analysis of the stakeholders will lead us to a better understanding of how the impact of strikes varies in different sectors.

The concept of stakeholders was first introduced by Edward Freeman in his book *Strategic Management: A Stakeholders Approach*, and refers to "those who can affect or can be affected by the firm" (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). It has been commonly said that the definition is vague (Fassin, 2009; Hall & Vredenburg, 2005; Phillips, Freeman, & Wicks, 2003). However, it is still useful and it can be implemented in our work, by changing the concept of firm for those of conflict or strike, describing stakeholders as those who can affect or can be affected by the conflict or the strike.

Stakeholders are said to be relevant at a company level because they constitute "a powerful heuristic device, intended to broaden management's vision of its roles and responsibilities beyond the

profit maximisation function to include interests and claims from non-stockholding groups" (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 855). In this case stakeholders also broaden the vision of the government when making decisions, due to the already explained relation between government and voters.

But how does the sector affect the stakeholders? There are two dimensions that need to be observed in order to understand the importance of the degree to which the stakeholders are affected, on the one hand how many of them are affected and on the other hand how they are affected. Both elements guide us to the dichotomy between essential and non-essential sectors or services.

The essential services are those that are used by a regular citizen in a normal day, which could stop the economic activity of the country, and include transports, supplies and energy sectors. On the other hand there are services that are not essential for the normal functioning of the country. This does not mean that eventually they are unable to affect all the citizens, but that under normal circumstances they should not affect the economic activities of citizens. These non-essential sectors include health, education, justice, as a random citizen can potentially find himself involved with one of them, but they should not affect the normal economic functioning of the country.

Therefore, we can expect a positive correlation between strikes in an essential service and the probability of success for the strike; as the larger the number of affected users and the more important the service is for them, the bigger the pressure would be upon the government.

In conclusion, If the sector is essential for the life of the average citizen, we presume that the strike is going to be more likely to succeed.

## 2.4. OUTCOMES

The goal of this research is to assess the impact of the factors presented in the previous two sections in the policy-making process; however, this is not an easy and obvious task. Therefore, we need to identify in what ways the policy-making process can be influenced by strikes. An incremental scheme will be used in this master thesis. Each of the steps of the scheme has been labelled as a success by trade unionists when asked about the objectives of strikes. Garrido claimed that "strikes are tools for engaging in negotiations with the government and to make labour issues the issues of the people" (Garrido, 2013). At this point, it is important to foreground that at the early stages of the research on trade unions and their activity, it was considered that there was no possible consensus on their goals, making trade unions activity intractable (Johnson, 1975); however, this perception has changed over time (Oswald, 1985) giving support to this master thesis. The first step would be raising awareness on the society of the social damage made by the policy. The second step would be opening a bargaining process to negotiate the policy between the government and the trade unions. And finally, the last stage in this scheme would be a change in the policy that would end the grievance perceived by the trade unions. Even though we frame them as part of an incremental scheme, there are sometimes exceptions, when steps of this ladder might be missing, or their order might vary. Later in this master thesis the three will be assessed, but first we need to understand what they entail.

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### 2.4.1 AWARENESS

Raising awareness of the people is the lowest goal that a union is aiming at when setting the objectives of a strike. Obtaining people awareness and sympathy is the first step for obtaining further results in the protest and for getting a good bargaining position for future ones. But how can be awareness assessed?

Despite the debate surrounding it, the basic method to assess political awareness in social science is through public opinion polls (Perrin & McFarland, 2011; Splichal, 2012), however due to the lack of surveys in the field alternatives are available to assess population's awareness of the conflict.

Citizens who sympathize with the protests can commonly attend to demonstrations called by the strikers. These demonstrations have a double impact, on the one hand, serve as a measure of the awareness and support level, as only aware people of the conflict will attend, and on the other hand, serve as instruments to increase the levels of awareness themselves, as they make the conflict visible to the rest of the citizens in the streets.

The other mechanism to assess the level of awareness is through the coverage given by the media. But why is appearing in the media a success for the strike? It is so, due to two reasons, as in the case of demonstrations. First, attending to the limited time, in television news, and the limited space in the headers of newspapers, only those issues relevant enough will make it, therefore if a strike does it, it is because it has reached enough relevance to do so, which is a sign of a remarkable level of awareness. Second, media appearances are not only a reflection of the awareness, but they are an enhancer as well. As it has been said appearing in the media is a synonym of creating awareness in the society, as "problems that receive prominent attention on the national news become the problems the viewing public regards as the nation's most important" (Iyengar & Kinder, 2010, p. 16).

In the end, the importance of awareness is, as Iyengar and Kinder frame it, a matter of perception. Awareness may move the government to change their policies as part of their electoral logic. Awareness of a conflict, forces the government to react, which is already a success for the trade unions in their comprehensive strategy, which includes justifying their *raison d'être*.

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#### 2.4.2 NEGOTIATIONS

Once the awareness is obtained, the government might feel pushed to seat in the negotiations table. This will be the next step into success for the strike and for the trade union; however, as we have already mentioned there are exceptions, when the access to bargaining despite not having a high level of awareness.

It is important to understand the start of negotiations in the context of the conflict. As we have already mentioned, trade unions have institutionalized their role, and have a direct and constant relation with the government. Therefore, communication between both actors is fluent and constant, so what does the start of the negotiations mean if there is a constant dialogue? Opening negotiations represents the compromise of both parties to seek an agreement in a bargaining process, where both parties will try to find common ground. Government and trade unions engage in conversations specifically about the policy that caused the strike.

But why is it a success? The importance of this process is acknowledging the willingness of both parties to reach an agreement, which for the trade unions would be better than the status quo. The difference between this process and the institutionalized dialogue is that at this point the government publicly recognizes legitimacy to the demands of the trade unions, either because they truly intend to reach an agreement or because they need to save face by initiating formal conversations the trade unions.

As a result the opening of negotiations may lead to a policy change, which would be the last and most successful step for the strike and the trade unions.

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#### 2.4.3 CHANGES IN POLICY

The ultimate end of a strike is to bring the grievance that originated it to an end. The simplest way to achieving this goal is to change the policy; therefore, it is to be understood as the maximum level of success a strike aims for. Trade unions draw up a table of demands that they aim to achieve when they call the strike. This list gathers the changes in policies they ask for.

However, not every single change in policy will satisfy to the same degree the table of demands of the trade unions, so what does a change in the policy entail? There are different typologies in the field of public policy that distinguish between levels of change, as Hall's typology (1993). However, these frameworks, despite of their theoretical relevance, do not describe the changes in policy from the trade unions point of view.

For our master thesis we will create our own typology of changes in policy, observed from the goggles of the trade unions. We need to assess whether or not the demands of the trade unions are fulfilled. This corroboration just needs to compare the demands and the outcomes, as the explanatory force will be obtained from the explained independent variables.

Therefore, despite the relevance of former theoretical approaches to changes in policy, this master thesis will opt to position itself in the place of trade unions to observe whether their demands have been fulfilled or not, and to explain the changes from the theoretical pillars of our independent variables.

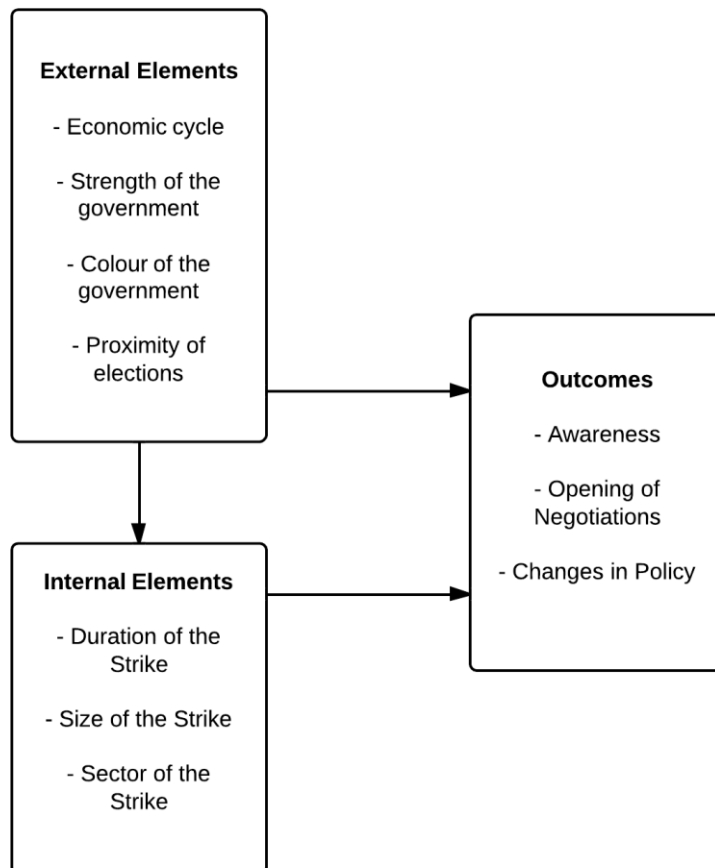
## 2.5 CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Once the different variables of this master thesis have been presented, it is necessary to put them in order, to understand how they interact with each other, and assess whether they come or not to produce the explained outcomes. As it has been presented there are three groups of concepts, first, the external elements that form the context and work as independent variables, second, the internal elements of the strike, their characteristics, which are independent variables as well.

The model is based in the impact of the external factors on the outcomes, the influence of the same external factors on whether the strike itself will occur or not, and the impact of the internal factors of the strike on the outcomes. But let's individually recapitulate the relation of each factor with the outcome of the strikes.

First, among the external factors, we explain the positive correlation between the economic cycle and the success of the strike, due to the availability of resources and the flexibility given by low unemployment rates. Second, we link the strength of the government negatively to the success of the strike, as weaker governments will be more vulnerable to the pressures of interest groups. Third, given the existing links between trade unions and left wing parties, when these last ones are in government they are more permeable to demands of the trade unions, and therefore, strikes will be more likely to succeed, in the event they occur. And fourth, the proximity of elections is positively correlated to the success of strikes, as parties in power will avoid policies that will not be forgotten and will cost them votes in the elections.

Moving to the internal factors, fifth, the sector of the strike determines two elements that influence the outcomes of the strikes. The number of affected users of the service that goes on strike and the prestige of the workers on strike, which directly affects the public sympathy, are both positively correlated to the success of the strike. Sixth, the size of the strike is directly correlated to its success, as it will have more resources and it will be able to put more pressure on the government. And seventh, the duration of the strike, which despite the lack of academic consensus, we expect a positive correlation, as the longest the strike the more chances to succeed it would have.



**Figure 1**

## CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Once we have theoretically presented our variables, this chapter will focus on how we are going to measure them; on how we will move from the abstract conceptual level, to the real measured level. We will start by introducing the research methods, which based in a exploratory research will consist in a desk research, depth interviews and a statistical analysis. We will continue by justifying the reliability and validity of the chosen method, to conclude by operationalizing the variables.

### 3.1 RESEARCH METHODS

#### 3.1.1 EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

When Robert Stebbins asks himself about "how many well-explored fields are there in social science?" The answer he finds is clear, "very few" (Stebbins, 2001). The relations of strikes and public policy is definitely one of them. As it was mentioned in the introduction, there has been no previous research that aimed to identify the factors that result in strikes influencing policy-making. Therefore, the research method in this research is going to be exploratory research.

"Exploratory research is a methodological approach that is primarily concerned with discovery and with generating or building theory" (Davies, 2006, p. 110). This exploratory research, as it can be observed from the theoretical framework, will integrate concepts and theories from traditional industrial relations theories and political power theories, from Rees and Ashenfelter to Downs and Freeman. From these theories we will run a case study research based on desk research, analyzing secondary sources. The desk research will be completed with semi-structured interviews, in order to run a comprehensive qualitative analysis. An statistical analysis of the collected data will be added to the research afterwards in order to complement it.

The case study is a inquiry approach based on "developing an in-depth analysis of a single or multiple cases" (Miller & Salkind, 2002, p. 147). The cases are the object of the study, which can take the form of individuals, groups or events. In our research they will be the strikes in France and in Spain. Our in-depth understanding, as it was just mentioned, will be obtained from a desk research and semi-structured interviews.

The procedure will follow Stake's approach (1995) which consists in 1) providing an in-depth study of a bounded system, which was done through the literature review that led to the theoretical framework; 2) gathering the data to develop in-depth understanding; 3) describe the cases in detail and 4) discussing the findings, interpreting the meaning of the cases.

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#### 3.1.1.1 DESK RESEARCH

The objective of this research is to observe the cases in Spain and France. There are scenarios in which trade unions have called political strikes against a decision or a set of decisions of the government. The best way to approach these cases is through the analysis of the news reports about the issue, which will provide the information of the event and the context of the protests. However, this will be combined with existing statistics in order to have a comprehensive picture. This analysis of secondary sources responds to what is identified as desk research.

The media analysis will be based on searches on the internet to have access to the main newspapers reports on the events, and completed with the laws that develop the policies and the trade unions

statements. The statistics will be retrieved from Eurostat, in order to homogenize the data in both countries.

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### 3.1.1.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Interviews are a good tool to collect qualitative data, in order "to understand the nature and the make-up of the area being researched" (Willis, 2002, p. 283). This research, as a exploratory one, needs to avoid pre-judgements that might lead to missing key aspects for the study. The goal of preventing pre-judgements is achieved by structuring the interviews as semi-structured ones, as this will provide the interviewee the freedom to direct the interview to what he considers more important.

The interviews will be conducted with politicians and members of trade unions, as they can offer their experience when suffering a strike or when calling a strike. The interviews will be based in the outline presented in the annex, which is characterized by open-ended questions, in order to give the interviewee the possibility to develop the topic in the way he finds more appropriate. The order of the questions, as it is a semi-structured interview, might change during the interview or even some questions might be dropped, since the interviewee is to direct the interview (Robson, 1993).

The interviewees are going to be Valeriano Gómez, former Minister of Labour (2010-2011 PSOE) and member of UGT, and current spokesman for economic affairs of the socialist minority in the Spanish Parliament; José María Zufiaur, representative of UGT before the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), associate professor at the Complutense Institute of International Studies and former member of UGT governing board (1977-1994); José Manuel Freire, member of the Madrid regional Assembly (PSOE) and director of the National Institute of Health Carlos III, and former regional minister of Health of the Basque Country (1987-1991); and Emilio Garrido, former lawyer of UGT.

This combination of profiles will provide us with an inside view from both sides, the government and the trade unions, as they are people that have been involved in strikes' negotiations. The objective of the interviews is to provide us with an approximation to the issues and eventually confront them to the findings of the desk research in order to validate or to challenge them.

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### 3.1.1.3 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

As exploratory research should grow as it is being conducted, a statistical analysis of the most likely general theory will be conducted. The statistical analysis will consist in calculating the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, to assess whether there is a significant statistical relation between the two variables being analysed and to indicate the sign of the relation. The values the coefficient can take vary from -1 to 1, being -1 a perfect negative correlation, so when one variable increases the other one by a proportionate amount, 0 the situation when there is no linear relationship, so when one varies the other one stays the same, and 1 a perfect positive correlation (Field, 2009, p. 170).

There is an important limitation to the use of correlations that needs to be acknowledged. A correlation does not provide causality, it just show the statistical relation of two variables, so it has no explanatory force. This limitation is the result of two features. First the third variable problem, as the "causality between two variables cannot be assumed because there may be other measured or unmeasured variables affecting the results" (2009, p. 173). And second, the fact that the correlation coefficient does not tell in which direction the causality operates, which variable is influencing the other (2009, p. 174). However, these two limitations are not key to the use we are giving to the statistical analysis, which is a support tool for the qualitative analysis.

The possibility of calculating a regression was also considered. However, a first problem arises that might compromise the explanatory force of our regression, consisting in the relatively small number of cases to be analysed, as "with small sample sizes random data can appear to show a strong effect" (2009, p. 222). Despite acknowledging this risk we decide to proceed and to include a regression in our study.

The option of using a multiple linear regression was discarded, as the variable type assumption that needs to be met in order to run this type of regressions was not met. This assumption states that "the outcome variable must be quantitative, continuous and unbounded" (2009, p. 220), meanwhile our dependent variable is continuous and unbounded but ordinal, which did not permit using this type of regression.

Therefore, an ordinal regression was the first thought after discarding the linear regression, due to the nature of our dependent variable, which is ordinal. However, the test of parallel lines would need to be met, as ordinal regressions "assume that the relationships between the independent variables and the logits are the same for all the logits" (Norušis, 2012, p. 74). In case that the parallelism assumption was rejected, as it will be the case, a multinomial regression will be considered, as "estimates separate coefficients for each category", avoiding the parallelism requirements (2012, p. 80).

Multinomial regressions are logistic regressions, which means that they predict the probability of a categorical dependent variable to occur from the observation of whether or not the event (dependent variable) did occur and based on independent predictor variable(s) (Field, 2009, pp. 266-267). Multinomial regressions also need to meet certain assumptions (2009, p. 273), which are common to linear regressions, 1) linearity, which needs to be violated and it was already commented; 2) independence of errors, which means that cases of data should not be related, if this assumption was violated it would result in overdispersion, so despite of the independence of our cases a overdispersion test will be conducted; and 3) multicollinearity, which is the result of the "correlation between two or more predictors in a regression model" (2009, p. 223).

