



SUSPECTED INAUTHENTIC COORDINATED BEHAVIOR AHEAD OF SPANISH ELECTIONS

Executive Summary of Avaaz's Facebook Report

Note for Press (April 23): In our report, Avaaz has identified three Spanish Facebook networks comprised of about thirty pages and groups with a total reach of 1,694,718 followers. This report was presented to Facebook on April 12. Below is an executive summary of that report. Today, Facebook has taken action against the duplicate and fake accounts behind a majority of the pages identified, leading to the takedown of at least 17 pages from within these three networks with a total reach of 1,439,332 followers.

Pages taken down by Facebook:

Page	Total followers	Archived link to Page
Unidad Nacional Española	758,964	http://archive.fo/zLwGD
Unidad Nacional Española E	35,140	http://archive.fo/fXaCk
Todo por España	57,210	http://archive.fo/8LfR0
Barcelona se queda en España	70,715	http://archive.fo/Tp3LX
Orgullo Nacional	83,705	http://archive.fo/QTwSA
Ejército Español	83,655	http://archive.fo/u77rE
Javier Grau	62,785	http://archive.fo/ISD82
Soy Español	10,367	http://archive.fo/JspZ6
Adelante España	27,917	http://archive.fo/Abbeo
Defendemos La Unidad De España	12,000	http://archive.fo/1A6AM
Todos Contra "Podemos"	68,311	http://archive.is/jZkRt
Todos Contra Pedro Sánchez	20,732	http://archive.is/EQy5l
Apertando Tuercas	20,342	http://archive.is/HPvC4
"Jóvenes Anti-Podemos"	2104	http://archive.is/IUpB8
Zarote TV	1920	http://archive.is/03bog
Todos con "Ciudadanos"	738	http://archive.is/QUJEX
Lucha por España	122,727	http://archive.is/wejox
TOTAL	1,439,332	

1) Introduction

The Avaaz report, focusing on far-right Facebook networks that are in breach of the platform's rules, was submitted by Avaaz to Facebook Inc. on April 12. Among other findings, the report:

1. Identifies three far-right networks in Spain engaging in behavior counter to Facebook's Terms of Service and Community Standards. The networks, named in the report after their pages or groups with the highest number of followers, are mainly spreading politically divisive content ahead of the Spanish elections to be held April 28. They are:
 - a. **Unidad Nacional Española (UNE)**
 - b. **Todos Contra Podemos**
 - c. **Lucha por España**
2. Shows that together, the networks have a reach of **1,694,718 followers**, with some **7,393,084 total interactions in the past three months alone**, sharing anti-immigration, anti-LGBT, anti-Islam, anti-feminist and other divisive content, including, in some instances, false and misleading information.
3. Presents evidence of how **multiple accounts are managing the first two networks**, in an apparent breach of Facebook's Community Standards. The third network appears to be engaging in **coordinated inauthentic behavior and page renaming** that could be counter to Facebook's terms of use (although public information did not allow us to identify its main administrator).
4. Compares the findings with statements made by Facebook over the past two years about previous takedowns of networks engaging in what the platform calls Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior.¹
5. Identifies a set of outlets producing mainly anti-migration, anti-LGBT, anti-feminist and, in some cases, disinformation content to which these three Facebook networks frequently link.

2) Findings

(a) **Unidad Nacional Española (UNE)** is a far-right network evidently created and coordinated by [Javier Ramón Capdevila Grau](#)², who has multiple pages and profiles on Facebook. Screenshots of of his multiple profiles, below.

¹ <https://newsroom.fb.com/news/>; relevant Community Standards provision: <https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/misrepresentation/>

