

Spanish free daily shuts as crisis hits advertising

MADRID, SPAIN: Spanish loss-making free daily newspaper *Que!* will shut down, owner Vocento said on Thursday, making it the third free paper to fall victim to the country's economic crisis.

Media companies in Spain are struggling in the face of tumbling advertising revenues as the country battles through a painful recession where one in four are unemployed. Vocento said recently that advertising revenues at *Que!* fell by 30% in the first quarter of 2012. The company bought the newspaper in 2007 for €132m, two years after its launch.

The closure of *Que!*, which offered a colourful mixture of local news, politics and celebrity gossip, leaves Spain with just one free newspaper, *20 Minutos*, owned by Norwegian media group Schibsted, following the closures of *Metro* in 2009 and *AND* in December.

As in many European countries, a number of free newspapers sprang up in Spain in the middle of the last decade, but the format has struggled to survive. Regional newspapers are also disappearing in Spain and left-leaning national newspaper *Publico* suspended its print edition this year and only operates online. Advertising in Spanish newspapers halved between 2007 and 2011 to €967m, according to consultancy Infoadex. (Reuters)

Source: European Journalism Centre

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