The objective of every regression is to create a model that will predict the outcome for any general case from the statistical model created from a sample. We are aware of the limitation of our research in terms of number of cases, so we can expect modest results from our regression. However, the regression should serve us as a complement to the qualitative analysis and it is an interesting tool that should be used in further research in our topic.

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### 3.1.2 RELIABILITY

The reliability of the research refers "to the extent that it is repeatable, or consistent" (Kellstedt & Whitten, 2011, p. 106). In order to ensure this feature the operationalization of the variables is deeply important, as it ensures that other researcher will obtain the same results. The main concern about reliability would be with measuring two variables: the strength of the government and the changes in policy. However a careful operationalization which includes clear categories will ensure reliability. Reliability will be consider and explained in the following section for each of the variables.

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### 3.1.3 VALIDITY

Validity is considered the most important feature of a research, consisting in measuring what we are supposed to be measuring and not other things (Kellstedt & Whitten, 2011, p. 108). Validity is reached through careful use and operationalization of concepts, which can be divided into three degrees of validity: face validity, that the measure appears to be measuring what it is supposed to measure; content validity, measuring by analyzing the essential elements to that concept; and construct validity,



which "the measure is related to other measures that theory requires them to be related to", so we are actually only measuring one thing (2011, p. 109). As with reliability, validity will be considered in each of the operationalized concepts.

## 3.2 OPERATIONALIZATION

The importance of the operationalization is that it provides reliability and validity to the measurements. It grants reliability, as a good operationalization will lead to consistent measurements, and any measurement of the same observation will produce identical results. And it provides validity, if when operationalizing the measurement it accurately represents the concept it is supposed to measure (Kellstedt & Whitten, 2011).

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### 3.2.1 INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

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#### 3.2.1.1 ECONOMIC CYCLE

Most of the studies analyzing the impact of the business cycle in strikes use the growth of real GDP, either per capita or for the whole population of a country (Rees, 1952; Cramton & Tracy, 2003; van der Velden, 2012). However, some include other elements as Cramton and Tracy do by using as well unemployment rates finding robust results. These measurement mechanisms used by the literature are backed up by Eurostat, which after stating that the economic cycle describes the "expansions and contractions of economic activity in an economy over a period of time", finds among the best methods for measuring it the GDP and unemployment rates (Eurostat, 2013). Therefore, both of these indicators are to be used in this study.

First, we will measure the GDP for the whole population of the country, as what is important about it for this study is its impact in the national finances and in the perception of the country as a whole. The key point is that we will observe how GDP varies overtime, as intrinsic to the definition of economic cycle are the changes of the economy, as this feature will allow us to judge if the economy is expanding or contracting, so quarterly variations will be observed. There is no need to include elements as PPP (Purchase Power Parity) as what we want to measure is the behaviour of the economy individually, and not to compare countries' economies behaviours; so real GDP will be used. The date will be collected from Eurostat, which will provide a common measurement mechanism from both Spain and France, avoiding measurement problems. From these measurements of GDP, we will draw the expansion and contraction cycles of the economy.

Second, we will measure the level of unemployment, as it reflects as well the momentum of the economic cycle, but, as it was previously explained, it has consequences on its own as well. As with the GDP rate, unemployment rates will be obtained from Eurostat, as this provides homogeneous standards for the measurements both in Spain and in France. The definition used for unemployed people is "someone aged 15 to 74 without work during the reference week who is available to start work within the next two weeks and who has actively sought employment at some time during the last four weeks. The unemployment rate is the number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labour force" (Eurostat, 2013).

In both cases, measurements present no doubts about reliability or validity, as the data is collected from an institution that provides an homogeneous methodology for both countries, and both concepts are not complex.

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### 3.2.1.2 STRENGTH OF THE GOVERNMENT

The strength of the government is not a figure as clear as unemployment or GDP rates are, however, departing from the definition given by Huber, Kocher and Sutter it can be operationalized for measurement. These three scholars understand the strength of the government as "the legislative power of a government vis-a-vis the opposition" (2003, p. 333). Therefore, it is the support in parliament to the government what needs to be observed.

As it was commented before, both countries respond to different regimes, while Spain is parliamentary system, France is semi-presidential one. However, in both cases we can identify a strong government if the government is formed by one single party, and this same party holds an absolute majority in parliament. The cases when the government can be framed as weak are the cohabitation in the French case, and the minority or coalition governments in Spain. For this purposes Roubini and Sachs created the "Type of Government Index", which they used for measuring the impact of the strength of government in the budget deficit and debts (1989). This index has been consistently accepted and used by the forthcoming literature (Ashworth, Geys, & Heyndels, 2005; de Haan, Sturm, & Beekhuis, 1999). The index states a ranging, where 0 is the strongest government and 3 is the weakest one:

Table 1 - Types of Government Index

Value	Types of government
0	One-party majority parliamentary government; or presidential government, with the same party in the majority in the executive and legislative branches
1	Coalition parliamentary government with two-to-three coalition partners; or presidential government, with different parties in control of the executive and legislative branches
2	Coalition parliamentary government with four or more coalition partners
3	Minority government

The reliability and validity of the measurement is safeguarded in this case as well. On the one hand, this reality can be observed straight forward, so no problems with reliability should arise. On the other hand, in terms of validity, this measurement is backed up by the previous literature in the field and by the use given to Roubini and Sachs' Types of Government Index.

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### 3.2.1.3 COLOUR OF THE GOVERNMENT

Measuring the colour of the government in both Spain and France is a simple task, as there have only been two parties in each country that have made to government in the last decades. Left and right are commonly accepted terms, which are also used by scholars (Zechmeister, 2006; Bienfait & Beek, 2001). Even though there might be conflict in defining the boundaries for both concepts, in Spain and France there is no room for discussion.

In Spain left parties are represented by PSOE and IU, and several regional parties, however, only PSOE has had governing opportunities; while in France are PS and EELV. On the other hand, right wing parties in Spain are PP and regional parties as CiU (Catalan) and PNV (Basque); meanwhile in France are UMP and FN.

As the values the variable can take are exclusive, there is no party in Spain nor in France that cannot be positioned in the left or the right wing that has been in government, so it is possible to operationalize them converting them into dummy variables. By using dummy coding, we will assign a 1 or a 0 value to each of the two possibilities, in this case left wing parties will take the value 1 and right wing parties will take the value 0. (Field, 2009)

In this case the reliability of the measurement is provided by the commonly accepted labelling of the parties in Spain and France. In this case we do not aim to go in depth in the policies of each party when in government, which might raise controversy in the positioning of the parties, but in the general perception of each of them, which is commonly accepted. On the other hand, no issues arise with the validity of the measurement.

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#### 3.2.1.4 PROXIMITY OF ELECTIONS

The proximity of the elections is a variable that should be simply to measure. Previous studies have analysed it distinguishing between electoral and non-electoral years (Kuklinski, 1978), however in this case we will use the number of months left for the elections. However, there is a relevant issue to be determined, when to start counting the months left from the elections. Some strikes are, as it has been explained, single day fixed time strikes, which present no difficulties, but others are open ended and can go for several months. Therefore, we will consider the date the strike ends, as the pressure on the government rises as the election's day comes closer.

The other issue to deal with when measuring this variable is when the election's day is. In the cases when the elections have already been celebrated after the strike it is simple to determine, however, for those strikes that have happened recently enough that elections have not been celebrated yet, we will consider the expected elections day taking into account the four years term in Spain and five years term in France.

Once the measuring specifications have been established, there should be no concerns about reliability. The concept of proximity of elections is straightforward, so it presents no complications for the validity of the measurement.

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### 3.2.2 INTERNAL VARIABLES

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#### 3.2.2.1 DURATION

The duration of the strikes will divide our study in two. On the one hand, we will find the commonly known as general strikes, which are one day and inter-sectoral. On the other hand, we will analyse the open ended and sectoral strikes. For the general strikes the analysis will not include the impact of the duration, as they have always been single day strikes.

The rest of the strikes do need to be assessed in their duration, and this will be done in a simple way by counting the number of days the strike has lasted. This straightforward measurement does not present problems with reliability or with validity.

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### 3.2.2.2 SECTOR

The sector of a strike definitely affects the probability of success the strike has, but how can it be measured? As it was presented in our theoretical framework, sectors can be divided into two categories, depending on whether they were essential for the daily life of average citizens, or they were not indispensable for them. From this dichotomy we will obtain our two categories essential services and non-essential services.

The essential services will include transports, supplies and energy production; while the non-essential comprise education, health and justice. General strikes, due to their nature, which aims to get involved every economic sector, will be considered as essential sector strikes. For the statistical analysis dummy variables will be used as well, giving the non-essential sectors' strike the value 0 and the essential sectors' strike the value 1.

The reliability of the measurement is ensured from the previous classification of sector, which comprehends all the analysed sectors, and the validity is ensured as with adopting this distinction between essential and non-essential sectors we encompass the key issues presented in the theoretical framework regarding the stakeholders.

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### 3.2.2.3 SIZE OF THE STRIKE

The measurement of the size of the strike will follow its dual nature. As it was presented, the right to strike is individual, but its exercise is collective, and from this nature arise two possible measurements of the size of strikes. First, the number of trade unions involved in the protest; and second, the number of workers that go on strike.

Every strike is legally called by trade unions, what it makes it easy to observe which of them are involved. However, the absolute number of trade unions does not tell the whole story, as not all the trade unions are the same size. The representativeness of the trade unions is to be measured by its results in the workers' elections, a practice common in Spain and France. With these values we just need to add the percentage of those trade unions supporting the strike and we will have their relative size. The alternative would be using the union's density, but this measurement presents two problems. First, as it was already stated, both Spain and France have low levels of union's density, which might distort the real picture of the rest of the workers. Second, the data about affiliation is not necessarily public, as it is to the trade unions discretion whether to make it public or not. Therefore, the results of the trade unions elections are a better indicator to measure their representativeness.

On the individual side of the dual definition, we explained how workers have the choice of following or not the strike called by the trade union. Their support influences the outcome of the strike, as it affects its ability to make pressure upon the government. However, measuring the support a strike receives is not an easy task, as the figures vary from the trade unions to the government, therefore both figures will be used in the analysis, to observe if they are proportional and if there are different effects with both measures.

Once the problem with the measurement of the individual support have been solved, the reliability of both measurements is granted, since the data is collected from official sources and from the statements made by the trade unions. On the other hand, the validity of the measurement is also ensured, as we assess both dimensions of the size of the strikes.

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### 3.2.3 DEPENDENT VARIABLES

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### 3.2.3.1 AWARENESS

As it was presented in chapter 2, awareness is the earliest goal of a strike. By obtaining awareness, the following steps might arrive, and even in the event they do not, the trade union would have gain a better position for future conflicts and it would have justified its *raison d'être* before the society.

The common method to measure awareness is through opinion polls; however, there are none available asking about the knowledge of people of the different strikes, so therefore is not an option for this research and alternatives need to be found.

Two will be the areas in which to measure the level of awareness the strike has achieved. First, the streets, since most of the strikes come along with demonstrations, in which not only the workers, but also individuals take part. Therefore, measuring the number of people attending a demonstration gives us a good idea of the level of awareness a strike is achieving. However, the problem that was found when measuring the number of participants in a strike appears when measuring the number of participants in demonstrations as well. There are two sources that measure the number of people attending a demonstration, those who call the demonstration and the government, via the forces of order. For this indicator, as in the previous one, we will opt for using both measures, the official attendance number given by the government after each demonstration and the number given by the trade unions.

The second arena to measure awareness is the media. As we presented it in chapter 2, the media is a good thermometer to assess how important issues are for society. The best sources to study, for measuring reasons, are the main newspapers in each country, *El País* in Spain and *Le Monde* in France. From the observation of these newspapers we will obtain an indicator based on the number of hit resulting from a search conducted using the online search engines of both newspapers.

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### 3.2.3.2 NEGOTIATIONS

The second dependent variable in our study is the opening of negotiations. Despite it looks a very straightforward variable, as negotiations are whether open or not, there are some concerns about reliability that need to be made clear.

As it was explained in the theoretical framework, conversations between the government and the trade unions are constant, as a result of the institutionalization of the trade unions' position as social interlocutor of the government. So, how can we distinguish between the daily relation between the government and the trade unions and a bargaining process? The key for us is observing that the government acknowledges the strike and reacts by opening or continuing ongoing negotiations about the issues the trade unions consider essential and led them to call a strike. Therefore, if the points that are relevant for the trade union are on the table, those will be considered as negotiations, and vice versa.

From this conditions we will ensure the reliability of the measurement, and the validity of the measurement does not need for discussion, as the concept is a simple one, opening negotiations can obviously be measured by assessing if negotiations were open or not.

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### 3.2.3.3 CHANGES IN THE POLICY

The last dependent variable refers to whether the trade unions have been successful to change the will of the government and fulfil its demands, or not. The degree of success of the trade unions

regarding this task varies, and it is not possible to provide an exact value. Therefore, in order to operationalize this variable we will opt for distinguishing three categories that can be assessed in a much easier way.

We will be distinguishing between no changes in policy (0), which will consist in keeping the previous policy and no concessions being made to the trade unions in other fields; a negotiated agreement (1), which refers to two possible situations, either obtaining part of the demands the trade unions had, but not all of them, or resulting in an agreement when the trade unions do not get any of their demands, but they obtain an alternative compensation; and the case when the demands of the trade unions are fulfilled (2), which consists in obtaining all the points from the trade unions started the strike for.

Table 2

<b>Value</b>	<b>Level of change</b>
<b>0</b>	No changes in policy and no concessions to the trade unions
<b>1</b>	Negotiated Agreement: demands partially fulfilled or alternative concessions made to the trade unions
<b>2</b>	Demands fulfilled

## CHAPTER 4. CASES REVIEW

Chapter 4 will select, describe and present analytically the case studies that this research will rely upon. Its intention is to provide an aseptic view of the reality of strikes in the public sector and their impact. Therefore, no theoretical considerations will be made yet, as that will come in Chapter 5. The Chapter will be structured in three parts, first the sampling will be describe and conducted, second the chosen cases will be described and third the cases will be coded and small remarks will be made to prepare ourselves for the discussion of the findings.

### 4.1 SAMPLING

In this research, as it was presented in the previous chapter, we were aiming to qualitatively analyse at least 20 cases overall. Obviously the number of strikes in Spain and France is larger than this; the average with the last available data is over 700 strikes a year per country, including private sector strikes (ILO, 2013). However, the cases cannot be randomly chosen from the population of cases, as research limitations could arise, as the known population of cases is too large and some of them do not provide sufficient information to conduct proper research, so there must be a pattern in the selection of cases.

In order to comply with this requirement, for the selection of the case studies the method to be used is relevance sampling. Relevance sampling starts by selecting all the "textual units that contribute to answer the given research question", which are defined by the analytical problem at hand, to continue by "following a conceptual hierarchy, systematically lowering the number of units that need to be considered for an analysis" (Krippendorff, 2003, p. 119). Therefore the process will consist in a general approximation followed by a lowering in the number of cases based on certain criteria.

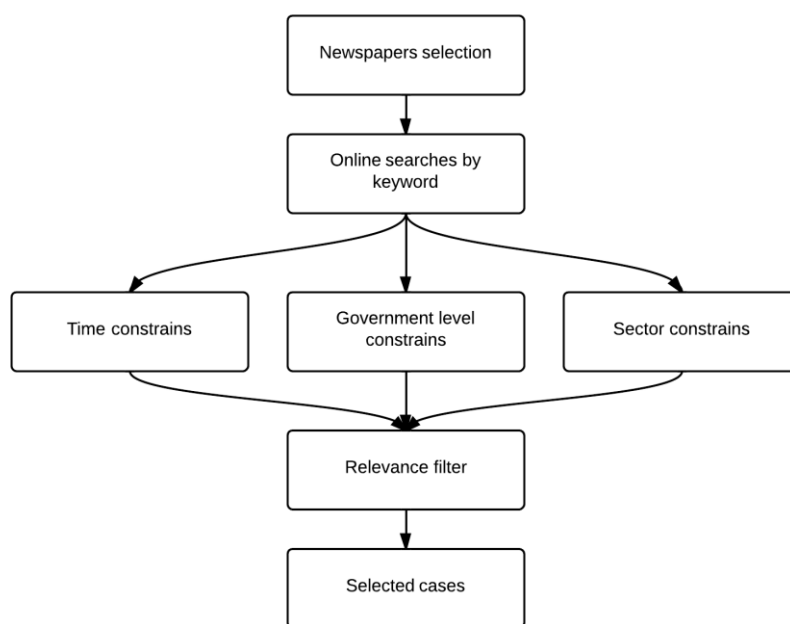
The first approximation will be done by using the online search engines of Le Monde; and El País, as prestige newspapers in France and in Spain. The search will be conducted using the keywords of "grève" and "huelga". Once this procedure was done, the number of results retrieved was too high, over a thousand in both cases and reaching almost 100.000 in Le Monde. Besides the number, the results presented other complications, as they included strikes in different countries, in the private sector and general comments not referring to any particular strike, but to striking habits. So at this point, it proved necessary defining more precise criteria to select the cases to be further considered.

First, to lower the number of units to be analysed only those between 2006 and 2012 were be considered. An exception to this rule will apply to general strikes, which due to their reduced number this rule will not apply. Second, obviously, only national or regional news will be considered, as even if a French newspaper addresses a strike in Spain and vice versa, that is not the intention of the analysis. Third, our study observes the effect of strikes in the public sector, therefore, only those strikes that include workers of the public sector will be considered, and however, no more than 4 cases per country will deal with the same sector. And fourth, only news referring to an event that had taken place within one month will be considered, as for example, nowadays there are still articles in the newspapers about the general strikes of May of 1968 in France.