² Archived version: <http://archive.fo/ISD82>

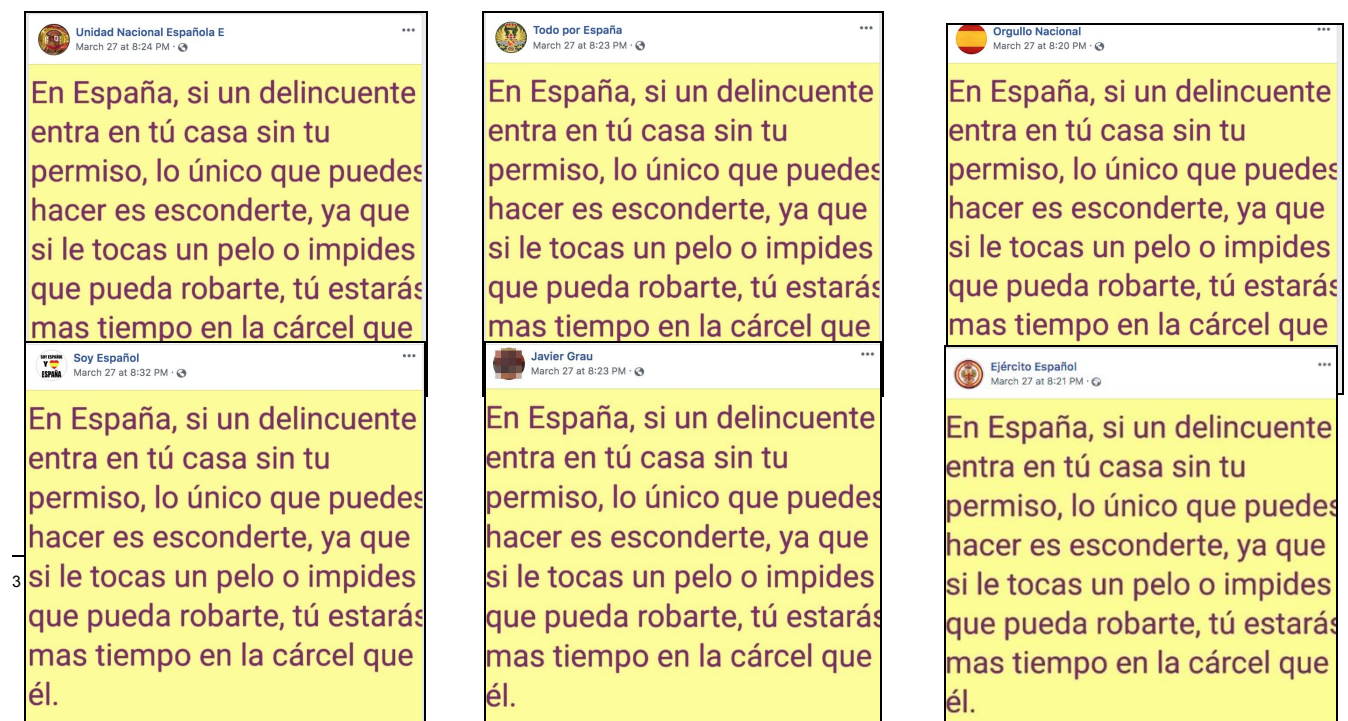


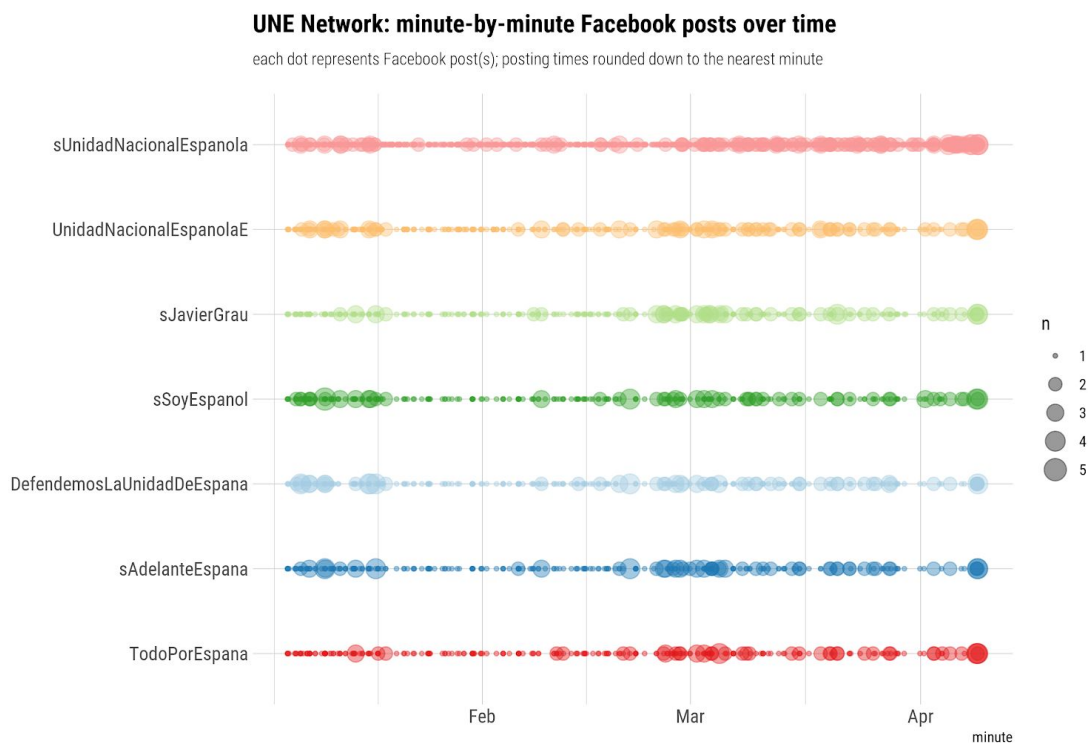
At least 10 Facebook pages related to this network appear to be working in a coordinated fashion to spread politically divisive content (see full report for list and links). This network alone has a total of 1,202,561 followers.

