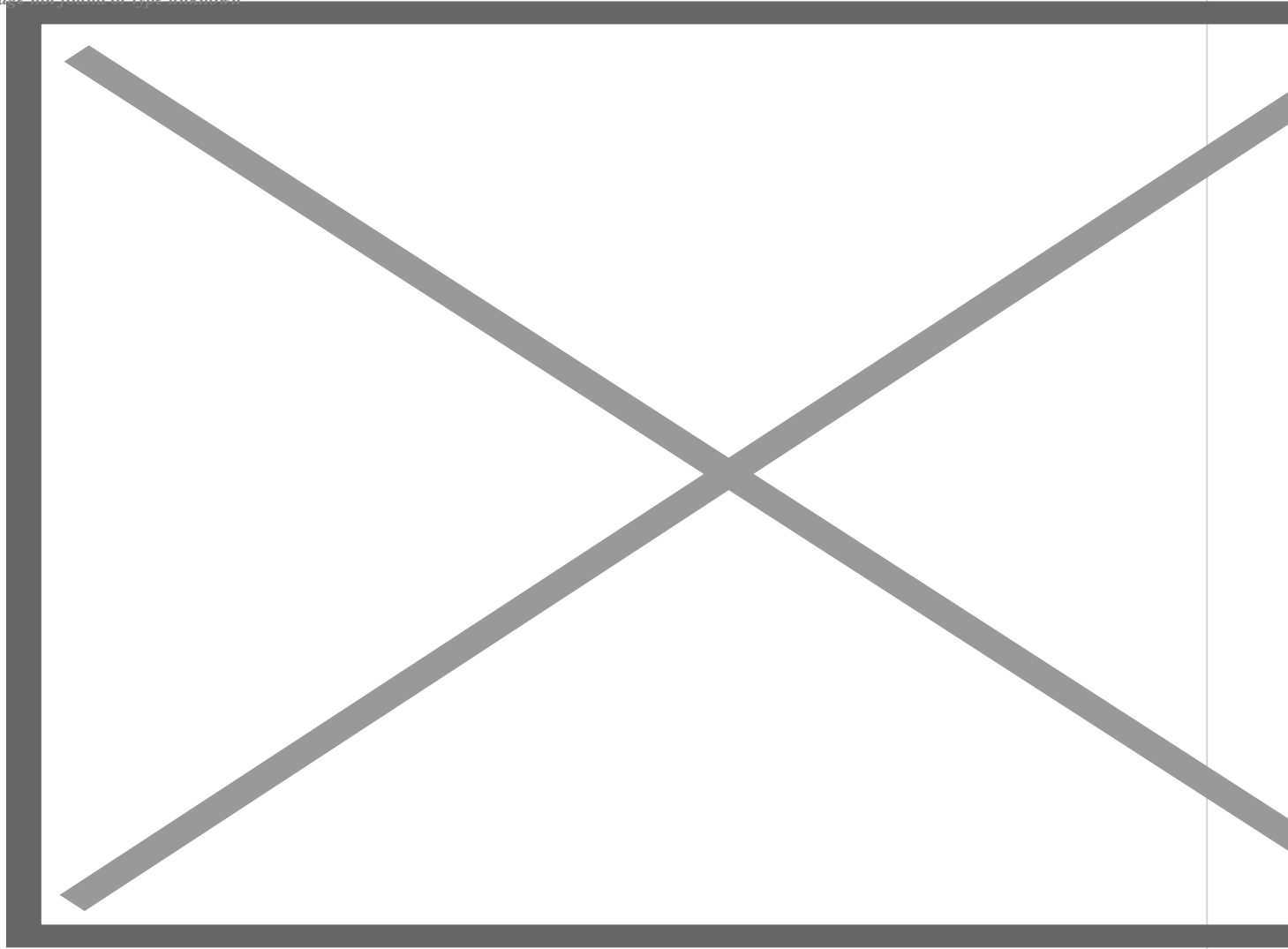


Right wins solid victory in Madrid regional elections

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Spain's right-wing Popular Party led by Isabel Diaz Ayuso

Madrid, May 5 (RHC)-- Spain's right-wing Popular Party led by Isabel Diaz Ayuso won a resounding victory in Madrid's regional elections on Tuesday, handing a stinging defeat to Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's party.

The Popular Party won 65 of the Madrid Assembly's 136 seats on Tuesday, more than twice the number it won in the previous election two years ago. The far-right Vox party won 13 seats - one more than in 2019 - to give the right wing 20 more seats than the 58 picked up by Sánchez's Socialists, the anti-austerity United We Can party and More Madrid, an upstart party that echoes the rise of the European Greens and becomes the opposition leader.

"Today is a turning point for national politics," said PP chief Pablo Casado, hailing Ayuso as "the leader that Madrid deserves." At the helm of Spain's richest region for less than two years, Ayuso, who is only 42-years-old, has been one of the leading critics of Sanchez's government and its handling of the pandemic.

An outspoken hardliner, she has won widespread support for resisting government pressure to impose tighter restrictions on the local economy.

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