The results from the just explained analysis can be found in the Annex. In the Spanish case there were 1575 hits, out of which 1002 hits were relevant. As it was mentioned the other hits referred to private sector strikes, local strikes, international strikes, non workers protest movements, police behaviour and hunger strikes. In the French case due to the overwhelming number of hits 8642, it was decided to introduce another criteria, consisting in filtering those articles that had the word "grève" in the title, which reduced the number of hits to 1320. From these hits 387 of them fulfilled the conditions to enter the analysis, while the rest were mainly international strikes and strikes in the private sector.

The resulting units of text will be the "population of relevant texts" (Krippendorff, 2003, pp. 118-120). The selection will be based in the relevance, measured in the number of news dedicated to the strike by the newspapers, in order to ensure the reliability of the case selection. We are aware of the implications this selection procedure has, as the sampling will be based in an indicator that is used to measure one of the dependent variables, which implies that the analysed strikes have already achieved a degree of success. However, the obtained degree of success varies, despite reaching a minimum. Furthermore, no measurement will be possible in a strike which would have not arisen certain degree of notoriety, as data will not be available for several of the indicators that are measured in this research.

Once the cases have been chosen, further searches with keywords related to the specific cases will be conducted, in order to retrieve all the existing published information about the chosen cases.



## 4.2 CASE SELECTION

After applying the mentioned criteria, 13 cases have been selected due to their higher relevance, they are listed with the number of hits next to them. Besides those strikes, also the general strikes that have occurred in Spain will be analysed; this includes the three of them that have taken place in the period from which the other cases are being taken.

If checking the results of the analysis in the Annex, there are three cases that despite receiving a large number of hits are not going to be analysed. First, the general strikes in Euskadi in 2012 (25 hits) and 2009 (26 hits), as general strikes in this region have a deep ideological and national component, which would require for an specific study, as the motivation is not a policy or the changes in labour conditions, but the political status of the region. Second, the air traffic controllers strike in 2010 (19 hits), as this strike was never called, becoming an illegal strike undertaken through massive sick leaves, and therefore escapes to the object of this study as well. And third, the 2008 truck drivers' strike (12 hits), as despite being a strike that required the action of the government, it was still in the private sector.



## 4.3 CASE DESCRIPTIONS

In this section the case studies will just be presented, no deep inquiry guided by theory will be conducted. There will be three sections the first one for the Spanish cases, the second for the general strikes in Spain and the third for the French cases. Each case overview will be structured in four parts, first it will be explained why the strike was called, second we will describe how it developed, including which trade unions were involved and if there were parallel protests, third we will present the economical and political context the strike took place in, and fourth and last we will describe its outcome, whether the trade unions fulfilled their demands, or no agreement was reached.

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### 4.3.1 SPAIN

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#### DOCTORS' STRIKE IN CATALONIA - 2011

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##### TOPIC

The strike was aimed to protest against the 10% budget cutback for the Catalan health system, which had not affected the salaries of the doctors yet, but worsened the provided service, and to prevent further cutbacks; however, further cutbacks were likely to do affect wages. According to Metges de Catalunya, which is the largest trade union among the Catalan doctors, the cutbacks resulted in reducing the number of beds in the hospitals and the closure of operation rooms, which had an impact in the quality and how demanding was their work, and it also resulted in the layoff of 3.500 interns. Therefore, they demanded to stop the cutbacks and recover the budget of previous years, in order to reverse the situation (Metges de Catalunya, 2011).

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##### DURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The strike was called by Metges de Catalunya, which is the largest and only trade union with real bargaining power in the health sector in Catalonia (Metges de Catalunya, 2006). The trade union announced November 7, 2011 a fixed time duration strike of two days, which would take place November 15 and 16, 2011. The strike called the doctors of the public and publicly participated health system to go on strike both days.

Metges de Catalunya were called to negotiate by the Catalan Health Institute (ICS), the governmental department in charge, after they called the strike and before it took place; however, these negotiations did not succeed and the strike took place.

As it is common, the figures regarding the participation provided by the trade union vary from the ones of the government. While the trade unions claimed that 71-73% of the doctors followed the strike, the government reduces the number to 20% (Mondelo, 2011). However, the general impression, as the newspapers reported it, is that the strike was unable to bring the system to a standstill (El País, 2011).

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##### CONTEXT

The main feature of this strike is that it was took place less than a week before the Spanish Parliamentary elections, which were held November 20. Despite of being a strike at a regional level, the regional parties were contending in the national elections too, so they had high electoral interests even if the regional elections had taken place in 2010.

At this time, the Catalan government was formed by CiU members and ruled by Artur Mas, which was governing thanks to an agreement with the PP. However, the government was a minority government, as the PP was not part of it.

The other main determinant was the economic situation, as the cutbacks are framed in a crisis context and are labelled as its consequence. The GDP growth rate was 0.4% in 2011, even though the GDP growth rate for the IV trimester of 2011 was -0.2%, while unemployment was 23% in November 2011.

## IMPACT

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The strike had a moderated impact in the media based on two factors: 1) the number of front covers in made in national media per day of strike, as it made it once to the front cover of the national edition of El País, which included the cover picture, on October 16, 2011; and 2) it received 10 hits in the already explained relevance search.

On the other hand, the awareness raised by the strike could not be observed in the streets, as the trade union did not call any demonstrations.

Negotiations continued after the strike, however, ended unsuccessfully on November 28, 2011, when the ICS unilaterally broke off the negotiations, and decided, in the short term, to implement indirect wage reductions that did not need of the agreement of the trade unions. In the long term, the budget cutbacks were not prevented and occurred again in 2012, as the health system budget shrank 11,3% (Castedo, 2013).

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## TEACHERS' STRIKES IN MADRID - AUTUMN 2011

### TOPIC

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The target of these strikes was to protest against the cutbacks ruled by the regional government in the primary and secondary education. The cutbacks had affected the temporary workers, which did not get their contracts renewed. This policy resulted in an increase of the teaching time for the other teachers, which move them from 18 to 20 hours per week of lecturing (Álvarez, 2011). Therefore, teachers claimed that the quality of the lessons would decrease, as they will not have the time to focus on the needs of each individual student.

### DURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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The strikes were called by the five most representative trade unions in the education sector of the region of Madrid, which are FREM-CCOO, ANPE, FETE-UGT, CSIF and STEM (Boletín Oficial de la Comunidad de Madrid, 2011), and in the latest protest CGT joined, however this trade union does not seat in the sectorial table, as it does not reach the required level of representation. The protests were coordinated through a platform of teachers, known as the "green wave" (marea verde), where these trade unions were present.

The platform opted for a strategy consisting in calling strikes in a limited number of days each week, resulting in strikes on September 14, 20, 21 and 22; October 4, 5 and 20; and November 15, 16, 17 and 29. However, not every trade union supported every strike; the following table presents the different strikes, the unions supporting them and the teachers' participation, according to the police.

Table 3

	Trade Unions	Participation
<b>September 14</b>	FREM-CCOO, ANPE, FETE-UGT, CSIF, STEM	
<b>September 20, 21 and 22</b>	FREM-CCOO, ANPE, FETE-UGT, CSIF, STEM	43%
<b>October 4, 5</b>	FREM-CCOO, ANPE, FETE-UGT, CSIF, STEM	30%
<b>October 20</b>	FREM-CCOO, ANPE, FETE-UGT, CSIF, STEM	30%
<b>November 15, 16</b>	CGT	_*
<b>November 17</b>	FREM-CCOO, FETE-UGT, STEM and CGT	18%
<b>November 29</b>	FREM-CCOO, ANPE, FETE-UGT, CSIF, STEM and CGT	8%

\*Participation was too low to be taken into account

Data retrieved from several news reports

The strikes on November 15, 16 and 17 received less support from trade unions, as they considered that the dates were too close to the parliamentary elections that took place on November, 20 (Belver, 2011). Besides the strikes, the trade unions called two demonstrations on September 20 and October 22.

## CONTEXT

These protests took place in the context of the financial crisis, in which Spain had a growing unemployment rate that moved from 22.4% in September to 23% in November and a growth of 0% and -0.2% in the III and IV trimesters of the year. The region was ruled by a PP government (right wing), which had an absolute majority in the regional parliament.

As in the previous case, the protests are close to the parliamentary elections that took place in Spain November 20, 2011. However, the regional elections in Madrid had taken place already in May 2011, so the next elections were to occur in 2015.

## IMPACT

The impact of the strike in the media was solid, especially the first month, as out of four days on strike it made it three days to the front cover of El País, and two of them included the cover picture. However, in the following two months, when there were seven days of protests, it made it twice to the front cover of El País. The impact can also be seen in the number hits, 24, it received in our search.

On the other hand, there were two demonstrations. Over 90.000 people demonstrated as part of the protests on September 20, according to the trade unions, a number that was reduced to 5.000 the regional government (EFE, 2011). On the second date of demonstrations, on October 22, the number was 70.000 according to the trade unions, and the government did not supply an official number.

Negotiations were officially established between the regional government and the trade unions on January 13, 2012; however they ended up without an agreement (Álvarez, 2012).

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## CIVIL SERVANTS STRIKE - SUMMER 2010

### TOPIC

The Zapatero's government announced on May, 2010 that they would reduce the salary of all civil servants by 5%, starting in June, 2010, and that they would freeze the salaries and contribution to

pensions, starting the following year (before they were updated according to inflation), as part of the austerity measures. Against these measures CCOO, UGT y CSI-CSIF, the largest trade unions in the public sector, decided to call a single day public servants strike on June 8, 2010.

## DURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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As it was just mentioned civil servants were called to a single day strike on June 8, 2010. All levels civil servants were called on strike, national, regional and local ones, by the three main trade unions in the public sector, which also called demonstrations in the afternoon in several Spanish cities.

The strike, however, had a limited impact in the civil servants, as 75% of them, according to the trade unions and 11.85%, according to the government, went on strike. According to the trade unions the strike was followed mainly in the education sector and it was differently followed in each region, as we can see in the next table.

Table 4

<b>Region</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Trade Unions</b>
<b>Madrid</b>	10%	73%
<b>Cataluña</b>	11,51%	75%
<b>Andalucía</b>	10%	75%
<b>Baleares</b>	8,70%	70%
<b>Asturias</b>	9,20%	80%
<b>Murcia</b>	-	60%
<b>Navarra</b>	5%	-
<b>Extremadura</b>	-	73%
<b>Aragón</b>	-	65%
<b>País Vasco</b>	-	47%
<b>Castilla y León</b>	4%	73%
<b>Galicia</b>	10,54%	62%
<b>Rioja</b>	4%	75%
<b>Valencia</b>	6,88%	72%
<b>Castilla-La Mancha</b>	4%	70%
<b>Cantabria</b>	9%	49%
<b>Canarias</b>	6%	63%
<b>Ceuta</b>	-	60%
<b>Melilla</b>	-	80%

Data retrieved from 20 Minutos

On the other hand, the main demonstration took place in Madrid, 75.000 people attended according to the trade unions, however the police reduced that number to 7.000. There were demonstrations as well in other cities as Barcelona, Alicante, Valencia and Bilbao.

## CONTEXT

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The strike and the cutbacks took place in a crisis context in Spain, where the international institutions were calling for austerity measures in order to balance the national budget. In terms of GDP, Spanish economy grew only 0.3% in the II trimester and unemployment in June 2010 reached 20.2%.

It was Zapatero's second government who had to face this strike. This government was a left wing minority government, which had been elected in March 2008, so it still had 2 years in office until the next elections, even though that eventually they were brought forward to November, 2011.

## IMPACT

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This single day strike made it to the front cover of El País the day after the strike, with the main headline and the picture, however it was framed as a failure, still it is important in terms of rising awareness. Still it had 18 hits in our online search.

On the other hand a demonstration was called in Madrid for the same day of the strike, to which 75.000 people attended according to the trade unions. Despite there was no official estimation made by the government, an estimation made by El País counted up to 15.250 people in the demonstration (Junquera, 2010).

In this case no negotiations were open and there were no changes to the policy.

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## MADRID UNDERGROUND STRIKE - 2010

### TOPIC

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The underground service of the city of Madrid is dependent on the regional government of Madrid. This government announced a 5% salary cut for all the employees of public companies in June 11, 2010 (Sérvulo González, 2010), which affected the metro employees.

Metro employees decided to go on strike, announcing that there was no room for negotiation with the regional government, as they claimed that their salary could not be modified, but through the means established in the collective agreement (20 Minutos, 2010). Therefore, they called a strike for June 28, 29 and 30, 2010.

### DURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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As it just been mentioned, Metro de Madrid workers announced on June 17, that they would react to the cuts in their salaries with three days on strike on June 28, 29 and 30. The reaction of the regional government to this announcement, in an attempt to avoid the strike, was to offer the workers a smaller reduction, consisting only in a 2.15%. However all the trade unions representing underground employees, decided to go ahead with the strike and to decline the offer.

The strike had no special incidents on the first day, though this was not the case in the other two, as the workers decided not to respect the skeleton staff ruled by the government that consisted in a 50% of the workers, which resulted in a total shut down of the underground these two days.

After these events, a negotiation started between the parties, with the compromise from the workers to temporally stop the protests (Álvarez, 2010). As an agreement was not reached strikes were called for July 14, 15 and 16 (Europa Press, 2010).

Finally, the conflict was closed on July 17, as both parties agreed to a 1% reduction of the salaries of the workers (EFE, 2010). However, further protests occurred in 2011 and 2012 due to salary conditions, as the workers argued that the regional government had broken the pact .

### CONTEXT

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This protests are deeply related to the previous case, as the salaries reduction implemented by Madrid's regional government followed the pattern establish by the national government cut of the previous case. Therefore, the economic situation is analogue, as only one month separates both cases, as both the unemployment rate and the growth rate are the same in June and July and the II and III trimesters of 2010.

The ruling government was different though, as in this case is a right wing majority government (PP), which would be facing elections in less than one year, in March 2011.

## IMPACT

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During the first three days the workers were on strike the news made it twice to the front cover of El País, on June 30 and 31, both times with no picture but with the headliner, and the issue retrieved 20 hits in our online search. In terms of awareness there were no demonstrations called, however, Metro de Madrid is used by over 2 million people each day (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2013).

Negotiations were started even before the strike took place, however no agreement was reached despite the offers from the regional government, and the first three days of strike took place. After those three days further negotiations were held and finally an agreement was reached on July 17, which consisted in a 1% salary reduction, which is far from the 5% reduction that the rest of the public employees received (EFE, 2010).

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## JUDGES STRIKE - 2009

### TOPIC

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The origin to the process that led to the first judges' strike in Spanish democracy history, could be found in the opening of a disciplinary procedure against Judge Tirado for inattention of his duties, due to the delays in his trials. The CGPJ (Judicial Power General Council) sanctioned Judge Tirado with a 1.500€ fine on September 10, 2008, however the government asked the public prosecutor to appeal in order to seek for a more severe sanction.

This fact led to the discomfort of the judges, as they understood that was the lack of means that was causing the delays in the administrating justice and were not pleased with the interference of the executive power in issues of the judiciary.

Judges in Spain have no right to unionize, but however they have professional associations that play an analogue role. These four associations, APM, JpD, AJFV and FJI, drafted a protest document asking the government for wages improvements and more means for the courts on January 8, 2009. As the conflict escalated, despite of the offers made the government in a bargaining process, AJFV and FJI decided to call a strike on February 18. APM and JpD, did not call the strike, as it was not clear if judges had the right to go on strike and preferred alternative means of protesting, however they supported the demands, which meant that the four judicial association had a common voice against the government (RTVE, 2009).

### DURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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The single day strike that took place on February 18, was the first time in history that judges went on strike in Spain. That day 70% of the judges in Spain went on strike according to the professional associations, number that is reduced to 35.38% by the CGPJ (Europa Press, 2009).

These protests led to the resignation of the Minister of Justice, Mariano Fernández Bermejo, five days later, on February 23, 2009 (RTVE, 2009). After Francisco Caamaño was named as the new Minister of Justice, negotiations between judges and the government restarted.

## CONTEXT

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This protests took place as well at the early stages of a crisis scenario, where the GDP was decreasing 1.6% and unemployment rate was 16.7%. The government was held by the PSOE (left wing), which governed with a minority support in parliament in their second term, after the elections held in March, 2008.

## IMPACT

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This single day strike made it to the front cover of El País on February 19, including a picture of the protests and a headliner, meanwhile it had 51 hits in our online search, which makes it the strike with the most hits in our search, but for the general strikes. On the other hand, there were no demonstrations attached to the strike.

In this case negotiations began before the strike was called, on November 4, 2008, however no results were achieved. After the strike and the resignation of the Minister, new negotiations started with the new Minister and some concessions were made to the professional associations as a 600 million investment to update the technology used in the courts (RTVE, 2009).

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## JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION STAFF STRIKE- 2008

## TOPIC

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This strike was called by the Justice Administration staff (including those working in the courts, the civil registry and other administrative bodies dependent of the Ministry of Justice) in those autonomous communities where the competence is not transferred to the regional government. The motivation of the strike is the 200€ gap in the salaries between the national civil servants and those paid by the regions (EFE, 2008).