To illustrate the pages' coordinated inauthentic behavior, Avaaz took a picture initially shared by [Unidad Nacional Española](#)³ on March 27 at 6:55 pm, which was then posted that same day by all of the pages above in an apparently coordinated way between 8:20 pm and 8:33 pm. The items, although clearly identical, were posted as if they were "original" on each of the 10 pages; there was no "share" indication, and therefore no trace of the original post.

A sample of six of these, and a chart showing the network's minute-by-minute posts, below:

Caption: Freely translated, the post reads: "In Spain, if a delinquent enters your house without permission, all you can do is hide, since if you touch him to stop being robbed, you'll be incarcerated longer than him."





See the full Avaaz report for more details, examples and screenshots of the findings on the **Unidad Nacional Española (UNE)** network.

The full report also includes similar findings about the network **(b) Todos Contra Podemos**, very likely run by the person behind the Facebook profile of **Antonio Leal Felix Aguilar**. *Screenshot of one of his multiple profiles, right.*




This network includes seven Facebook pages and groups (see full report for list and links) and has a total of 114,147 followers, with 142,254 interactions in the past three months. Like the first network above, the pages share politically divisive content in a clearly coordinated manner.



According to our investigation, there is a third potential network, **Lucha por España**, comprising

12 Facebook pages (see full report for list and links), and reaches a total of 378,010 followers, with 4,235 interactions in the past three months.

The pages all share almost identical content, and all but two have the exact same pinned post showing a [Spanish national football team special edition Viceroy watch](#).⁴ Further indication of the ties among these pages is the fact that eight out of the 12 share the link [www.elsaqueocatalan.com](#)⁵ (currently offline), in their "About" section. El Saqueo Catalán is also the name of one of the clearly anti-separatist pages of the network.

 <p>and fake news about a child cancer center being closed down by "Catalan separatists" in favor of leaving "Catalan embassies" open.</p> <p>Unidad Nacional Española E</p> <p><i>Caption:</i> " 'Torra closes cancer units for children but maintains open Catalan "embassies".</p> 	 <p>Doctored images of Podemos leader Pablo Iglesias doing the Hitler Salute</p> <p><i>Caption:</i> "the insults and the lack of support that Podemos is gaining lately and after the celebration of the European elections, are the clear evidence of the LOW level of their crazy proposals, absurd arguments and wrongful conduct"</p>
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⁴ <http://archive.fo/4TkTA>

⁵ These are: "Viva España," "Antipodemos," "Carmenadas by Manuela Carmena," "El saqueo Catalán," "La nación española, la única nación," "Ejército España," "Que viva España" and "El Saqueo Catalan."

[Unfounded](#) claims that the Moroccan government demanded free education for Moroccan students in Spain in exchange for acting on illegal immigration

Caption: "Morocco blackmails Spain: demands that moroccan citizens have their education funded in exchange for them to act on illegal immigration"



One website passing as a media outlet sharing fake [data about foreigners](#) committing the majority of rape crimes.

Caption: post read: "Magrebs are not even 2% of the population but carry out 22% of gang rapes. And some think that the solution to this problem is hiding it." The headline reads: "In Spain, with only 10% of foreigners the non-Spanish men are responsible for 53% of all rapes."

Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the evidence presented in the report, Avaaz asked Facebook to take immediate action to avoid coordinated inauthentic behavior on its platform that would certainly impact the upcoming Spanish elections. In particular, Avaaz asked Facebook to:

- Investigate and confirm the inauthentic behavior of the three main networks described in the report and take them down;
- Investigate the admins of these pages and any potential correlation among the networks and also with other actors trying to undemocratically impact the Spanish elections;
- Urgently remove the pages and profiles of the people responsible for Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior, as the election date, April 28, is quickly approaching;
- Further investigate all the pages linked to the "outlets" highlighted in Chapter 4 of the full report and remove those engaging in coordinated inauthentic behaviour;
- Correct the Record and send notifications to people impacted and misled by these networks.