

# **AN UNTIMELY, PARTIAL AND UNFAIR REFORM**

*Posted on 31/01/2011 by Naider*



Workers will have to contribute for 38 and a half years (and no 40) to retire at 65. This agreement has been enough for the two majority unions in the State as a whole to agree with the Government on a reform that is urgent for some but for many others, including myself, untimely and imposed by the global financial markets.

With this agreement it is clear that the president of the Spanish Government has scored something fabulous and the unions have served him a break on a silver platter. It is difficult to understand how the UGT and CCOO have agreed to bow to such a question. Some attribute "responsibility" for the sake of social peace and a positive image to international markets.

I find it hard to believe what has happened. Without eating or drinking it, in less than three weeks we have come across a [pension reform](#) clearly [it hurts most of us](#) who go to work every morning (or want to). The unions have given their support for sneaking in some very minor improvements to the official project and, yes, adding some relative privileges for the [officials](#). Little more.

In my opinion, we have all lost. Well, not all. From now on, new options for private pension plans will emerge (with their corresponding tax advantages, that is, "co-financed" by all) for those who can afford it.

Two more ideas to conclude:

- Ideologically, it seems that pensions can only be paid for with contributions. In other words, the debt is not worth it, nor is the tax system (although as we saw for private plans, it does seem to be allowed). I don't really share it. It is, like everything, a matter of priorities. There is a lot of money that this company gives to its managers that could be perfectly used to complete a possible Social Security deficit (a deficit that on the other hand does not exist). Nor have I understood how the reform did not even consider raising the contributions to companies. It must be some taboo subject that escapes me.

- The fact that URGÍA (in capital letters) carried out a reform of the pension system has also triumphed. I don't agree either. What is really urgent is a structural reform of the Spanish economic system that today is still based fundamentally on activities with medium or low added value and that has gigantic surplus capacity: no less than 4.7 million unemployed. Activating all this capacity is part of the solution, among other things, for the questioned pension system. And to activate it, what is needed is to multiply the funds for R+D+I, education, technological infrastructures, universal broadband, language teaching, and instilling new values in a society still dazzled by the brilliance of jewels. . Where do we get the money? I can think of a thousand places: of the 20,000 million allocated to the rescue of the banks, of the annual expenses of a useless army or of the restructuring of an institutional system of the rich (it is only necessary to intuit the enormous dysfunctions and duplicities that a country like Euskadi with 250 municipalities, three powerful councils and a government that manages the public affairs of just over two million souls: half the population of the municipality of Madrid), among many other examples.

To finish with the issue of unions and pensions, one more reference to my land where the unions in the Basque Country held a general strike day in Euskadi and Navarra on January 27 that had an uneven impact and, in any case, a null resonance in the corridors of the Moncloa, which is where the game was being played at that time. Both facts are clear proof of the joy with which they call some general strikes without taking into account that to call society to disobey you have to have something more than loudspeakers in the streets because you can find yourself with a new failure to add to your previous calls and adding one more component of discredit and disaffection to the work of class unionism among increasingly broad sectors of society and also of the Basque

company. Said this with the greatest respect to institutions that have historically fought so hard to raise the dignity and quality of life of workers. However, today I see them outdated in their approaches and very disoriented in their strategic approach.

. I have reread the text and the above really lacks any scientific rigor and is little more than a poorly expressed opinion. This is what blogs have, anyone can express their opinion even if they have a degree of relevance bordering on zero. Some would call it very cruelly: the *democratization of ignorance*.

PS2. 02/01/2011. It seems that today the bases on