CCOO, UGT, CSI-CSIF and STAJ, which represented the majority of the workers in the sector, were the trade unions calling the strike.

## DURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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The strike was called on February 4, 2008, with an undetermined duration, and it lasted 60 days, until it was called off on April 6. In these two months offers were made by the Minister of Justice in order to improve the salaries of these civil servants, however they did not match the demands of the trade unions, so the strike continued.

On April 3, UGT announced that they were willing to put an end to the strike if the Minister seated at the negotiations table with the willingness to reach an agreement through bargaining. This happened the day after, as negotiations started, and finished after two days of bargaining, agreeing to a progressive salary increase reaching 190€ in 2009, which was close to the original demands of the trade unions.

Meanwhile, the conflict affected thousands of citizens and it took over three months to get the delayed work up to date.

## CONTEXT

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The context of early 2008 in Spain shows a economy that is starting to show symptoms of fatigue, however, authorities did not frame the economic situation as a crisis, as the GDP growth was 1% in the I trimester of 2008 and the unemployment levels moved from 9.2% to 9.9% between February and April.

When the strike started the PSOE (left wing) was the only party in a minority government, which needed for isolated agreements in parliament to pass any legislation. In the meantime, elections were held on March 5, but they did not change the balance of power in parliament, so the resulting government from that elections was also a minority PSOE one.

## IMPACT

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Despite of lasting 60 days this strike only made it twice to the front cover of El País, on March 13, after five weeks of protests, and on April 7, when the strike was called off after the agreement. However, our search retrieved 18 hits. Meanwhile, they called a demonstration on March, 29, which was attended by 8.600 people according to the trade unions and 5.200 according to the police (Europa Press, 2008).

In the end, after negotiations went on, an agreement was reached on April 6, almost match the demands of the trade unions as the salary was risen 190€, close to the 200€ the trade unions were demanding.

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## DOCTORS' STRIKE IN CATALONIA - 2006

### TOPIC

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The demands that made the Catalan doctors go on strike in April and May 2006 were all related to their labour conditions, including having their own collective agreement, a human resources plan to adapt to the increment of the demand of the system, regularizing the weekly working hours so it does not exceed 48 hours and a continuous training programme (EFE, 2006). By obtaining their own collective agreement doctors would be able to negotiate and regulate their own labour conditions independently from the other hospital staff.

### DURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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The strike was supposed to start on March 20, 2006, however an administrative mistake in the forms for calling the strike, delayed it until March 28. All doctors in the public and publicly participated health system were called on strike for three days, from the 28 until the 30. The strike was called by Metges de Catalunya, which, as it has already been presented, is the largest trade union among doctors in Catalonia, but without the support of UGT and CCOO.

After those three strikes' days, which were followed by 86% of the doctors according to Metges de Catalunya and 45% according to the regional government, two more days of protests were called on April 26 and 27, being followed this time by 84% of the doctors according to Metges de Catalunya and 35.8% according to the regional government (Costa Pau, 2006). Metges de Catalunya continued the



protests and called two more days of strike on May 3 and 4, which were followed by 83% of the doctor according to Metges de Catalunya and 35% according to the government (Europa Press, 2006).

After this protests two more days of strike were called for May, 9 and 10, however they were called off, after the bargaining between the government and the trade union advanced. Once the conflict was finished the ICS (Catalonian Health Institute) announced that up to 275.000 patients had been affected by the strike (Ricart, 2006).

## CONTEXT

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These strikes took place in a growing economy, as GDP grew 2% in the II trimester of 2006 and low record unemployment levels, as in March and April was 8.5 and 8.4% respectively, in one of the best moments in history for Spanish economy. Catalonia was governed by a left wing coalition government, formed by PSC-PSOE, ERC and ICV, which got to office in December 2003. This meant that the expected date for new elections in Catalonia was December 2007, however, the pact between the three parties broke later in 2006 and elections were called by the end of the year.

## IMPACT

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The Catalonia's doctor strike did not make it to the front cover of the national newspapers, however it did make eight times during the strikes it to the front cover of La Vanguardia, the largest newspaper in Catalonia. Still when undertaking our search in El País news engine it had 14 hits. In terms of awareness there were no demonstrations called.

The negotiations between the regional government and Metges de Catalunya ended up successfully as they agreed to create a Labour Council where doctors would be able to regulate their own internal issues, to a productivity complement and to an increase in the working life of doctors and in exchange doctors would called off the strike, as they did (Ricart, 2006), which was considered by the doctors as a positive agreement that fulfilled their demands (Metges de Catalunya, 2006).

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### 4.3.2 GENERAL STRIKES IN SPAIN

General Strikes in Spain have been institutionalized as a tool trade unions have against a policy of the government, traditionally new labour legislation. General strikes are single day labour stoppages (with the exception of 1992 that was a 12 hours strike) to which are called all the workers in all the economic sectors. Since Spanish democracy was established in 1978, there have been eight general strikes in Spain. This count does not include regional or local general strikes, which are common in the Basque Country. The eight of them are going to be analysed in this research, as they offer a good sample in which to observe and analyse the outcomes of strikes.

Their impact is going to be assessed only in terms of negotiations and results of the negotiations, as general strikes have always had a deep impact in the media. Their awareness is maximum, as it can be seen when checking the front covers of national newspapers, as they have always made it to the front cover of all the newspapers the day after the strike, and they have received a strong coverage the previous. In our research, for instance 2010 general strike had 146 hits and 2012 strikes got 233 and 161, which are values that are far from the sectorial strikes.

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### 1985 GENERAL STRIKE

#### TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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Between 1980 and 1985 the number of old-age pensioners had increased by one million, which seriously affected the state budget, therefore, as a reaction the socialist government passed a new pension law, which reduced the pension amount received and made it harder to access to pensions (Boletín Oficial del Estado, 1985).

Protests had taken place on June 4, 1985, organized by CCOO and UGT, however the general strike on June 20 was only called by CCOO. But, why UGT did not join CCOO when calling the strike? The already explained link between UGT and PSOE, which was in government, prevented UGT from joining the general strike. Therefore, CCOO, linked to the Communist Party, called the first ever general strike of the Spanish democracy and the only one that was not called by both largest trade unions together.

## CONTEXT

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In 1985 Spain was a country that was still not part of the European Economic Community and was still struggling because of the effects of the transition from a dictatorship to a democracy (less than ten years old), therefore in the II trimester of 1985 GDP was shrinking 0.7% and unemployment of the year reached 20.6%.

In the political arena, since 1982 the PSOE was governing holding a wide majority in parliament (202 out of 350 seats), so the next parliamentary elections were one year and a half away.

## IMPACT

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The results of the first general strike of the Spanish democracy were inexistent in terms of policy change. No negotiations were opened between the government and CCOO after the strike, and therefore, no changes in the pension law were made, which eventually entered into force in 1986 (Cebrián, 1985). The day after the general strike president González, when attending the media in The Hague said that "the strike was a total failure" and "it almost did not exist", due to its low relevance, so the government would not move from its previous position (Bayón, 1985).

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## 1988 GENERAL STRIKE - 14-D

### TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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The 1988 general strike was called jointly by CCOO and UGT, protesting against the government "intransigence" that "defends the corporate interests and puts in practice deeply regressive measures that go against the wide collective interests, among which are those of the most disadvantaged of our society" (El País, 1988). The trade unions highlighted five clear demands associated to this general strike: 1) the withdrawal of the youth insertion contract and the creation of a new general employment plan, 2) increasing 2% the buying power for pensioners and civil servants, 3) increasing the unemployment benefits to 48%, as agreed between the government and UGT in 1984, 4) matching the minimum pensions to the minimum wage and 5) recognizing full collective bargaining rights to civil servants.

The government reacted despising the strike, which was labelled as a "political" strategy by the PCE and CCOO by the Minister of Economy, Carlos Solchaga (El País, 1988), however, they were surprised by the fact that their twin trade union, UGT, joined the general strike, as this undermined their argument.

The general strike took place on December 14, 1988, and as the headliner of El País on December 15 expressed it "The General Strike paralyzed Spain yesterday". Therefore, the strike was a success in terms of support by the workers, who massively followed the strike call. Especially important was the fact that

the public television workers followed the strike, as at midnight the only television channel in Spain stopped broadcasting (El País, 1988).

## CONTEXT

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The Spanish economy started recovering in 1986 and showed a strong growth until 1992, and the IV trimester of 1988 was not an exception as the GDP growth rate was 2.7%, however unemployment was still high as the unemployment rate was 16.5%.

Felipe Gonzalez' (PSOE) government was in its second term, supported by a PSOE majority in Parliament that resulted from the elections that took place in June 1986, so there were almost two years left until the next elections.

## IMPACT

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The strike was accompanied by large demonstrations, which got almost two million people to protest at different Spanish cities according to the trade unions, a number that was reduced to 250.000 according to the government (El País, 1988).

After the general strike, the government acknowledged the success of the protests in mobilizing the workers, and decided to call the trade unions to the negotiations table the day after (ABC, 1988), decision that was confirmed in the Friday's Council of Ministers (García Moreno, 1988).

The final outcome of the negotiations satisfied the demands of the trade unions, as the young insertion contract was withdrawn and the minimum pension matched the minimum wage, however the government did not accept to increase the unemployment benefits to 48%, as "the active population rate has grown over the forecasts" and implementing that policy would have led to "students and housewives to join dole queues to receive unemployment benefits", said the Minister of Labour, Manuel Chaves (Díez, 1988).

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## 1992 GENERAL STRIKE - 28-M

## TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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This 12 hours strike was called by CCOO and UGT as a reaction to the unemployment benefits system reform, to the new Strike Law and the de-industrialization process (El País, 1992). One of the key objectives of the strike was to paralyze the transport system between 8 and 11am, which successfully did on May 28, 1992, however, as the trade unions claimed that the strike paralyzed "the economic activity, but not the life of the citizens" (El País, 1992).

## CONTEXT

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This strike took place in a scenario where the Spanish economy was getting into another crisis, as GDP was shrinking 0.1% in the II trimester of 1992. However, this decrease in the economy was not reflecting in unemployment figures, as it was 15.8%.

On the other hand, González' third government was in power with a minority support from the parliament, since PSOE lost the majority in Congress in the 1989 elections.

## IMPACT

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The government's attitude towards the general strike was to recognize its importance and start negotiations with the trade unions, but "rejecting the demands of 28-M" (Parra, 1992). Therefore, no final agreement was reached between trade unions and government regarding the unemployment benefits system, the Strike Law or the de-industrialization process.

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## 1994 GENERAL STRIKE - 27-E

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### TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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The 1994 general strike was caused by the labour reform the fourth González' government was writing at the beginning of the year. First, the trade unions used the threat of a general strike to try to convince the government to amend their labour law reform proposal, which included the legalization of temporary work agencies, the expansion of learning contracts to 25 year olds or adding organizational reasons as a objective dismissal cause for the employer (EFE, 1993).

These attempts made by CCOO and UGT were unsuccessful, as the government did not change its original position, which can be understood from the words of president González, when he said that "the government will do what it has to do, if possible it will be through dialogue, if this is not the case, it will do it accepting its own responsibility" (Cembrero, 1993). This lack of progress for the trade unions led them to call a general strike on January 27, 1994, for the "employment and solidarity", as their "last resort" (Hernández, 1993).

The results of the strike in terms of workers following it, was heterogeneous, as El País described it: "the strike was not general", "the stoppage was almost total in the industrial and construction sectors, almost inexistent in agriculture and unequal in services" (El País, 1994). The largest Spanish employers' organization, CEOE, claimed that only 26% of the workers followed the strike (Martín del Pozo, 1994).

The strike was complemented with demonstrations all around Spain. In Madrid 250.000 people attended the demonstration according to the trade unions and 65.000 according to the police. These figures deserved the comments of the Minister of the Presidency, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, who described the protests as "a heated reaction from the trade unions" (García Calle, 1994).

Finally the reform was passed on May 19, becoming the Law 10/1994. The text was passed almost in the same terms that it was before the general strike.

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### CONTEXT

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In 1994, Spain was struggling economically, and the González' government was under the political attack of the opposition for its "economic policy" (González Ibañez, 1994). The PSOE government had a minority support in Parliament after the June 1993 elections, and was facing a 21.5% unemployment rate and a GDP shrinking 0.6%.

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### IMPACT

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As it was explained, 1994 general strike did not manage to stop or change the labour market reform that was already following the legislative procedure in Parliament. The government, which hosted meetings with the trade unions' leaders, set clear, in words of its spokesman, that "any reform to the project would have needed of an agreement between the trade unions and the employers' organization" (El País, 1994), and as this agreement never came, no major modifications were made.

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## 2002 GENERAL STRIKE - 20-J

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### TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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The so called "Decretazo", a labour market reform, was the cause of the 2002 General Strike. The two main Spanish trade unions, CCOO and UGT, decided on May 17 to call a general strike on June 20, in order to ask for the "withdrawal of the unemployment reform the government was elaborating" (Abellán, 2002). As a reaction to the general strike, which was called the day before an EU summit in Sevilla, the Aznar's government passed the labour market reform via decree on May 24, which skipped the parliamentary procedure and debate before its entry into force (El País, 2002). The procedure used by the government is what gave the nickname to the reform.

Both the trade unions and the PSOE conducted a campaign to encourage workers to follow the general strike in June (El País, 2002), fighting against the unemployment subsidies tightening and the reduction of the dismissal compensation. Eventually, the general strike was a success in terms of participation, as El País explained it, besides the figures discrepancies between trade unions and government, "denying the dimension of the general strike is to close the eyes to reality" (El País, 2002). It is interesting to highlight that the electric power demand dropped 20.5% compared to a normal day, which is a measurement of the following of the strike by the workers (El País, 2010). The strike was accompanied by demonstrations which were attended by over 2.2 million people according to the trade unions (Parra, 2002).

The upcoming events, which resulted in the trade unions demanding resuming the negotiations with the government, led to the resignation of the Minister of Labour, Juan Carlos Aparicio, on July 20, which for the trade unions was an evidence of the success of the general strike (Marcos, 2002). After this episode negotiations resumed.

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### CONTEXT

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The president Aznar's catch phrase "España va bien" (Spain is doing well) could be used to explain the Spanish economic situation in 2002. As unemployment was low (11.4%) and the economy was growing 1.4%. It was this strong economic performance that let the PP to achieve a majority in parliament in elections held in March 2000.

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### IMPACT

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As it was presented, after the strike the Minister of Labour resigned and negotiations recommenced. A final agreement was reached on October 7 and a new regulation passed on October 17, which fulfilled the original demands of the trade unions, both regarding unemployment subsidies and dismissal compensation (Parra, 2002). Cándido Méndez, UGT leader, said that "the modifications are essential, not just formal" and "they are a real reassessment by the PP" after the general strike.

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## 2010 GENERAL STRIKE - 29-S

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### TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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The only general strike of the Zapatero presidency took place on September 29, 2010, as a reaction to the labour market reform voted in parliament on September 9 and that entered into force on September 19, and other austerity policies taken by the government, as the pensions-freezing or the

civil servants salary cuts (Zufiaur, 2010). The labour market reform incorporated measures that eased dismissals, as including "current or future losses or persistent decrease in the profits" of the company or absenteeism as a reason for a right and proper dismissal.

The strike, called by CCOO and UGT, was "moderately followed" (El País, 2010), affecting mainly the industrial sector. On the other hand, it is remarkable that particularly in Barcelona; there were severe violent incidents, which were an event with no precedents in previous general strikes (Blanchar, 2010).

## CONTEXT

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Spain was already feeling the consequences of the financial crisis in 2010. Despite GDP showed a small growth in the III trimester of the year (0.3%), the unemployment rate continued rising, up to 20.4% in September. This was the first general strike for a Zapatero government, which since the March 2008 elections was ruling Spain, without a majority in Parliament.

## IMPACT

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After the protests, a member of the cabinet said that "We have no room for manoeuvre. We are not going to modify anything. But we will negotiate other important stuff" (El País, 2010). As this representative from the government explained it, no modifications were introduced to the text. However, the government kept an open dialogue with the trade unions, a fact that was reinforced after Valeriano Gomez, a UGT trade unionist that attended the demonstrations supporting the general strike, was named Minister of Labour on October 21 (Abellán, 2010).

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## 2012 1ST GENERAL STRIKE - 29-M

## TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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A new labour market reform was passed in February 2012, by Rajoy's government, which had just been in office for less than three months. The new reform among other points, reduced the amount received as dismissal compensation and deeply change the collective agreements system, as it placed in the top of the hierarchical pyramid the company level agreement, before the sector level ones, and it suppressed the extended validity rule for these agreements in case no agreement was reached after they had expired, including only a two year extension (La Vanguardia, 2012).

The general strike protested against this reform, in a crisis and austerity context, being followed by 77% of the workers according to the trade unions and getting two million people to demonstrate in Spain, according to the trade unions, a number that was lowered by the government to 861.000 (El País, 2012).

## CONTEXT

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Despite a small recovery in 2010 and 2011, Spanish economy shrank again in 2012, as the I trimester of the year saw how GDP decreased 0.6%, while unemployment kept rising, reaching 24.1%. However, the government suffered this strike almost when moving in to their new offices, as it took place only four months after the elections. These elections gave the PP a majority in parliament, which provided the government with stability in order to pass legislation.

