

Spain's pseudo-left launches Broad Front as electoral trap for workers and youth

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Spain's pseudo-left parties launched their new electoral coalition, the Broad Front (Frente Amplio), at a rally in Madrid on October 17, calling to tackle the housing crisis and prevent the far-right Vox party from coming to power with the right-wing Popular Party (PP) in the November 29 elections.

The launch of the Broad Front takes place amid an eruption of mass protests and strikes across Spain and Europe, from France to Italy, Portugal, Belgium and Albania. Earlier this month, hundreds of thousands of workers and young people took to the streets in more than 50 Spanish cities against soaring rents, evictions and the housing crisis, with growing calls for a general strike. The protests led to the dissolution of parliament and the calling of snap elections.

The Broad Front, led by former Barcelona Mayor Ada Colau, brings together Sumar, the Stalinist-led United Left (Izquierda Unida-IU), More Madrid (Más Madrid), Catalonia in Common (Catalunya en Comú) and smaller regional formations. It repackages the discredited political forces that have participated in successive pro-austerity, pro-war PSOE-led governments since 2018.

It seeks to divert the growing anger of workers and youth against austerity, militarism and the far right into a nationalist dead end of support for capitalist governments. It aims to prop up another PSOE-led capitalist government or, should the PP and Vox secure the victory predicted by opinion polls, present itself as a “left” opposition to Spain's first far-right government since the fall of the regime of General Francisco Franco in 1978. In either case, its function is to block the emergence of an independent movement of the working class.

Speaking at the coalition's launch, Colau claimed to represent the “working social majority” protesting soaring living costs. Recalling the housing demonstrations, she declared: “They only see the price at which each flat can be sold, the vulture funds and great fortunes, but we know that we are the social majority.”

Colau then appealed to the PSOE, stating, “The Socialist Party must understand that it is not enough to mobilise fear to stop the far right. ... We have not come to manage inequality; we have come to end inequality. We have come to change the rules of the game. We have come to intervene in the housing market to defend the right to housing, not to defend

speculators.”

Similarly, Sumar co-coordinator Verónica Martínez Barbero defended her ministers' record in government, citing their threat that “either there are housing decrees or there is no Council of Ministers.”

United Left (IU) candidate Toni Valero declared: “The PSOE must be forced to implement left-wing policies,” before proclaiming: “They will not stop us! Here is the working class!” Social Rights Minister Pablo Bustinduy claimed: “We have 43 days to mobilise the working class.”

Mass protests on housing have broken out in Spain precisely because broad sections of left-wing workers and youth no longer believe such empty rhetoric. Sumar and IU have spent years imposing austerity, expanding militarism and suppressing working-class struggles. Their own policies helped create the social catastrophe facing millions of workers and youth, fuelling the disillusionment and anger that Vox seeks to exploit.

The scale of their political discrediting is reflected in the opinion polls. The latest poll by RTVE shows the PP at 31.5 percent, the PSOE 26.8 percent and Vox at 18.7 percent. Accompanying seat projections give the PP 135 seats and Vox 65, a combined 200—well above the 176 required for a parliamentary majority. Meanwhile, the Broad Front stands at just 6.9 percent and Podemos at 3 percent, exposing the collapse in electoral support for parties that entered government promising to transform Spanish society.

Colau was mayor of Barcelona for eight years. Rising to prominence through the anti-evictions movement, she took office in 2015 promising to transform the city, particularly on housing. During her eight-year term, property prices rose 29 percent and rents by 51 percent. Her administration was ruthless against the working class, opposing Barcelona metro workers' strike against four years of frozen pay, and defending the intervention of the Guardia Civil against striking security workers at Barcelona's El Prat airport. Her administration also deployed police against migrant street vendors.

As for the Stalinist-led IU, it has participated in PSOE-led governments through both Podemos and Sumar. Its leading figure, Yolanda Díaz, served as labour minister and deputy prime minister under both coalitions. Más Madrid emerged from the same political milieu as Podemos and subsequently

joined Sumar, while Catalunya en Comú was Colau's main political base. These organisations were already assembled under Sumar in 2023, when they claimed to be offering a new beginning following Podemos's electoral collapse.

