

Hundreds of Spanish musicians boycott festivals organised by pro-Zionist hedge fund

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Spanish musicians and cultural workers have launched a widespread boycott in protest against the Western-backed Zionist genocide in Palestine. Their targets are music festivals owned or operated by investment giant Kohlberg Kravis Roberts (KKR), which is financially involved in real estate developments within Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories.

As reported by the online outlet El Salto, KKR acquired Superstruct Entertainment in 2024 for €1.4 billion. Superstruct organises more than 80 music festivals globally, including some of Spain's most high-profile events. It is now the world's second-largest festival promoter, after Live Nation.

KKR is also the principal investor in German media conglomerate Axel Springer, which owns prominent publications such as Bild, Die Welt, Business Insider, Politico, and Upday. Axel Springer also operates a real estate platform, Yad42, which offers housing built in occupied East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank.

In addition to its real estate and media interests, KKR has extensive business ties to Israel. It owns the property management platform Guesty, collaborates with the Israeli cybersecurity firm IntSights, founded by former Israeli military intelligence officers and, in 2021, built a 10.5 MW underground data center in the Israeli city of Petah Tikva (through its subsidiary Global Technical Realty).

American financier Henry Kravis, a key figure at KKR, is a longtime donor to Israeli cultural initiatives. He contributed \$1 million to Donald Trump's first inauguration and has supported both Republican and Democratic candidates. In 2024, he backed Republican primary candidate Nikki Haley, who infamously wrote "Finish them off" on an Israeli missile bound for Gaza.

In Spain, KKR now controls up to 25 music festivals

spanning a wide range of genres. These include some of the country's most iconic and well attended events, such as FIB Benicàssim, Viña Rock, and Sónar in Barcelona. Other festivals under its umbrella include Arenal Sound, Bahía Sound, Brava Madrid, Brunch Electronik, Caudal Fest, Elrow Town, Festival de Les Arts, Granada Sound, I Love Reggaeton, Ibiza Elrow Amnesia, Interestelar, Love the Twenties, Love The 90s, Madrid Salvaje, Monegros Desert, Morriña Fest, OFF Sónar, O Son do Camiño, Resurrection Fest, Sonórica, Sónica, and Tsunami Xixón.

After the acquisition was made public, dozens of bands began announcing their withdrawal from KKR controlled festivals. The first was Sons of Aguirre, who declared:

It goes without saying what we think about collaborating with genocidaires complicit in an ethnic cleansing that has claimed over 60,000 Palestinian lives including 17,000 children. We have therefore decided not to participate in Viña Rock or any other festival acquired by KKR until ownership changes hands.

Soon after, other artists joined the boycott, including Dakidarría, Los de Marras, Kaos Urbano, Ill Pequeño, and Ergo Pro. The list has since grown to encompass dozens of acts. While some, like Fermín Muguruza, Reincidentes, and Ska P, are known for their left-wing political messaging, the boycott has also drawn support from artists in other genres including electronic musicians such as Ancient Pleasure, Amantra, Animistic Beliefs, Jeisson Drenth, Manuka Honey, Juliana Huxtable, and DJ Sosa RD.

Ticket cancellations have followed artist withdrawals, inflicting significant financial losses on many festivals. In response, some (Viña Rock, ShareMusic, and Resurrection Fest) have sought to distance themselves from KKR, claiming their links to Superstruct were necessary to ensure survival amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and that they retain operational independence. However, none have committed to severing ties with KKR.

Ernest Urtasun, Spain's Minister of Culture and a member of Sumar (a Podemos offshoot and coalition partner to the big-business Socialist Party), has tried to capitalise on the controversy. He declared that funds like KKR "are not welcome in Spain, are not welcome in Spanish culture," claiming his government has long worked to prevent companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements from enjoying normalised business within the EU single market.

Urtasun's rhetoric masks the complicity of both Sumar and Podemos in enabling Israel's actions in Gaza. Under their tenure, Madrid has continued to sell arms to Israel and purchase "combat tested" Israeli weaponry including bombs, grenades, torpedoes, missiles, and other munitions. Spanish ports, especially Algeciras, have reportedly facilitated the transit of over 13,000 tons of weapons bound for Israel in recent months. These are the real values Urtasun and his government defend.

The boycott by Spanish artists is not an isolated event but part of a growing global movement of cultural workers rising up against Israel's military actions, global imperialism, and the authoritarian tendencies of modern capitalist regimes. In recent weeks, hundreds of filmmakers, screenwriters, and actors have signed an open letter denouncing the genocide in Gaza. High profile figures such as Robert De Niro, Neil Young, Eddie Vedder, and Bruce Springsteen have also spoken out publicly against Donald Trump, who remains closely aligned with pro-Israel hardliners.

These statements reflect the growing anger and disillusionment of millions of workers and young people worldwide against genocide, austerity, militarization, and the capitalist elite that controls governments, banks, corporations, and the official cultural establishment. As the KKR case has shown, this corrupt establishment includes not only conservative forces, but also pseudo left forces like

Sumar and Podemos.



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