## IMPACT

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The general strike did not have any impact in the labour market reform. As the Minister of Labour, Fatima Báñez, explained it "the reforming path is unstoppable. The main text [of the reform] is not going to change".

However, the trade unions and Báñez met in April and May 2012 to address the labour market reform, bearing in mind that there was little room for negotiation, as the government was firm about their position (Manetto, 2012).

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## 2012 2ND GENERAL STRIKE - 14-N

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### TOPIC AND DEVELOPMENT

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The latest general strike in Spain, took place on November 14, 2012. This was the first time that a government suffered two general strikes in one term and that two general strikes took place in the same year in Spain. It was also the first time that a protest of this nature was coordinated by trade unions of several EU member states. As the statement of the European Trade Unions Confederation reads: "[with these protests] it will be shown the strong rejection to the austerity measures that are sinking Europe in economic stagnation and also against the continuous dismantling of the welfare state" (Doncel, 2012).

Protests therefore took place in other southern European countries as Greece, Portugal and Italy. In Spain the strike was followed by 77% of the workers according to the trade unions and 12% if we consider the figure given by the government (El País, 2012)

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### CONTEXT

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The context did not change from the previous strike in terms of the political scenario, however the economy worsened, as GDP accelerated its downturn (-0.9% in the IV trimester of the year), and unemployment grew to 26.2%.

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### IMPACT

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The general strike, as it was common in the last general strikes, was accompanied by demonstrations in the Spanish cities, which were attended by over 3 million people according to the trade unions and less than 200.000 according to the government (El País, 2012).

Despite this general strike was not aiming to a single piece of legislation, we can still assert that it did not produce any change, as more than half a year later, the austerity policies were still in place. The trade unions as Fernández Toxo, leader of UGT, said "[trade unions] do not close the door on new general strikes in the upcoming months" (El País, 2012)

In forthcoming months meetings between the government, the employers' associations and the trade unions, were common, however, the government rejected all the proposals made by the trade unions (Cué & Gómez, 2013).

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## 4.3.3 FRANCE

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### 2010 PENSION REFORM STRIKES

## TOPIC

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The pensions' reform entered into force on November 9, 2010, after a complex procedure, starting earlier in the year, and parallel to this procedure the protests took place. On May 16, the government presented a report on the orientation of pension reforms, after discussing it with the social partners (Ministère de la Réforme de l'État, de la Décentralisation et de la Fonction Publique, 2010). This report advised to "increase the contributing period as a sustainable and fair response to the unbalance of the pensions' regime".

On June 16, the Minister of Labour announced the project for reforming the pensions, which consisted in raising the retirement age from 60 to 62 and the full state pension age from 65 to 67. However, in his press conference the Minister announced that "the project is still open to discussion and my office is wide open" (20 Minutes, 2010).

Despite the offer to the trade unions to discuss the project, as it was mentioned, was voted by the Parliament on October 25 and entered into force on November 9, in the terms it was presented in June (AFP, 2010).

## DEVELOPMENT AND DURATION

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The pensions' reform was accompanied by a strong social protest movement, which included strikes and demonstrations. In the early stages of the procedure, the protests took the form of demonstrations, which had a strong support from the population, reaching a maximum at September 7 demonstration, which according to the government brought together 1.1 million people in French streets (Liberation, 2010).

The other mean the protesters used to contest the reform were the strikes. Despite no general strike was called, several sectors went on strike, being public transport (SNCF), the road hauliers and refineries the most sensitive ones.

The SNCF strike started as a renewable strike on October 12. However, the renewable strike lost followers day after day, on October 12 a 40.4% of the SNCF was on strike, while on October 13, it was only 24.6%, which resulted in only 4 out of 10 TGV trains running (AFP, 2010). On October 25 the following rates were between 6.5% and 15.7%, which resulted in 8 out 10 TGVs working normally, raising to 9 out of 10 TGVs on October 26 (AFP, 2010), returning to regular traffic on October 29 (AFP, 2010).

On October 18, the road hauliers decided to join the joint renewable strike movement, causing scarcity in the cities distribution markets and cuts in the main roads, as they block them as a sign of protest, however they called off their strike shortly after the new law was voted by the parliament (Reuters, 2010).

The strikes in the refineries took place gradually, as the protests started in five Total's refineries on September 23, as renewable strikes (Dancoing, 2010) and reached all twelve French refineries on October 15 (AFP, 2010). The strikers blocked the entrance to the refineries, which led to the total paralysis of the refineries and to supply problems in the petrol stations. The government reacted by making use of the petrol national reserves to ensure supply in the petrol stations and in the airports. After, the reform was passed by the parliament on October 25, the strikes were called off on October 29 (AFP, 2010).

## CONTEXT

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The context of the protests was determined by a slowed economy, growing only 0.6% in the III trimester of 2010, and unemployment reaching 9.7%.

In the political arena the political tandem of Sarkozy - Fillon enjoyed a solid majority in the National Assembly, which allowed them to pass any legislation without any trouble. This right wing stable government was in power since May 2007, when presidential and legislative elections took place. This government was ruling from May 2007 until May 2012, as terms in France last five years. Therefore, in all the analysed cases, but the 2006 First Employment Contract protests, the government was the same, so no further mention will be made regarding this issue.

## IMPACT

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This intersectorial strike receive a strong coverage from the media, as in our search obtained 29 hits, which is the highest for any French case. This coverage from the media was corresponded in the streets, as it was presented before, the protests began with demonstrations, which obtained support from over a million people on September 7, being the most frequented of the 14 demonstrations that were called between March and November.

However, this large protests were not translated into any further success, as there were no negotiations, nor policy changes regarding the pensions' reform, with the only changes being made by the Constitutional Council due to legal reasons, after which President Sarkozy said "Tomorrow everything will be done", meaning that the law would definitely enter into force on November 10, after it was promulgated (Le Parisien, 2010).

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## APRIL 2010 SNCF STRIKE

### TOPIC

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The railway workers went on strike in April 2010 demanding "supplementary recruitments" in the company and the "cessation of the reorganization and restructuring" of the public company, according to CGT and Sud-Rail (AFP, 2010).

On the other hand, as the SNCF human resource manager, François Nogué, explained it, "the company needs for important evolutions, due to the arrival of competition to the sector, to the need of improving productivity and efficiency of our products and the particularly difficult economic context" (Bissuel, 2010).

### DEVELOPMENT AND DURATION

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This strike was called as a renewable strike on April 6, by the CGT, the largest trade union in the company that received 39.3% of the votes in the 2009 unions elections, and Sud-Rail, the third largest trade union in the trains sector, which gained 17.6% of the votes in the 2009 elections (Turlan, 2012).

As a renewable strike, every day it was called again for the following day. As the strike was taking place trade unions claimed that they wanted to enter into negotiation with the SNCF, meanwhile at early stages, despite seating to the negotiation table the public company was not receptive and it was ignoring their claims (AFP, 2010).

The company offered to engage in negotiation under three conditions "the return to trains running normally, the participation of all the trade unions, and a negotiation about all the topic railway workers

are concerned about" (AFP, 2010). Eventually the strike was called off after two weeks of protests as the negotiations advanced. (AFP, 2010)

## CONTEXT

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The economic situation that contextualizes these strikes is similar to the previous case, however, it is slightly more positive, as the economy grew 0.9% in the II trimester of 2010 and unemployment was two tenths lower, reaching 9.7% in April 2010.

## IMPACT

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During the 14 days this strike lasted, the strike obtained 24 hits in our search. In terms of awareness there was not demonstration called, however the protests could be felt by the users, as the train service got severely disrupted, affecting TGV, TER, Corail and Intercités' trains (AFP, 2010).

After two weeks on strike and continuous negotiations between the parties, the strike was called off, as "the management of the company had made a gesture regarding employment and the 2010 budget for recruitment will be surpassed", according to the CGT. However, according to Sud-Rail, "there was no agreement upon new recruitments", and the issue would be addressed in a round table with both parties by mid-May (AFP, 2010).

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## 2009 MUSEUMS STRIKES

### TOPIC

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In November 2009, French museums and national monuments went on strike as they opposed the 1 out of 2 replacement policy to be introduced in 2010, which meant that for any two staff members retiring in the museums, only one position will be replaced. The Centre Pompidou was especially affected due to its employees' age pyramid, which resulted in 26 and 23 jobs suppressed in 2010 and 2011 (AP, 2009).

### DEVELOPMENT AND DURATION

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The first museum to start the protests was the Centre Pompidou. Pompidou's employees started a renewable strike, called by all the trade unions with representation in the museum (CGT, CFDT, FO, CFTC and FSU) that led the museum to close its doors to the public on November 23, 2009. On December 2, six other museums joined Pompidou, including Louvre, Versailles palace and Orsay and did not receive any visitors (AFP, 2009).

After four days closed, all the museums, but Pompidou, reopened their doors to visitors, without having achieved any of their demands (AFP, 2009). Pompidou's protests continued despite the statement made by the Minister of Culture saying that he was "determined" not to change his decision (Fabre, 2009). Eventually, Pompidou's workers called off the strike on December 17, after 24 days on strike, due to the lack of impact of their protests and proximity of the Christmas holidays (Fabre, 2009).

## CONTEXT

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The museums protests took place in the scenario of an economy bouncing back from a recession, in which the IV trimester GDP grew 0.8%, however, the employment was still suffering the economic downturn and unemployment level were escalating, reaching 9.9% in November 2012.

## IMPACT

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The strike that affected the museums obtained 10 hits in our search, during the 24 days the Centre Pompidou was closed due to the protest of its workers, which was the museum that was closed for the longest time. During the protest no demonstration was called by the workers of the museums.

"We must be clear, after 24 days on strike, we have got nothing" (Fabre, 2009). This is how Alain Seban, secretary general of CFDT summarized the results of the strike. His statement responds to the fact that the trade unions neither got to engage into negotiations with the government, nor to obtain any change in the replacement policy.

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## 2008 CIVIL SERVANTS STRIKE

### TOPIC

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In 2008, six trade unions (CFTC, la CGT, le FSU, l'UNSA, Solidaires and CFDT) called public servants to a strike on May 15, to "defend the employment in the public sector" (Delberghe, 2008). The call to go on strike was directed to both national and regional civil servants and staff from hospitals (that a special regime), in what was called by the trade unions a "day of intersectorial national action" (Delberghe, 2008). The strike was called to protest against the "General Revision of Public Policies" programme, announced by president Sarkozy in 2007 and of which the first report was published on April 4, 2008 (Conseil de la modernisation des politiques publiques, 2008). This programme had the objective to eradicate the annual government deficit and to reduce the national debt. The programme included the suppression of 22.900 employments in the education sector (Delberghe, 2008).

### DEVELOPMENT AND DURATION

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This strike was characterized by being intersectorial and single day. However, because of its deeper impact in the education, it was especially followed by the workers in the sector. According to the information provided by the Ministry of Civil Service, the percentage of workers following the strike in each sector are as follow in this table:

Table 5

<b>Sector</b>	
Primary Education	33,5%
Secondary Education	46,2%
National Civil Service	28,8%
Regional Civil Service	3,0%
Hospitals	5,8%
La Poste	4,8%
France Telecom	8,0%
ANPE	5,0%

France 3	7,0%
Météo France	23,7%

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## CONTEXT

The II trimester of 2008 was the first one to see red numbers for the French GDP, as it decreased 0.2%. However, this economic downturn could not be felt yet in the employment, as in May 2008 unemployment was a solid 7.7%.

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## IMPACT

This single day strike, obtained 11 hits in our search; the demonstrations also got a strong impact, as according to the government 110.500 people (226.500 according to the trade unions) demonstrated in France against the government policies.

However, the outcome was not any close to what the trade unions demanded, as there were no negotiations nor concessions. The only statement made by Xavier Darcos, Minister of Education, in name of the government, was to announce the creation of a new "national teachers replacement agency", in order to guarantee the right to education of the students the days that teachers would go on strike (AFP, 2008).

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## 2007 PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRIKES

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### TOPIC

The public transport workers, including SNCF and RAPT, went on strike in November 2007. These workers protested against the modification of their special pension regime. This modification consisted in raising progressively the pension contribution period of these workers, from 37.5 years to 40 years in 2012, as the Minister of Labour, Xavier Bertrand, said "the government is determined to raise to 40 years the contribution period before 2012" (Bostnavaron & Guélaud, 2007).

On the other hand, the government found the total opposition of the trade unions, as Arnaud Morvan, secretary general of the trade union CFDT-cheminots, explained it "if the government wanted a strike, there was no better way to get it" (Bostnavaron & Guélaud, 2007).

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### DEVELOPMENT AND DURATION

The renewable strike started on November 13 in SNCF and on November 14 in RAPT (Bostnavaron, 2007). The strike was supported by seven out of eight trade unions in the SNCF, which resulted in only 90 out of 700 TGVs running on the first day of the strike (AFP, 2007).

Negotiations between the government and the trade unions started even before the strike did (Bostnavaron & Guélaud, 2007). However, few advances were made at the early stages (AFP, 2007). It was on November 23, after nine days of severe interruptions on the public transports, that the trade unions decided to call off the strike, and announced for the day a "progressive return to normality", as negotiations with the government found common ground (Le Monde, 2007).

## CONTEXT

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In The IV trimester 2007, the French economy was giving signs of slowing down, as GDP rate was 0.9%. However, this deceleration was not perceived yet in the employment, as unemployment was still 7.8%.

## IMPACT

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This strike matched the 2010 pension reforms strikes as the one that obtained the most attention from the media, as it got 29 hits in our search. In this case however, there were no demonstrations called, as in the other SNCF analysed strike in 2010 the protests were perceived by the users of the services that got disrupted.

After several days of negotiations an agreement was reached between the trade unions and the government , however how could this be possible, if as Sarkozy announced "I have conducted a the special regimes reform not because I want to bother the public transport worker, the electricians or the gas workers. It was because it was necessary" (Glad, 2010). So how could the trade unions get an agreement if the reform they went on strike against eventually survived? As Cahuc and Zylberberg explained in their book "Les Réformes Ratées du Président Sarkozy", there were concessions to workers in other conditions that made them better off in the end. As for the government "It seems that the cost of the reform is not important. The key is to produce an appearance of change" (Cahuc & Zylberberg, 2009).

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## 2006 FIRST EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT STRIKES

### TOPIC

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The First Employment Contract was a type of contract proposed by Villepin's government in early 2006. The CPE consisted in a contract for employees under 26, working for companies with more 20 employees, which allowed the employer to fire the employee without any reason during a trial period of two years (Journal Officiel de la République Française, 2006).

The reactions from the trade unions were fierce, as Rémi Jouan, of CFDT, explained it, "Dominique de Villepin institutionalized job insecurity" with CPE (Le Monde, 2006).

### DEVELOPMENT AND DURATION

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The protests started as a students' movement, stopping the lessons in over 40 universities and calling for demonstrations all around the country (Le Monde, 2006). At this early stages, the government was "inflexible" about the CPE (Jakubyszyn, 2006). On February 9, the French parliament eventually passed the law that introduced the CPE and announced that it would enter into force "in one month time", according to Gérard Larcher, Minister of Labour (Reuters, 2006).

However, the conflict escalated when the trade unions decided to join the students and called a general strike on March 28, supported by all the large trade unions in France, CGT, CFDT, FO, UNEF, CFTC, FSU, UNSA and Solidaires (AFP & Reuters, 2006). The strike had an impact in public transports, postal services, media and education (AP, 2006). The work stoppage was accompanied by demonstrations all around the country, which congregated over three million people according to the trade unions and over one million according to the police, protesting against the CPE (Le Monde, 2006).

After the protests, the Prime Minister, called the trade unions to "negotiate amendments", however the trade unions refused the invitation and considered it a "provocation", as they would only accept the withdrawal of the CPE (AFP, 2006).

A new general strike was called for April 4, in this case renewable, so the trade unions could call it day after day, as they did on April 5 and 6, however, the strikes did not have as much support as they did on March 28 (AFP & Reuters, 2006).

Eventually, the Prime Minister announced on April 10, "the necessary confidence conditions to allow the application of the CPE are not matched" and therefore he would amend the law to withdraw the CPE (Barroux & Jakubyszyn, 2006), which stopped the protests.

## CONTEXT

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This was the only case with a different political scenario, as the French government was not ruled by the political tandem Fillon - Sarkozy, but by Dominique de Villepin and Jacques Chirac. Villepin was Prime Minister since 2005, when Chirac opted to replace Raffarin, due to the French "No" in the European Constitution Referendum. Meanwhile Chirac had been the President of the Republic since 1995, after being elected in the 1995 and 2002 elections. However, there is not much difference in terms of political scenario, as both were right wing tandems and had a majority in the National Assembly. The economic situation in 2006 was positive as in the II trimester of the year GDP grew 1.4%, however unemployment was 9.4%.

## IMPACT

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The awareness obtained by the strikes against the CPE was limited to only 12 hits, however it is important to point out one of the key aspects of this study, that the strikes were a part of a whole protesting strategy. Therefore, the demonstrations were another key factor, as they got over 3 million people to protest against the contract in the streets according to the trade unions, and over a million according to the police (Le Monde, 2006).

As it was mentioned, after negotiating with the trade unions, the government announced on April 10, withdraw the CPE (Barroux & Jakubyszyn, 2006), fulfilling the demands of the trade unions.

### 4.4 CASES CODING

Chapter 4 last section will translate the just presented cases into a solid database, following the procedures established in Chapter 3. These results will not be theoretically discussed in this chapter; as the analysis will come in the following one.

