

ENGLISH EDITION

Spain: Families of 3,000 people killed by coronavirus sue Pedro Sánchez for «homicide»

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Spain has been one of the countries most affected by the coronavirus pandemic, registering up to Tuesday May 12 more than 230 thousand positive cases and 27,000 deaths.

The deep crisis caused by COVID-19 has had a social and economic repercussion in the European nation, but also a political and judicial impact, as the courts begin to accumulate hundreds of lawsuits from citizens who complain, both to the central Administration and to the autonomous communities, to compensate them for the possible damages caused by the management of the pandemic.

In recent weeks, the Supreme Court has received 16 complaints or denunciations against the Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, various ministers and other high officials, for their possible criminal responsibility in managing the health crisis.



However, on Monday more than 3,260 people who have lost relatives due to the coronavirus filed a lawsuit in the highest court of Spain against Sánchez, the 22 vice-presidents and members of the Council of Ministers, for the «alleged crime of homicide because of serious recklessness» at » having allowed, by action or omission», the spread of the pandemic and the virus that has killed the lives of those close to them.

The complaint, in which eleven lawyers from different parts of Spain are involved, was presented by the Second Chamber of the Supreme Court against all the members of the Council of Ministers as «alleged criminally responsible for a number not yet determined of crimes of homicide because of serious recklessness» .

Specifically, the complaint represents 3,268 people, whose families have lost 3,274 relatives as a result of the Sars-Cov-2 epidemic, although so far only 116 families have filed, «given that the rest have not been able to obtain» the Medical Death Certificate necessary to prove the death of family members, and the causes of death, reported *El Confidencial*.

The lawsuit was filed before the Second Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court, as “the competent body for the investigation of the case” in accordance with the provisions of the Spanish Constitution.

The accusation presented, states that the deaths were due to the «vituperable behavior and actions of the defendants, regarding the fact that they are members of the Council of Ministers and, therefore, responsible

for the obligations inherent in the Government of the Spanish nation».

The text refers to «the irresponsible and negligent inaction and late and ominous action» by the 23 members of the Government in the management and evolution of the pandemic due to the new coronavirus.



Delayed and inefficient response

The judicial offensive against the Executive includes not only the actions carried out during the state of alarm, but also those activities prior to confinement, when the first echoes of the spread of the global pandemic arrived.

To promote judicial action, the plaintiffs maintain that on January 30 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the coronavirus outbreak constituted a public health emergency of international importance, «but the Government of Spain ignored, hiding any information from the citizens about said emergency ».

«The government knew in late February the risk to citizens, but decided to put their interests above the health of the people», says the document.

The virus, as reflected in the complaint, «began to spread exponentially throughout our country and, by the end of February, 32 cases of contagion had already been detected, without the Government taking any preventive measures, for more than a month after it had the knowledge of the health emergency declared by the WHO and, on the contrary, denying its spread ».

For the relatives of the victims of the COVID-19, the Spanish Government did not adopt any measure that would have «avoided or minimized the exponential spread of the disease and the risk of contagion»

allowing people to «continue to lead a ‘normal’ life, without recommendations of what to do in the face of the situation that was coming and that other countries were already suffering».

They also denounced that it was on March 12 when, «already overwhelmed by events and undoubtedly with a long delay, that members of the Government decided to adopt the first preventive measures against the coronavirus, such as the closure, at national level, of colleges and universities, which had even been applied in advance by various autonomous communities.

According to the plaintiffs, after decreeing the state of alarm on March 14, the Spanish Government «also failed to adopt the necessary measures to protect health personnel, state security forces and other agents involved in the protection and healing of affected people, to the point that there was a brutal escalation of infections and deaths».

This led to Spain being «the world leader in the number of fatalities and infections in proportion to the number of inhabitants, and also the world leader in terms of the number of health professionals infected».

Contradictory decisions and corruption

In the complaint, the complainants condemn that the late response to the health emergency has been continually «full of decisions and verbal orders that contradict the measures envisaged to stop contagion, which in turn has contributed in a powerful way to the disproportionate increase of the number of victims who, possibly, were infected in the health centers themselves, in which dantesque scenes of overcrowding of patients occurred, thus creating a perfect setting for the spread of the virus», reported *The World News*.

Reference is also made to the fact that “apparently” fraudulent acquisitions of medical equipment for use in the diagnosis of the disease (tests), material for the prevention of contagion and protection of the people involved (masks) have been managed, “presumably favoring the enrichment of entities or persons related to the government».

In addition to the families of the victims, unions, public employees, health workers, lawyers and consumers have also denounced the mismanagement of the crisis and the lack of transparency on the part of the Government and its officials.

Complaints against local authorities

Pedro Sánchez and his team are not the only defendants. According to Spanish media, the president of the Community of Madrid, Isabel Díaz Ayuso, her health adviser, Enrique Escudero, as well as ten directors of residences in the region, have been accused of committing «crimes of reckless homicide, humiliating treatment, prevarication and denial of help».

In the Spanish capital there have been more than 64,000 cases and 8,700 deaths.

Europa Press reported that the complaint against Díaz Ayuso states that the crisis caused by COVID-19, which was already known «due to the cases that had occurred mainly in China and Italy, among other countries, was not addressed by the Community of Madrid».



For their part, relatives of older people confined in residences, grouped in the Marea de Residencias movement, filed a collective criminal complaint against the owners and those responsible for these centers located in the Spanish capital.

In other provinces and communities, such as Valencia and Galicia, complaints have also been registered against local authorities and residential centers for alleged negligence, reckless homicide and injuries.

Lawsuits in Italy

Along with Spain, Italy is the country most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe, so municipalities and hospitals located in the northern region are preparing for a large number of lawsuits filed by relatives of victims demanding compensation for alleged treatment errors, negligence and disinformation.

Hundreds of relatives of coronavirus victims in Lombardy, the worst affected region, blame authorities for offering an inadequate and late response to the health crisis that has left at least 30,000 dead in the European nation.

Likewise, the businesses and shops that had to close their doors due to the quarantine that was imposed by the national and local governments are also considering filing legal claims for alleged failures to prevent the spread of the deadly virus.

Among the merchants' complaints is that the restrictions were not applied uniformly, as some establishments were able to remain open and working.

Prosecutors are also studying the case of nursing homes like the Pio Albergo Trivulzio in Milan that has become the focus of a murder investigation for its negligent handling of the pandemic, which claimed the lives of more than 200 residents.

In Latin America no such demands have been registered, but the President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, accumulates at least 24 requests for removal.

These requests could increase exponentially, since the far-right President has had successive scandals for the way he is handling the coronavirus crisis, including his constant support to break the isolation measures, the political crisis around his government and that Brazil is the country of the region with the worst figures during the pandemic: more than 170 thousand infected and 12 thousand deaths.

To be immune: this are the parties for young people in the United States to catch COVID-19

COVID-19 will plunge Europe into its biggest economic crisis since 1930

Fuente: El Ciudadano