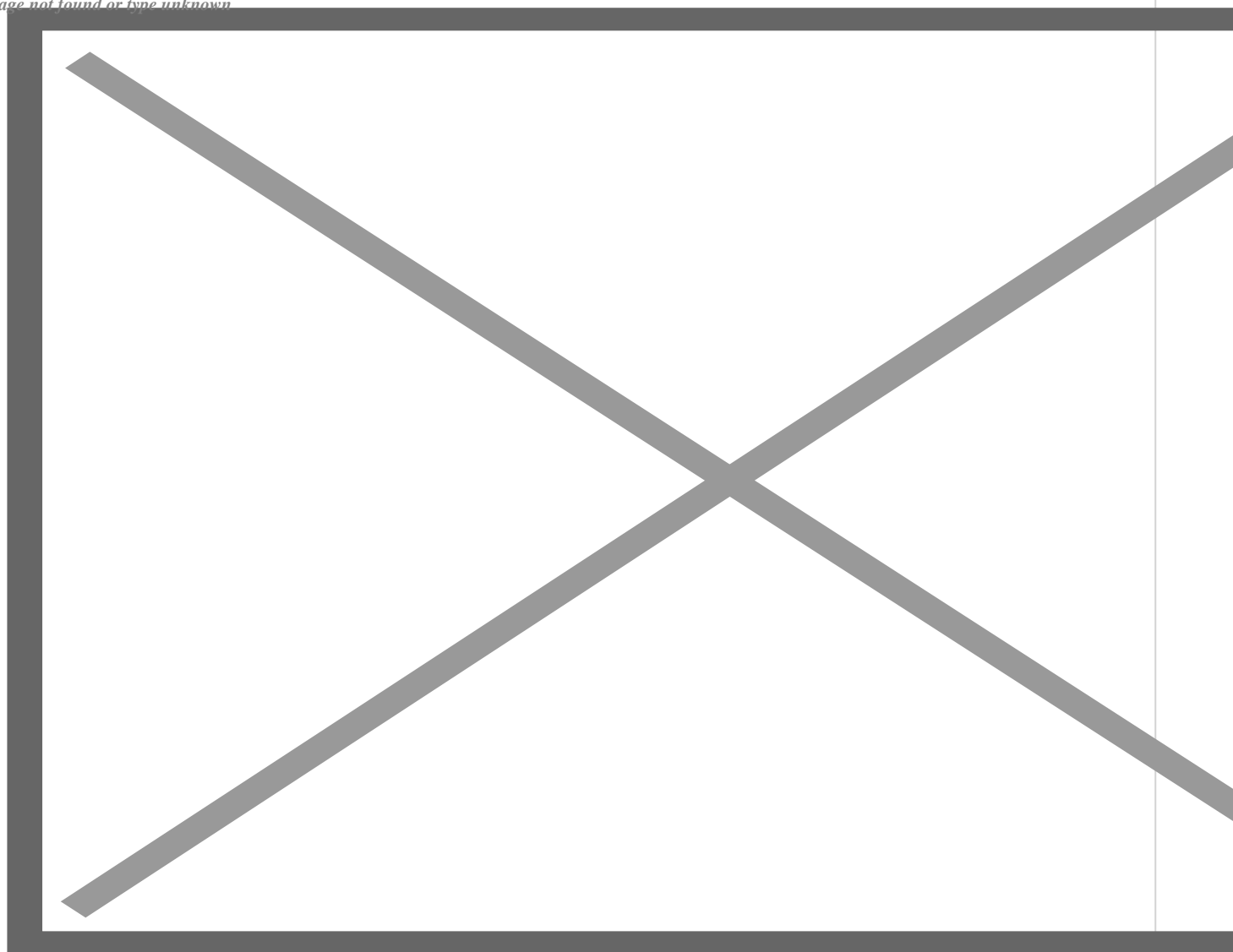


# *Clashes break out in Rome amid anger over COVID green pass*

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**Clashes broke out in Rome during a protest against the government's introduction of the 'green pass' [Remo Casilli/Reuters]**

Rome, October 9 (RHC)-- Thousands of protesters including members of far-right groups demonstrated in Italy's capital against the extension of the COVID-19 health pass system.

Demonstrators marched in downtown Rome on Saturday in opposition to a government-validated certificate system, known as a “green pass,” that was made mandatory for all workers.

Many raised clenched fists or waved Italian flags, shouting “Freedom!” and waving banners that read “Get your hands off [our] work.” Italian media reported 10,000 participants, while organizers said they numbered 100,000.

At least one person was injured as an unauthorised march broke off from the main rally in Piazza Del Popolo, in Rome’s downtown, and attempted to reach Prime Minister Mario Draghi’s office. Police officers in riot gear blocked the demonstrators by forming a line and spraying water on protesters.

Videos posted on social media showed rioters, some of whom had covered their faces, throwing objects at police officers and damaging armoured vans. Among them were proponents of extreme right-wing group Forza Nuova, who waved the Italian flag and extended their arm in a ‘Roman’ Fascist salute.

The mob reached the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL), Italy’s oldest trade union organisation, and briefly broke into its premises. CGIL has called for an emergency general assembly on Sunday to decide how to respond to the act, which was blamed on “fascist action squads”.

“[This was] an attack on democracy and on the world of work that we are determined to repel,” Maurizio Landini, secretary-general of CGIL, said in a statement. “No one should think they can take our country back to the Fascist years.”

Prime Minister Draghi has called Landini to express “the government’s full solidarity for the assault that has taken place today in Rome,” Italian newspaper La Repubblica reported.

“Trade unions are a fundamental stronghold of democracy and of workers’ rights. Whatever intimidation they face must be repelled with absolute firmness,” Draghi said in a statement.

Italy became in September the first country in Europe to make the “green pass” compulsory in public and private workplaces starting on October 15. To obtain one, employees must either have had at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, document recovery from the illness in the last six months, or test negative for the virus in the previous 48 hours.

Both employees and employers risk fines if they do not comply. Workers in the public sector can be suspended if they show up five times without a “green pass”.

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<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/273227-clashes-break-out-in-rome-amid-anger-over-covid-green-pass>



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