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#### 4.4.1 THE OUTCOMES

All the strikes analysed in this study are successful to some extent, as they all have received certain coverage from the media, gaining the awareness of the people, however they did not all make it to the same degree and not all of them got to satisfy their demands. Therefore, in order to later cross it with the independent variables, first, we are going to present the results obtained for the dependent variables. The data presented in this first section does not tell any part of the story itself, it is when relating it to the independent variables when conclusions will be drawn.

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##### 4.4.1.1 AWARENESS

Awareness is an end itself and not only a mean, as it serves the trade union as a justification for its own existence. Its results were measured in terms of impacts in the media and attendance to demonstrations.

## MEDIA COVERAGE

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When analyzing the media coverage, we opted for a relevance analysis, based on the number of hits obtained in the search engines of the two largest newspapers in France and Spain, from which we obtained the following results:

Table 6

Code	Strike	Hits
SPGS7	2012 1st General Strike - 29-M	233
SPGS8	2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N	161
SPGS6	2010 General strike - 29-S	146
SP5	2009 Judges Strike	51
FR1	2010 Pension reform Strikes	29
FR5	2007 Public Transport Strikes	29
SP2	Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	24
FR2	April 2010 SNCF Strike	24
SP4	2010 Madrid Underground Strike	20
SP3	Summer 2010 Public Servants Strike	18
SP6	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike	18
SP7	2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	14
FR6	2006 First Employment Contract Strikes	12
FR4	2008 Civil servants Strike	11
SP1	2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	10
FR3	2009 Museums Strikes	10

For the regular strikes Spanish cases, we also conducted a front covers count. In all the cases, but in the 2009 Judges Strike, there is a relation between the number of hits and the times the issue made it to the front cover of the newspapers:

Table 7

Code	Strike	Front Cover	Hits
SP1	2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	1	10
SP2	Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	4	24
SP3	Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike	1	18
SP4	2010 Madrid Underground Strike	2	20
SP5	2009 Judges Strike	1	51
SP6	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike	2	18
SP7	2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	0	14

## DEMONSTRATIONS

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On the other hand, the other mean to measure awareness is through the demonstrations called by the trade unions to come along with the strike, however, not all the strikes had a demonstration

accompanying them. And in case there was a demonstration there are always two figures of the number of people attending to it, the one provided by the trade unions, and the one given by the government.

Table 8

Code	Strike	Demonstrators - TU	Demonstrators - Gov
SPGS8	2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N	3.000.000	180.000
FR1	2010 Pension reform Strikes	3.000.000	1.120.000
FR6	2006 First Employment Contract Strikes	3.000.000	1.000.000
SPGS5	2002 General strike - 20-J	2.200.000	-
SPGS7	2012 1st General Strike - 29-M	2.000.000	861.000
SPGS2	1988 General Strike - 14-D	1.750.000	250.000
SPGS6	2010 General strike - 29-S	500.000	40.000
SPGS3	1992 General strike - 28-M	280.000	70.000
SPGS4	1994 General Strike - 27-E	250.000	65.000
FR4	2008 Civil servants Strike	100.500	226.500
SP2	Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	90.000	5.000
SP3	Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike	75.000	15.250
SP6	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike	8.600	5.200

#### 4.4.1.2 NEGOTIATIONS

Strikes, as Jose María Zufiaur pointed out, "are the last resort trade unions have to force the government to open negotiations" (2013). Negotiations are a «contitio sine qua non» for policy change, as in none of the 21 cases, there was a change in policy without engaging in negotiations before. However, the access to negotiations does not guarantee a satisfactory outcome.

Table 9

No Negotiations	Negotiations
Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia
Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike	2010 Madrid Underground Strike
1985 General Strike	2009 Judges Strike
2010 Pension reform Strikes	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike
2009 Museums Strikes	2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia
2008 Civil servants Strike	1988 General Strike - 14-D
	1992 General strike - 28-M
	1994 General Strike - 27-E
	2002 General strike - 20-J
	2010 General strike - 29-S
	2012 1st General Strike - 29-M
	2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N
	April 2010 SNCF Strike
	2007 Public Transport Strikes
	2006 First Employment Contract Strikes
<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>

#### 4.4.1.3 CHANGES IN POLICIES



In the case of the changes in policies the results are not directly extracted from the figures as in the case of the impact in the media, demonstrations or the opening of negotiations. In the case of changes in the policies, the results were obtained from the analysis of the cases, as it was explained in the operationalization.

Table 10

No Policy Changes	Negotiated Agreement	Demands Fulfilled
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia</li> <li>- Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid</li> <li>- Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike</li> <li>- 1985 General Strike</li> <li>- 1992 General strike - 28-M</li> <li>- 1994 General Strike - 27-E</li> <li>- 2010 General strike - 29-S</li> <li>- 2012 1st General Strike - 29-M</li> <li>- 2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N</li> <li>- 2010 Pension reform Strikes</li> <li>- 2009 Museums Strikes</li> <li>- 2008 Civil servants Strike</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2010 Madrid Underground Strike</li> <li>- 2009 Judges Strike</li> <li>- 2008 Justice Administration Staff strike</li> <li>- 1988 General Strike - 14-D</li> <li>- April 2010 SNCF Strike</li> <li>- 2007 Public Transport Strikes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia</li> <li>- 2002 General strike - 20-J</li> <li>- 2006 First Employment Contract Strikes</li> </ul>
<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

#### 4.4.2 INTERNAL FACTORS

##### 4.4.2.1 STRIKE SIZE

As we advanced in the operationalization, when analysing the size of the strike, we are looking at two different indicators, the number of trade unions calling the strike and the number of workers following it.

First, when we looked at the trade unions, there was one main difficulty for its study, as it is not easy to find the electoral results of the trade unions by sectors and regions. However, from the collected data we can assert that in every single analysed strike, but the 2009 Judges strike and the 1985 General Strike, both in Spain, the protests were supported by the majority of the trade unions.

In terms of workers support, the measurement presented as well data collection difficulties, due to the lack of consistent sources, therefore, this variable will not be used in the statistical analysis.

As Jose María Zufiaur explained it, the main trade unions "have institutionalized their role", so they have become direct interlocutor with the government in order to negotiate social issues (2013).

##### 4.4.2.2 STRIKE DURATION

When observing the duration of strikes, the feature that highlights is that among the one and two days strikes, excluding the general strikes, only one of them obtains successful results, the 2009 Judges Strike in Spain.

Table 11

Code	Country Code	Name	SD	Ne	CP
1	SP1	2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	2	1	0
2	SP2	Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	11	0	0
3	SP3	Summer 2010 Public Servants Strike	1	0	0
4	SP4	2010 Madrid Underground Strike	6	1	1
5	SP5	2009 Judges Strike	1	1	1
6	SP6	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike	62	1	1
7	SP7	2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	5	1	2
8	SPGS1	1985 General Strike	1	0	0
9	SPGS2	1988 General Strike - 14-D	1	1	1
10	SPGS3	1992 General strike - 28-M	1	1	0
11	SPGS4	1994 General Strike - 27-E	1	1	0
12	SPGS5	2002 General strike - 20-J	1	1	2
13	SPGS6	2010 General strike - 29-S	1	1	0
14	SPGS7	2012 1st General Strike - 29-M	1	1	0
15	SPGS8	2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N	1	1	0
16	FR1	2010 Pension reform Strikes	17	0	0
17	FR2	April 2010 SNCF Strike	14	1	1
18	FR3	2009 Museums Strikes	24	0	0
19	FR4	2008 Civil servants Strike	1	0	0
20	FR5	2007 Public Transport Strikes	9	1	1
21	FR6	2006 First Employment Contract Strikes	3	1	2

Among the other cases there is no pattern to be observed; however, the case with the longest duration, the 2008 Justice Administration Staff Strike in Spain that lasted 62 days (almost three times more than the next strike observed), did result in changes in legislation.

#### 4.4.2.3 STRIKE SECTOR

When analyzing the strike sector we will also exclude the general strikes, as they are intersectorial, and its especial nature suggests excluding them from this analysis. Once they have been excluded, the results are as shown in the following table.

Table 12

	Essential	Non-Essential
<b>No Policy Changes</b>	-2010 Pension reform Strikes	-2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia -Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid -Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike -2009 Museums Strikes -2008 Civil servants Strike
<b>Negotiated Agreement</b>	-2010 Madrid Underground Strike -April 2010 SNCF Strike -2007 Public Transport Strikes	-2009 Judges Strike -2008 Justice Administration Staff strike
<b>Demands Fulfilled</b>	-2006 First Employment Contract Strikes	-2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia

#### 4.4.3 EXTERNAL FACTORS

##### 4.4.3.1 PROXIMITY OF ELECTIONS

When analyzing our cases looking for the effects of the proximity of elections, we observe that there are strikes that point in both directions.

Table 13

Code	Strike	PE	Ne	CP
SP7	2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	6	1	2
SPGS2	1988 General Strike - 14-D	12	1	1
SPGS3	1992 General strike - 28-M	12	1	0
SP1	2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	13	1	0
SPGS1	1985 General Strike	13	0	0
FR6	2006 First Employment Contract Strikes	13	1	2
SP4	2010 Madrid Underground Strike	16	1	1
SP3	Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike	18	0	0
FR1	2010 Pension reform Strikes	18	0	0
SPGS6	2010 General strike - 29-S	19	1	0
SPGS5	2002 General strike - 20-J	21	1	2
FR2	April 2010 SNCF Strike	24	1	1
SPGS4	1994 General Strike - 27-E	26	1	0
FR3	2009 Museums Strikes	29	0	0
SP5	2009 Judges Strike	34	1	1
SPGS8	2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N	36	1	0
SP2	Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	42	0	0
SP6	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike	44	1	1
SPGS7	2012 1st General Strike - 29-M	44	1	0
FR4	2008 Civil servants Strike	48	0	0
FR5	2007 Public Transport Strikes	54	1	1

Still, it is interesting to highlight that the one single case that takes place in an electoral year, the 2006 Catalan Doctors' Strike, does result in a complete success in terms of the trade unions obtaining their demands.

##### 4.4.3.2 COLOUR OF THE GOVERNMENT

When analyzing the left - right dichotomy we look at our results and there is no observable difference between left and right, as both have a similar distribution.

Table 14

	Left-wing government	Right-wing government
<b>No Policy Changes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike</li> <li>- 1985 General Strike</li> <li>- 1992 General strike - 28-M</li> <li>- 1994 General Strike - 27-E</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid</li> <li>- 2010 Pension reform Strikes</li> <li>- 2009 Museums Strikes</li> </ul>

	- 2010 General strike - 29-S	- 2008 Civil servants Strike - 2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia - 2012 1st General Strike - 29-M - 2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N
<b>Negotiated Agreement</b>	- 2009 Judges Strike - 2008 Justice Administration Staff strike - 1988 General Strike - 14-D	- 2010 Madrid Underground Strike - April 2010 SNCF Strike - 2007 Public Transport Strikes
<b>Demands Fulfilled</b>	- 2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	- 2002 General strike - 20-J - 2006 First Employment Contract Strikes

#### 4.4.3.3 STRENGTH OF THE GOVERNMENT

When analyzing the cases, using the Types of Government Index, we obtained results that did not point in a clear direction, as it can be observed in the table.

Table 15

	Very Weak (3)	Weak (2)	Strong (1)	Very Strong (0)
<b>No Policy Changes</b>	-2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia -Summer 2010 Public Servants Strike -1992 General strike -1994 General Strike -2010 General strike			-Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid -1985 General Strike -2012 1st General Strike -2012 2nd General Strike -2010 Pension reform Strikes -2009 Museums Strikes -2008 Civil servants Strike
<b>Negotiated Agreement</b>	-2009 Judges Strike -2008 Justice Administration Staff strike			-2010 Madrid Underground Strike -1988 General Strike -April 2010 SNCF Strike -2007 Public Transport Strikes
<b>Demands Fulfilled</b>			-2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	-2002 General strike -2006 First Employment Contract Strikes

#### 4.4.3.4 ECONOMIC CYCLE

##### CHANGE IN GDP

With a quick glance to the following table, it is easy to appreciate the relation between the GDP growth and the changes in policies produced by strikes, as the bigger the growth, the more successful strikes appear to be.

Table 16

Case	Strike	GDP	Policy Change
SPGS2	1988 General Strike - 14-D	2,7%	1
SP7	2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	2,0%	2
SP5	2009 Judges Strike	1,6%	1

<b>SPGS5</b>	2002 General strike - 20-J	1,4%	2
<b>FR6</b>	2006 First Employment Contract Strikes	1,4%	2
<b>SP6</b>	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike	1,0%	1
<b>FR2</b>	April 2010 SNCF Strike	0,9%	1
<b>FR5</b>	2007 Public Transport Strikes	0,9%	1
<b>FR3</b>	2009 Museums Strikes	0,8%	0
<b>FR1</b>	2010 Pension reform Strikes	0,6%	0
<b>SP3</b>	Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike	0,3%	0
<b>SP4</b>	2010 Madrid Underground Strike	0,3%	1
<b>SPGS6</b>	2010 General strike - 29-S	0,3%	0
<b>SPGS3</b>	1992 General strike - 28-M	-0,1%	0
<b>SP1</b>	2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	-0,2%	0
<b>SP2</b>	Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	-0,2%	0
<b>FR4</b>	2008 Civil servants Strike	-0,2%	0
<b>SPGS4</b>	1994 General Strike - 27-E	-0,6%	0
<b>SPGS7</b>	2012 1st General Strike - 29-M	-0,6%	0
<b>SPGS1</b>	1985 General Strike	-0,7%	0
<b>SPGS8</b>	2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N	-0,9%	0

There is no strike that with the economy growing quarterly over 0.9%, has not obtained from the government some of its demands. And there is only one case in which the trade unions got some of their demands when the economy was growing less than 0.9%. Therefore, in an economic growth scenario the strikes seemed more likely to succeed.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

On the other hand, unemployment has to be regarded acknowledging the differences between French and Spanish traditional unemployment levels, which are results of the nature of their economy. Spanish economy is used to higher levels of unemployment than French, even with growing economic cycles, so the results are going to be presented separately.

Table 17

<b>Case</b>	<b>Strike</b>	<b>Unemployment</b>	<b>Policy Change</b>
<b>SP7</b>	2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	8,4%	2
<b>SP6</b>	2008 Justice Administration Staff strike	9,9%	1
<b>SPGS5</b>	2002 General strike - 20-J	11,4%	2
<b>SPGS3</b>	1992 General strike - 28-M	15,8%	0
<b>SPGS2</b>	1988 General Strike - 14-D	16,5%	1
<b>SP5</b>	2009 Judges Strike	16,7%	1
<b>SP4</b>	2010 Madrid Underground Strike	20,2%	1
<b>SP3</b>	Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike	20,2%	0
<b>SPGS6</b>	2010 General strike - 29-S	20,4%	0
<b>SPGS1</b>	1985 General Strike	20,6%	0
<b>SPGS4</b>	1994 General Strike - 27-E	21,5%	0
<b>SP2</b>	Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid	23,0%	0
<b>SP1</b>	2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia	23,0%	0
<b>SPGS7</b>	2012 1st General Strike - 29-M	24,1%	0
<b>SPGS8</b>	2012 2nd General Strike - 14-N	26,2%	0

We observe a negative relation between the level of unemployment and the changes in policy, with the only exception of the general strike of 1992, which with a unemployment rate under 20% did not obtain any policy changes.

Table 18

<b>Case</b>	<b>Strike</b>	<b>Unemployment</b>	<b>Policy Change</b>
<b>FR4</b>	2008 Civil servants Strike	7,7%	0
<b>FR5</b>	2007 Public Transport Strikes	7,8%	1
<b>FR6</b>	2006 First Employment Contract Strikes	9,4%	2
<b>FR2</b>	April 2010 SNCF Strike	9,7%	1
<b>FR1</b>	2010 Pension reform Strikes	9,7%	0
<b>FR3</b>	2009 Museums Strikes	9,9%	0

In the French case neither the relation is as obvious as in the Spanish case, nor are the levels of unemployment as different from each other, as while in the Spanish cases range from 8.4% to 26.2% (17.8%), in France they only vary 2.2%, from 7.7% to 9.9%

## CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 has just described each of the cases of our research. These descriptions try to highlight the key elements of our analysis, without drawing any conclusions about them yet. The discussion of those findings is going to be done in this chapter.

In order to discuss those findings this chapter is divided in two parts: 1) in the first one we will conduct a qualitative analysis, we will propose a general model based in our empirical findings and we will confront them to our theoretical analysis; and 2) in the second part we will carry out a quantitative analysis, including correlations and a regression in order to statistically support our findings.

In our introductory chapter we presented several subquestions querying about different factors, at this point we will be assessing which of these expectations were matched in each of the individual cases. This chapter will then close with a quantitative analysis based in correlations for each independent variable and a regression.

### 5.5 THEORETICAL DISCUSION

In the light of the just described cases, a theoretical analysis needs to be done. From the just presented findings we can presume that the economic model constitutes the general theory for this exploratory research; however, for each case the model needs to be combined to other theories that particularly apply. Moreover, there are cases in which the effects of the economic model cannot be observed, as other variables play a bigger role, those will be called the outliers.