The PSOE–Podemos (2020–2023) and PSOE–Sumar (2023–2026) governments imposed the dictates of the financial aristocracy in collaboration with the union bureaucracy. They disbursed EU bailout funds to corporations and banks, imposed a reactionary labor reform, a pension reform negotiated with Brussels that maintained earlier attacks on retirement entitlements and below-inflation wage increases that hit millions of workers.

Together, these have been the most militarist governments in modern Spanish history. According to estimates by the anti-militarist organisation Grupo Tortuga, Spain's military expenditure surged from €23.6 billion in 2018 to more than €65 billion in 2025—a 176 percent increase. They supplied tanks, rocket launchers and armoured vehicles to Ukraine in NATO's war on Russia. Despite their criticisms of Israel's genocide in Gaza, Spain continued exporting arms shipments to Israel and awarding contracts to Israeli arms manufacturers.

These governments' bloody record at Spain's borders stands in stark contrast to their professed defence of migrants. In June 2022, Spanish and Moroccan security forces violently attacked thousands of African refugees attempting to cross into Melilla, leaving at least 100 or more dead. Four years later, at least 140 migrants drowned during the mass crossings into Ceuta in July 2026. The government responded by deploying the army and riot police, as soldiers brutally beat migrants, blocked their movement to mainland Spain and organised mass expulsions.

The rival alliance to the Frente Amplio formed by Podemos and the Catalan-nationalist Republican Left (ERC) offers no alternative. Former Podemos Equality Minister Irene Montero and ERC spokesman Gabriel Rufián are to campaign together. Podemos will support ERC's electoral lists in Catalonia, and run its candidates elsewhere. However, Sumar and Podemos have reached local electoral agreements in the Valencian Community and the Canary Islands. These alliances underscore that Podemos and Sumar have no irreconcilable strategic differences.

The factional warfare between these organisations has centred on electoral lists and parliamentary seats. Colau even offered to withdraw her candidacy and abandon the Broad Front's name to secure an agreement, while Podemos insisted on Montero's leadership and its alliance with Rufián.

The failure to form a nationwide alliance reflects a deeper political crisis rooted in their declining support and their attempts to block the emergence of political opposition to their left. These issues came to a head in 2023. After entering the PSOE-led government in 2020 and carrying out anti-working class policies, Podemos suffered a devastating loss of support. In December 2023, Podemos's five deputies left Sumar's parliamentary group, while Sumar joined the PSOE in a new

government.

The split took place amid mounting mass opposition to Israel's genocide in Gaza. Podemos left the government, calculating that it could better contain and channel this growing opposition from outside the minority PSOE–Sumar government. It sought to present itself as a radical opponent of the policies of the government of which it had been a part.

The deepening crisis confronting workers in Spain cannot be resolved via national reforms. Spain's public debt stood at approximately €1.76 trillion, or 101.5 percent of GDP, in June 2026. Across Europe, high indebtedness, economic stagnation and the enormous expansion of military expenditure are intensifying demands from the financial oligarchy for sweeping austerity. The hundreds of billions being diverted towards NATO rearmament must be paid for through mounting pressure on wages, pensions, healthcare, education and other social spending.

The PP and Vox are advancing an agenda of tax cuts for the rich and big business, mass deportations of migrants, cuts in education and healthcare and privatisation of pensions. Their influence cannot be explained as the product of a uniform shift of Spanish society to the right. It takes place amid mass housing demonstrations, teachers' strikes and widespread hostility to social inequality and militarism.

The struggle against austerity, war and the far right cannot be waged through an electoral strategy to pressure the PSOE for less reactionary policies. The deep social anger expressed in the housing protests and calls for a general strike must be transformed into a conscious political movement of the working class, independent of all the capitalist parties and the trade union bureaucracies tied to them. The same forces that have collaborated with successive governments cannot be entrusted with leading a struggle against the capitalist system.

Workers must build rank-and-file action committees in workplaces, schools and working-class neighbourhoods, independent of the union bureaucracies and the pseudo-left. These committees can unite struggles over wages, housing, public services and democratic rights with opposition to the Gaza genocide, NATO militarism and the growth of the far right in Spain and across Europe. Above all, the working class must be politically prepared for the revolutionary confrontation with the capitalist oligarchy that will emerge from its struggles against austerity, fascism and war.



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