#### 5.5.1 THE GENERAL THEORY - THE ECONOMIC MODEL

When looking at the results of our analysis we observe that most of the cases seem to follow Rees' economic model (Rees, 1952), which stated that strikes should be more successful in the event of an expansive economic cycle. The expectations that led to this hypothesis were 1) that the government would had more resources to allocate, which was a result of the growth of the GDP, and 2) that in order to save face before the voters to be re-elected, the government would allocate the abundant resources to stop the protests. On the other hand, the economic cycle also influences through unemployment, as Morris and Ashenfelter and Johnson explained it, due to the configuration of the job market.

These expectations can be observed in the analysed cases. Especially clear is the effect in the General Strikes in Spain. In these eight cases the other factors did not seem to play a key role defining the outcome in all the cases, as there are different results with similar conditions in the colour of the government, its strength, the proximity of elections and the internal factors. Therefore, it needs to be tested if the expectations of the economic model are matched.

The first general strike of the Spanish history, which took place in 1985, did not succeed to modify the pension law introduced by the Gonzalez government. This case is clear, as the government was urged to reactivate the economy and to reduce the deficit, as the economy was shrinking and unemployment grew rapidly. The government found it hard to reallocate resources in order to change the pensions' reform. On the other hand, due to the key role of trade unions in industrial relations, the fact that UGT did not join CCOO when calling the strike subtracted strength to the protest. This fact was confirmed by Valeriano Gomez in the interview, as he affirmed "it was a key factor for the failure of the strike" (2013). This is the only case of a general strike in Spain, in which both of the largest trade unions

did not coordinate their efforts in the protests, as after this experience they realized that in order to have a chance they needed to work together.

The second general strike that occurred three year later, when the Spanish economy had recovered, saw opposite results, as the government found itself unable to justify its policies, as a consequence of the economic situation. The government was not capable to defend its young insertion contract in the context of a growing economy, in which unemployment was decreasing, and young people could easily find jobs. Furthermore, the strike was followed by 90% of the workers according to the trade unions, which had a deep impact in creating the perception that the country had "stopped", a perception that was increased by the fact that the only TV channel stopped its broadcasting, which according to Vaeleariano Gomez was key for the success of the strike.

The 1992 and 1994 general strikes are two other examples when the economic constraints are used by the government by the government to dismiss the demands of the trade unions. These two cases are different to the 1985, as both main Spanish trade unions were coordinated in the protests, however, the economic situation had a bigger influence than the number of trade unions supporting the strike, even though the government did not have a majority in Parliament anymore, which because of the weakness it entails, facilitates a positive outcome for the trade unions, however, this was not the case.

The 2002 strike is the other successful general strike in Spain. In this case the colour of the government had changed to the right wing, which could mean fewer chances for success, as the links between right-wing parties and trade unions do not exist neither in France nor in Spain. However, the economic situation had already bounced back from the 90s downturn, so the government did not have the need to ease the dismissal procedure as it pretended with the reform, which allowed the trade unions to create a coherent discourse against the reform and to transfer it to the people.

The last three general strikes in Spain share a common negative economic situation, which suggests that the strikes would have resulted in no changes in policies, as it was the case. The 2010 and the first 2012 strikes protest against similar policies, labour market regulation reforms, and despite different colour and strength of the government and proximity of elections, that would suggest the 2010 strike to be more successful, both did not achieve it, due to the little room to change the policies the government had, as the economic model explains.

Among the other strikes the CPE protests in France are significant to appreciate the importance of the economic model together with the size of the protests. The economic model itself would have explained why the CPE protests. However, from the desk research we can observe the importance of a wide inter-sectorial protests with and important repercussion in the French streets. Furthermore, the intersectorial strike included key essential sectors as the transports, which entails a high cost to the government in terms of affected users, which are likely to become unsatisfied voters. This pressure on the government and its economic capability to change the policy resulted in a successful outcome for the trade unions.

Another interesting case is the 2006 Doctors' strike in Catalonia, which combined an economic expansion scenario, with the proximity of the elections. In this case the government did not have the constrain of having scarce resources to respond to the doctor's demands, and adding up to this fact the proximity of the elections made pressure higher, hurrying the government to put out the fire created by the protests. The electoral logic, that make politicians more permeable, as Kuklinski (1978) observed from other stakeholders, does reproduce in the case of strikes and the trade unions, as politicians make a cost-benefits analysis in order to be re-elected (Downs, 1957), as the PSC government did in 2006.

This case can be compared to the 2011 Doctors' strike in Catalonia. First we have to bear in mind that the demands were slightly different, as in this case the trade unions demanded a change in the



health spending policies. However, after that issue has been pointed out it is interesting to compare both cases to the light of the theory, as meanwhile in the 2006 strike most of the variables point in the direction of a successful strike, this is not the case in the 2011 strike as those variables are the opposite. First, the economic cycle was negative and unemployment is high, which responds to the already explained logic. Second, the duration of the strike was shorter, which despite the theoretical doubts, results in lower pressure to the government, which suffers less before the voters. Third, the participation of the doctors in the strike was smaller in the 2011 case (25% lower according to the hospital direction and 13% according to the trade unions), which the theory predicts that would result in worse results due to two logic constructions: 1) the power of the trade union to bargain with the government is lower in the 2011 case, as the protest is less representative of the general feeling of the doctors to the eye of the government, as less doctors follow the strike, and therefore would have a smaller cost for the government; and 2) the cost of the strike is lower as well, as the services is less disrupted, due to the smaller number of physicians on strike, which entails a smaller cost to the government in terms of voters/users perception.

There are three strikes in France that despite having similarities had a different outcome. Two of these strikes in the public transport system, particularly in the SNCF, took place only half a year away from each other. However, the economic situation had worsened from the first to the second one, and the deceleration of the economy was becoming evident. All the other variables were similar, but the number of trade unions calling the strike that was bigger in the second protest. The outcome of the first protest was relatively successful; meanwhile the second protest did not achieve its objectives. However, in this case, it cannot be clearly asserted that was the economy that determined the final outcome of the strike, as the differences between both economic scenarios were not different enough. The third case in the public transport system took place in a better economic scenario, and the outcome of the protest was successful, despite of being protesting against a similar policy to the second 2010 strike. However, in this case, the outcome was positive for the trade unions as they manage to negotiate compensations from the government in exchange to accepting the pensions' reform. This can be seen as an effort from the government to save face, as they frame themselves as winners of the conflict, while they allocate available resources to the trade unions, a practice that would not have been possible in a negative economic scenario. Therefore the 2011 strike was unsuccessful.

Besides the positive economic scenario, the 2008 Justice Administration Staff strike, is characterized by its duration, the only one among the analysed ones that went over a month. In this case the industrial relations theorists did not agree about the effects of duration in strikes, as the effects for the companies are diverse. However, as the counterparty of the trade unions was the state, the consequences were not clear. In this case the duration played in favour of the protesters, as the strike got greater impact after its first month, when the Minister agreed to meet with the trade unions. The pressure put in the government by this non-essential sector, increased thanks to the duration of the strike, which made it more visible for the voters, which eventually made the strike to be successful.

Last but not least there are three strikes that took place in similar conditions and had a similar negative outcome for the trade unions, as they all took place in an economic downturn. These are the Autumn 2011 Teachers' strikes in Madrid, the Summer 2010 Civil Servants Strike in Spain and the 2008 Civil servants Strike in France. However, the three cases register different levels of unemployment, as they took place at different moments of the crisis, and the unemployment was escalating consistently. In these cases the negative economic scenarios did not give the room to the government to manoeuvre and to change the policies. It adds in the failure direction that the sectors involved were non-essential and therefore, citizens' daily lives were not dramatically affected.

All in all, the economic model is related to a logic of the government being able to justify or not policies before the trade unions and the voters, according to the Jose Manuel Freire, which relates to the electoral logic guiding the actions of governments, based in Downs' theory.

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## 5.5.2 THE OUTLIERS - ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Despite of the just proven ability of the economic model to give a consistent approach to the political strikes outcome, there are cases in which the model does not happen to meet the outcomes. For these cases alternative explanations are required, as other forces are stronger than the economic model.

The first case that does not respond to the economic model is the 2010 Madrid Underground Strike, where the Spanish economy was growing slowly and unemployment was high, as it was explained. The economic model would have predicted the strike to fail, as there were scarce resources to be reallocated and the employees would have found it hard to find another job in such a scenario and it should be easy to find replacements in the job market. However, in this case the result of the strike was successful for the workers.

Guided by the results regarding the other analysed variables and the content of the case study, the most reasonable explanation is given by the sector of the strike, as a result of the Wilson Model. The Wilson Model, as explained in the theoretical framework explains political decisions based on a cost - benefit analysis depending on how diffuse and concentrated they are. In this case, as the strike completely stopped the underground, an essential service, millions of citizens were affected which created a high pressure in the government. The government was forced to negotiate and to yield some concessions to the trade unions, resulting in a smaller cut in their underground workers' salaries than to the rest of public workers.

The second case that the economic model would have predicted a different outcome is the French museums strike, which took place in a scenario where unemployment was 9.9%, the French highest though, and a GDP quarterly growth of 0.8%, which can be read as a recovering from the 2008 recession. In this scenario some positive outcome for the trade unions could be expected. However, there was not such a thing and no negotiations were even opened.

In order to explain this situation we could use again the Wilson Model, as in this case the affected sector, the museums, is not an essential one for average citizens' daily lives. Therefore, the government did not feel the erosion caused by the strike. So if we combine the economic cycle that despite recovering was full of doubts and a non-essential sector, the result is, as Alain Seban was quoted, that the trade unions got "nothing" (Fabre, 2009).

The last case that the economic model does not explain is the judges strike that hit Spain on February 28, 2009, which was a new event in Spanish history, as it was mentioned. This fact, which could be observed as a punctuated event, helped the protesters to recall large attention from the media, which is already itself a success for the protests. This kind of situations were not operationalized, however, due to the nature of this exploratory research, it is important to highlight the new findings that come out during the research (Stebbins, 2001), as this one is.

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## 5.7 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

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### 5.7.1 CORRELATIONS

As the economic model seems to be the most influential factor to the strikes outcome, the bivariate correlation coefficient will be calculated to assess if there is a significant relation between both variables. Two coefficients will be obtained: one for the relation between the quarterly GDP and the results for changes in policy, and the other one between the unemployment rate and the results for changes in policy. For the second correlation, as it was explained in the results presentation, we will only be using the Spanish cases, as unemployment levels in Spain and France are distinct due to structural economical reasons.

**Correlation 1**

		%GDP	Changes in Policy
%GDP	Pearson Correlation	1	.620**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	21	21
Changes in policy	Pearson Correlation	.620**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	21	21

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation 2**

		Unemployment	Changes in policy
Unemployment	Pearson Correlation	1	-.820**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	15	15
Changes in policy	Pearson Correlation	-.820**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	15	15

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of both correlations are highly significant (Sig. = 0.003, 0.000 < 0.01), this means that the relationship between the variables could have not happened by chance. The first correlation indicates that the relationship between GDP growth and changes in policy is a strong positive one (r = 0.620), which statistically supports the qualitative analysis based on the interpretation of Rees' economic model. The second correlation shows a very strong negative relationship (r = -0.820) between unemployment levels and changes in policy, that is coherent with the Morris and Ashenfelter's and Johnson's models. This suggests that when economic conditions change the outcomes of strikes change with them, in a strong way.

Despite of the significant results of both correlations, this does not mean that changes in policy are explained by changes in the GDP or unemployment, but that there is a significant statistical relation between the variables. The explanatory force cannot be found in these correlations, which must only serve as a tool to complement the research.

After the satisfactory results of the previous two correlations, we need to assess the statistical relation between the other independent variables and the levels of changes in policy produced by strikes. However, the results in these cases were insignificantly different from zero (Sig. = 0.352, 0.935, 0.343, 0.721, 0.740 > 0.01), so statistically no conclusions can be drawn. This does not mean that the theories supporting the other independent variables lack of explanatory force, but that it is not statistically significant. These theories explain particular cases and shape the influence of the economic model in the results of strikes, as it was proved in the qualitative analysis.

**Correlation 3**

		Strength of Gov.	Changes in Policy
Strength of Government	Pearson Correlation	1	-.214
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.352
	N	21	21
Changes in policy	Pearson Correlation	-.214	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.352	
	N	21	21

**Correlation 4**

		Colour of Gov.	Changes in Policy
Colour of Government	Pearson Correlation	1	-.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.935
	N	21	21
Changes in policy	Pearson Correlation	-.019	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.935	
	N	21	21

**Correlation 5**

		Proximity of elections	Changes in Policy
Proximity of elections	Pearson Correlation	1	-.218
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.343
	N	21	21
Changes in policy	Pearson Correlation	-.218	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.343	
	N	21	21

**Correlation 6**

		Strike Duration	Changes in Policy
Strike Duration	Pearson Correlation	1	.083
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.721
	N	21	21
Changes in policy	Pearson Correlation	.083	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.721	
	N	21	21

**Correlation 7**

		Sector of the Strike	Changes in Policy
Sector of the Strike	Pearson Correlation	1	.077
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.740
	N	21	21
Changes in policy	Pearson Correlation	.077	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.740	
	N	21	21

## 5.7.2 REGRESSION

As it was advanced in the research design chapter, in order to complete our statistical analysis we are going to run a regression. Our first approach would be to try a ordinal regression, however, when conducting the parallel lines test the significant test statistic indicates that the final model does violate the parallel lines assumption (Norušis, 2012, p. 74), which leads us to opt for the multinomial regression.

**Test of Parallel Lines in the**

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Null Hypothesis	28.547			
General	.000	28.547	6	.000

Once we have finally decided running a multinomial regression our first step is to test the two remaining assumptions identified by Field and which need to be met (2009, p. 273). The first one, consisting in the independence of errors, which means that cases should not be related, as this would produce overdispersion. Therefore, despite our small sample allows us to identify the obvious differences between our cases, we will test overdispersion to discard any relation between our cases. To test overdispersion we need to obtain the dispersion parameter ( $\phi$ ), which is the ratio of the chi-square goodness-of-fit statistic and its degrees of freedom. If the dispersion parameter is smaller than 2 overdispersion is not problematic and if it is smaller than 1 does not exist.

**Goodness-of-Fit**

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	44.617	38	.213
Deviance	30.417	38	.804

$$\phi = 44.617 / 38 = 1.174$$

The value of the dispersion parameter, which is close to 1 suggests that there is no overdispersion, and allows us to assert that the independence of errors assumption is met.

The other assumption that needs to be observed is the absence of multicollinearity. In order to identify multicollinearity, scanning a correlation matrix of all the independent variables and to look for strong correlations is a good technique (2009, p. 224)

**Independent Variables' Correlations**

		EC1	EC2	SG	CG	PE	SD	SSe
EC1	Pearson Correlation	1	-.581**	-.291	.008	-.336	.233	.094
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006	.201	.972	.136	.310	.687
EC2	Pearson Correlation	-.581**	1	.240	.121	-.064	-.388	.124
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006		.296	.602	.782	.083	.593
SG	Pearson Correlation	-.291	.240	1	.660**	-.159	.100	-.324
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.201	.296		.001	.492	.665	.151
CG	Pearson Correlation	.008	.121	.660**	1	-.339	.026	-.113
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.972	.602	.001		.133	.910	.625
PE	Pearson Correlation	-.336	-.064	-.159	-.339	1	.319	-.197
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.136	.782	.492	.133		.158	.393

SD	Pearson Correlation	.233	-.388	.100	.026	.319	1	-.320
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.310	.083	.665	.910	.158		.157
SSe	Pearson Correlation	.094	.124	-.324	-.113	-.197	-.320	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.687	.593	.151	.625	.393	.157	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As we can observe there are two sets of indicators that are strongly correlated. On the one hand, as it could be expected, both indicators measuring the economic cycle, the GDP and the unemployment, are correlated, and on the other hand, the colour and the strength of the government are also correlated. In order to avoid multicollinearity we will run four different regressions avoiding the correlated indicators.

Once the assumptions have been met, which should provide us with a reliable and valid model, it is time to conduct the analysis. Our first choice is to chose the method of logistic regression, which will be a stepwise method, as its optimal for situations in which no previous research exists (2009, p. 272). Among the stepwise methods we will opt for the backward likelihood ratio method, which works by "including all the predictors in the model" and testing whether any of these predictors "can be removed from the model without having a substantial effect on how well the model fits the observed data", based on the likelihood ratio statistic (2009, p. 272).

Three of the regressions produced models in which the independent variables were non-significant when predicting the outcomes. The only one that produced a significant model was the one including the growth of the GDP and the strength of the government. In this case only the growth of the GDP significantly predicted whether the demands were fulfilled or there was no change in the policy  $b=2.64$ , Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 4.79$ ,  $p = 0.029 < 0.05$ , indicating that as GDP grows in one unit the change in the odds getting the demands fulfilled is 13.96. So the outcome is sensitive to the increase of the GDP and success for the trade unions is more likely in case of a growing economic scenario.

**Parameter Estimates**

Changes in Policy <sup>a</sup>	B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Negotiated Agreement	Intercept %GDP	-1.069 .775	.631 2.983	2.872 1	1 .084	.090 3.817	.835	17.450
Demands fulfilled	Intercept %GDP	-3.243 2.636	1.482 1.204	4.789 4.791	1 1	.029 .029	13.953	1.317 147.776

a. The reference category is: No Changes in Policy.

## CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

This last chapter will conclude our research by giving answer to the research question, obtained from the findings, it will continue by acknowledging the limitations of the research, and it will end up by presenting its implications and opportunities for future research.

### 6.1 CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION

In the introduction we posed our central research question, we were seeking for the political strikes' factors that might have an impact in policy-making processes. And in this conclusion we are going to give an answer to our central research question.

In order to answer to the central question, we first are going to analyse the subquestions, we are going to travel from the concrete and individualized, represented by each of the independent variables, to a final and general conclusion.

#### *Q1. How can the impact of the strike be assessed?*

Besides analyzing the level of awareness the strike obtained and if the trade unions managed to open negotiations, which both did not pose much complications; the challenge, regarding this measurement, was to determine how to assess the changes in the policies.

Despite exploring literature about the levels of changes in policy (Hall P. A., 1993), in the end we decided to assess the level of change by simplifying it. We opted to observe it from the side of the trade unions and its demands, as trade unions do not care about the level of change, but about fulfilling their demands. Therefore, we opted for three categories depending on to which level the demands were fulfilled or not, resulting in no changes, a negotiated agreement and a total acceptance of the demands of the trade unions by the government.

#### *Q2. Does the economic cycle have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?*

From our findings, if there is one independent variable that points out in the direction of being suitable for crystallizing in a general theory, this is the economic cycle. The economic cycle has proven successful in explaining most of the observed cases. From our cases it can be observed and matched with the theory that a positive economic cycle, with low unemployment, is likely to result in a positive outcome for a strike, and vice versa. The statistical analysis was coherent with the qualitative findings. A very strong correlation was found between the indicators of the economic cycle and the outcomes of the strikes, which pointed already in a encouraging direction, and these solid findings were partially confirmed when regressions were run. The regressions did not only identify a correlation between the variables, but also confirmed the explanatory force of the growth in the GDP when determining the effect of political strikes in public policy.

However, due to the nature of the analysis this variable needs to be complemented with others when analyzing the cases. The strength of the economic model is to illustrate the ability of the government to act differently and to change its policy, when it is put under pressure. Obviously, this single factor itself is unable to explain the outcomes of strikes, as otherwise any strike taking place in a growing economy would be successful and any strike in an economic downturn would not achieve its goals. Therefore, as it was mentioned several times, the different variables need to be combined, despite the strength the economic model might have to explain strikes outcomes for the majority of the cases.

*Q3. Does the colour of the government have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?*

The colour of the government is one of the two variables that could not be observed in the cases as influential. The statistical analysis did not find any significance of this variable in changes in policies, the correlation was far from being significant and in the regressions did not show any significance either, so statistically does not have any explanatory force.

Still, a dissuasive capacity was mentioned by José María Zufiaur, which is attributed to the trade unions when left-wing governments are in government (2013). However, it could not be analysed in this research, as it only addressed cases when the strike eventually took place; still this hypothesis is coherent with our theoretical approach, which suggested spill over effects between the trade unions and the left-wing parties due to their institutional and personal links.

*Q4. Does the strength of the government have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?*

The other variable that did not show clear results in the qualitative analysis was the strength of the government. Despite there were cases in which the results matched the expectations from the theory, there were no clear signs that it was this factor that determined the outcome. It was not proven that the weakness of the government was the factor that made it permeable and led to a change in the policy. The statistical analysis did not show any significance either, so statistically the strength of the government has no influence in the outcome of the strike.

The fact that both of the variables dealing with the structural configuration of the government were correlated, as we found in the independent variables matrix, offers us a interesting unexpected finding, parallel to the main research issue.

*Q5. Does the proximity of elections have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?*

The proximity of elections came to be a relevant factor in the only analysed case taking place in an elections year, therefore the theoretical approach which was based in the permeability of the government, previously researched by Kuklinski (1978) and that found its theoretical roots in the political power theories, proved useful. However, this factor does not work *a contrario sensu*, as the fact that it was not an elections year did not have any appreciable effect. From the qualitative analysis we could already predict the quantitative results, which eventually proved non significant, nor in the correlation, nor in the regression.

Further research should be conducted on strikes taking place in elections years, to test if the results of the case of the of the 2006 Doctors' Strike in Catalonia, the only one in an electoral year, were just a one case results or if the theory is strong when relating to the generality of the strikes.

*Q6. Does the strike size have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?*

The importance of trade unions proceeding united proved relevant in those cases when the trade unions did not had a single voice, as well as counting with a strong support from the workers following the call of the trade unions. However, all the trade unions working together or the strong support from the workers did not necessarily mean the success of the strike. This responds to their ability to put more pressure in the government when working together, but the government is still conditioned by the economic cycle as it was already explained. Therefore, the size of the strike can be regarded as an enabler factor. The popular phrase that says "unity makes strength" is clearly applicable to the trade unions and workers in this case.



*Q7. Does the strike duration have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?*

The only case in which there was a long strike (over one month) the results for the strikers were successful and our analysis proved that the duration of the protests was a key element to raise awareness and to obtain an agreement with the government. On the other hand single day strikes did not get to achieve relevant results (without considering general strikes), as the pressure they could make in the government was limited. In the statistical analysis there were no significant results, as there was no significant correlation and the variable was not significant for the regression.

It would be interesting to statistically analyse the impact of what we could define as long lasting strikes. This could be done in further research including a larger amount of cases when the strikes in the public sector go over a month.

*Q8. Does the strike sector have an impact on the final outcome of the strike?*

The sector of the strike proved relevant in certain cases, as when a essential sector, as the public transport was affected, the government was more likely to engage into negotiations, due to the high pressure it was put under. The result of Madrid's underground strike was clearly explained by the nature of the sector and the number of users affected by it, which forced the government to find a negotiated solution. However, when running a quantitative analysis there were no significant results, the correlation was not significant and did not prove significant in the multinomial regression.

So, once the subquestions have been addressed, it is time to give a response to our central research question:

**– What factors affect the ability of a political strike to have an impact in the policy making process in France and in Spain?**

From our qualitative and quantitative findings we can conclude that there is one factor that stands out over the others, the economic cycle. The economic cycle found solid backup from the qualitative analysis, as the allocation of resources and the scenario of the labour market provided theoretical explanations for its effects that matched the reality of the case studies; and from the quantitative analysis, in which we found significant correlations between both indicators, the GDP and the unemployment rates and the changes in policy produced by strikes, and in the regressions GDP growth proved as the only indicator that was significant in the models. Both the qualitative and the quantitative analysis are coherent in their findings, as they both show that a economic growth scenario makes strikes to be more successful in their attempt to influence the policy making process in Spain and in France, and that higher unemployment makes influencing policy a tougher task for the trade unions.

Some of the other factors showed certain relevance in the qualitative analysis, but not in the quantitative one, however this might respond to the limitation posed by the size of the sample, which could be corrected in further research by increasing the number of cases being analysed. However, from our qualitative analysis we can assert that the proximity of elections, the size of the strike, the duration of the strike and the sector of the strike affected the ability of political strikes to have an impact in the policy making process.

As in any bargaining process, when analyzing political strikes and their effects, observing both parties and their constrains is the key to understand the outcomes. The classical industrial relations theories, combined with the political power theories, suggested the analysis of these variables, which eventually described a power game between the government, conditioned by the electoral logic, and the trade unions, constrained by their resources. A combination of the pressure put in the government, defined by the size, duration and sector of the strike and the proximity of the next elections, and its ability to act

differently, conditioned by the economic scenario, provided a successful framework to analyse the effects of strikes in policies.

## 6.2 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

This research has met several limitations; some of them relative to the research design itself and some others exogenous to it. As part of the learning process that this exploratory research was meant to be, they need to be acknowledged and taken into consideration for further research.

Regarding the research design there are three main limitations that need to be highlighted. The first one is a result of the fact that not all the labour or social disputes between the trade unions and the government result in a strike. Many of them are solved through previous bargaining thanks to the institutionalization of the trade unions as social interlocutor with the government. This results in a limitation to the scope of the analysis, as those cases that do not reach the media would need to be researched through in depth interviews with trade unionists and politicians.

The second limitation is the result of the lack of accuracy of policy changes measurements. Our scheme proved useful thanks to its easy application, which ensured reliability in the measurements. However, it suffers of the lack of accuracy when observing negotiated agreements, as all of them fall into the same category.

The last limitation regarding the research design was found in the sampling method. Relevance sampling offered us the possibility of selecting the cases ensuring the reliability. However, the downturn consisted in the fact that the selected cases had all reached certain degree of notoriety, which was part of one of our dependent variables. Still, the resulting cases could be graded in their awareness levels and choosing cases with no notoriety will imply not being able to conduct a desk research about them.

The other limitation has to do with the nature of the trade unions, which escapes to our research design. Trade unions are reluctant to provide details about their relative strength, as they were not eager to provide figures about the number of affiliates they have or their results in their elections by sector.

## 6.3 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

"Exploration lacks this sense of finality. Rather, many studies must be undertaken to generate a convincingly valid, wide-ranging grounded theory" (Stebbins, 2001) and this exploratory research is no exception. During this research several ideas for new research have come out, so I will only enunciate the main ones.

The first and logical forthcoming research should follow the steps of this one and include more cases, in order to continue testing the different variables, which will increase the quality of our regressions. It could also be exported to other countries with different industrial relations models, to test if the results of this research are conditioned by the French and Spanish models, which as they were explained in the introduction are quite similar.

Other variables could be included into the analysis, as economic expectations, the number of strikes in the year, the personalities of leaders of the trade unions and the government or the support to other parties to the demands of the trade unions, as the parties in the opposition or the media. Another approach to the current issue is giving a twist to the research and analyzing the voting intention of the government before and after the strikes, so it could be assessed what impact strikes have in the voters. The possibilities offered by this new approach are related to the political power theories. So, "scientific

field, like the city of Rome, is (was) not built in a day" (Stebbins, 2001), and plenty of opportunities arise from this research.

To conclude, I would like to make certain remarks about the practical implications of our research. Despite of the doubts about their current role, trade unions are still a key actor in shaping social policies. Their ability to influence policies calling strikes is a powerful tool in the comprehensive strategy they follow. Understanding under what conditions strikes are more likely to achieve their objectives would help them to better assess their performance.

The conditions that this research explains should lead the trade unions to consider the role they want to give to strikes in times of economic downturn, as this research proves that the effects of their protests are limited in terms achieving any changes in policy, which might result in a waste of resources and increasing frustration of the workers.

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## Abbreviations

Abbreviations		
<b>PP</b>	Partido Popular	People's Party
<b>PSOE</b>	Partido Socialista Obrero Español	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party
<b>PS</b>	Partie Socialiste	Socialist Party
<b>UMP</b>	Union pour un Mouvement Populaire	Union for a Popular Movement
<b>UGT</b>	Unión General de Trabajadores	General Union of Workers
<b>CCOO</b>	Comisiones Obreras	Workers' Commissions
<b>CGT</b>	Confédération générale du travail	General Confederation of Labour
<b>CFDT</b>	Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail	French Democratic Confederation of Labour
<b>FO</b>	Force ouvrière	Workers' Force
<b>CiU</b>	Convergencia i Unio	Convergence and Union
<b>PNV</b>	Partido Nacionalista Vasco	Basque Nationalist Party
<b>SNCF</b>	Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français	National society of French railways

## Spanish Strike Count

Year	Strike	Hits
2012	General Strike 29-M	233
2012	General Strike 14-N	161
2010	General Strike 29-S	146
2009	Judges	51
2012	Madrid's Health System	33
2011	Madrid's Education System	26
2009	Euskadi General Strike	26
2012	Euskadi's General Strike	25
2010	Madrid's Underground	20
2010	Air Traffic Control	19
2010	Public Servants	18
2012	National Education	14
2006	Catalonia's Health System	14
2012	Madrid Underground	13
2012	Valencia's Public TV	13
2012	Renfe (National Trains)	13
2008	Truck Drivers	12
2008	TMB (Metropolitan Transport of Barcelona)	11
2008	Justice Public Servants	11

2011	Catalonia's Doctors	10
2012	Barcelona's Public Transport	8
2012	Andalucia's Health System	7
2009	Valencia's Education System	5
2008	Judges	5
2008	Catalonia's Education System	5
2006	Euskadi's Justice Civil Servants	5
2011	Galicia's Education	4
2011	Madrid's Transport	4
2008	Madrid's Health System	4
2011	Castilla La Mancha's Education	3
2010	Euskadi's General Strike	3
2009	Air Traffic Control	3
2008	EMT (Madrid's Transport System)	3
2006	Madrid's Health Emergencies	3
2006	Euskadi's Health System	3
2011	Madrid's Underground	2
2011	Nationalist General Strike	2
2010	Catalonia's Education System	2
2009	Madrid's Education System	2
2009	Catalonia's Education System	2
2008	Valencia's Education System	2
2008	Telemadrid (Madrid Public TV)	2
2008	Euskadi's General Strike	2
2008	Euskadi's Health System	2
2007	Euskadi's Education System	2
2007	Galicia's Intern Doctors	2
2007	Galicia's Health System	2
2007	Andalucia's Health System	2
2007	Euskadi's Justice System	2
2006	Euskadi's Education System	2
2006	RTVE (National TV)	2
2012	Madrid's Health Emergencies	1
2012	Catalonia's Trains	1
2012	Valencia's Education	1
2012	Castilla La Mancha's Health System	1
2011	Canary Islands' Health System	1
2011	Intern Teachers	1
2011	AENA (National Airports Groundforce)	1
2011	Valencia's Transport	1
2010	Barcelona's Bus System	1
2010	Euskadi's Public Servants	1
2010	Renfe (National Trains)	1
2010	RTVE (Public TV)	1
2010	School Canteens	1

2009	TMB (Metropolitan Transport of Barcelona)	1
2009	Catalonia's Trains	1
2009	Euskadi's Education System	1
2009	Madrid's Underground	1
2009	Galicia's Health System	1
2009	Civil Register	1
2008	RTVE (Public TV)	1
2008	Sevilla's Justice	1
2008	Malaga's Judges	1
2008	Madrid's Underground	1
2008	Valencia's Health System	1
2008	Catalonia's Trains	1
2007	TMB (Metropolitan Transport of Barcelona)	1
2007	Euskadi's Universities	1
2007	Bilbao's Bus System	1
2007	Euskadi's Health System	1
2007	Galicia's Education's System	1
2007	Cantabria's Health System	1
2007	Euskadi's Nurses	1
2007	Euskadi's Education System	1
2006	Telemadrid (Public TV)	1
2006	National Health System	1
2006	Madrid's Education System	1

### French Strike Count

Year	Strike	Hits
2010	Pensions	29
2007	SNCF	29
2010	SNCF (April)	24
2007	SNCF (Oct)	18
2011	National Airports (Private)	15
2009	RER	13
2011	Ports (Private)	12
2006	CPE	12
2008	Civil Servants	11
2009	Museums	10
2006	Liberal Doctors	8
2011	SNCF	7
2012	Paris Airports	6
2008	High Schools	6
2007	Health Interns	6
2011	SNCF	5
2010	Marseille Port	5
2010	Air Traffic Controllers	5

2009	SNCF	5
2007	Civil Servants	5
2006	SNCF	5
2012	General Doctors	4
2010	France National TV	4
2009	Universities	4
2007	Civil Servants	4
2006	Education	4
2011	Judicial System	3
2010	Air Traffic Controllers	3
2010	Education	3
2009	SNCF	3
2009	La Poste	3
2009	Teachers	3
2009	Pole Emploi	3
2009	La Poste	3
2008	Air Traffic Controllers	3
2007	France Telecom	3
2007	High Schools	3
2006	SNFC St. Lazaire	3
2006	La Poste	3
2006	Pompidou	3
2006	Doctors	3
2012	National Monuments Center	2
2011	RFI	2
2011	Pole Emploi	2
2011	Orsay	2
2011	Education	2
2011	RER	2
2011	AFP	2
2010	National Register	2
2010	Courts	2
2010	Education	2
2010	Pensions june	2
2010	Pensions May	2
2010	SNCF (February)	2
2009	Radio France	2
2008	France TV	2
2008	SNCF	2
2008	Transports	2
2008	Judges	2
2007	Courts	2
2007	La Poste	2
2006	High Schools	2
2006	RAPT	2



2006	SNCF (Nov)	2
2006	National Gas Comany	2
2012	Nuclear Plant	1
2012	SNCF	1
2012	French Bank	1
2012	France 3	1
2012	INSEE	1
2012	Air Traffic Controllers	1
2011	INA	1
2011	General Strike	1
2011	La Poste	1
2010	SNCF	1
2010	Ecole National Superior	1
2010	Pole Emploi	1
2010	Doctors	1
2010	Civil Service	1
2009	Civil Servants	1
2009	Ecole Physic et Chimie	1
2009	EDF	1
2009	RFI	1
2009	TGV	1
2009	Health Sector	1
2008	Emergencies' doctors	1
2008	ANPE	1
2008	La Poste	1
2008	Emergencies' doctors	1
2008	France 2	1
2008	Civil Servants	1
2007	Emergencies' Doctors	1
2007	Universities	1
2007	Air Traffic Controllers	1
2007	Gynecologists	1
2007	INSEP	1
2007	Psychiatric Hospitals	1
2006	France 3	1
2006	Tax Collectors	1
2006	Labour Inspectors	1
2006	France Bleu	1
2006	RAPT	1
2006	Civil Servants	1