Popular Party and far-right Vox lead polls in tightly contested Spanish election

Santiago Guillen, Alejandro López
27 November 2026

Spain holds a general election Sunday. The latest polling average published by *El País* puts the right-wing Popular Party (PP) on 31.4 percent of the vote, followed by the ruling Socialist Party (PSOE) on 29.1 percent and the neo-fascist Vox on 17.9 percent. Its parliamentary projections give the PP and Vox a combined 190 seats, above the 176 required for an absolute majority.

The PP's lead over the PSOE has narrowed from nearly six percentage points at the beginning of the campaign to just 2.3. The latest survey by the state-run Centre for Sociological Research (CIS), which stands at odds with most other polls, puts the PSOE on 34.4 percent, the PP on 24.7 percent and Vox on 15.6 percent.

The fact that Vox and the PP now stand on the verge of taking power paints a devastating picture of eight years of PSOE-led government, first minority, then in coalition with Podemos (2020-2023) and subsequently with Sumar (2023-2026), during which millions of workers have been confronted with stagnant wages, soaring housing costs and a relentless rise in the cost of living. Against a backdrop of mounting social discontent, Spain faces the prospect of a far-right party entering the national government for the first time since the end of Franco's dictatorship in 1978.

The election was called amid mass protests triggered by the eviction of 87-year-old Maricarmen Abascal on September 23. Opposition to her eviction from the home where she had lived for decades rapidly developed into a nationwide movement against the housing crisis and property speculation, increasingly directed against the PSOE-Sumar government.

Since Sánchez came to power in June 2018, rents have soared by 45 percent nationwide. More than a quarter of households spend over 40 percent of their income on rent. Amid mounting demands from protesters for a general strike, the trade unions were eventually forced to call one on November 11, drawing millions.

Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez sought to suppress this social opposition by holding a gun to workers' heads, trying to force them to support the PSOE and its allies, or confront the prospect of a far-right government.

During the campaign, the PSOE, Frente Amplio (Broad Front) and Podemos have each sought to present themselves as the most effective political instrument for stopping the far right.

Speaking at a campaign rally in Tenerife, Sánchez declared that the PSOE was the only "ballot that can stop these two far-right parties". The PSOE echoed this message on its official social media account: "There is only one ballot in these elections to defeat that reactionary coalition, and that ballot is the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party's."

Sánchez has passed a battery of social measures over the past weeks, including an increase in the minimum wage to €1,286 a month from January 2027, public-sector pay rises, tax relief and the extension of public transport subsidies. These last-minute concessions fall far short of addressing the social collapse of living standards. Consumer prices have risen by 27 percent since 2018, while the cost of food has increased by nearly 43 percent. Real wages remain 2 percent below their levels at the beginning of 2021.

The Broad Front's candidate for prime minister, Ada Colau, has repeatedly framed the election as a choice between a far-right government and a renewed coalition with the PSOE. The Broad Front includes Sumar, which has ruled with the PSOE since 2023. She declared: "We are going to vote on whether there will be a coalition government between PP and Vox or a coalition government between the Socialist Party and the Broad Front."

Appealing to left-wing voters disillusioned with the PSOE, Colau argued that a stronger Broad Front could pressure Sánchez into adopting more progressive policies. "We want to enter government with strength so that it is bolder than it has been until now," she said, pledging to "force the Socialist Party to finally confront the speculators".

Podemos has made similar appeals. Its leader, Irene Montero, declared: "And to achieve meaningful results in stopping the far right, it is necessary to vote for the left, it is necessary to vote for Podemos." Montero did not rule out joining another PSOE-led coalition, provided it agreed to

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measures to “lower rental prices, prohibit speculation and cap food prices”.

While workers face declining real wages and soaring rents, these parties have dramatically increased military expenditure. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Spain’s military spending surged by 50 percent in 2025 alone, reaching €34.3 billion, equivalent to 2.1 percent of GDP.

The diversion of public resources plundered from the working class to the military and the financial oligarchy has led to two catastrophic railway accidents in 2026 that claimed 115 lives, exposing the consequences of decades of liberalisation, inadequate investment and deteriorating safety standards.

Sánchez’s occasional criticisms of US President Donald Trump and denunciations of Israel’s genocide in Gaza stand in contrast to Spain’s participation in NATO’s escalating military confrontation in Ukraine with nuclear-armed Russia. Since 2022, successive PSOE-led governments have sent billions of euros in military assistance to Ukraine, while Spain has continued military-industrial ties with Israel despite the announcement of an arms embargo.

Successive PSOE-led governments have presided over deadly massacres of migrants and the militarisation of Spain’s borders. In May 2021, the PSOE-Podemos government deployed the army against migrants entering Ceuta. The following year, Spanish security forces were implicated in the Melilla massacre, which left at least 100 dead. Under the PSOE-Sumar government, the army was again deployed against migrants in Ceuta in 2026, where a reported 141 people died, amid brutal beatings and forced expulsions of thousands to Morocco.

The PSOE-led governments have deployed riot police against striking workers, including brutally assaulting strikers two weeks ago during the nationwide general strike against the housing crisis, and maintained the notorious Citizens’ Security Law that restricts the right to protest.

The political record of these three parties shows that a new PSOE-led government would be right-wing, militarist and pro-austerity and would fuel further social discontent and help strengthen neo-fascist Vox.

The PP has centred its campaign on denouncing Sánchez’s government and its corruption, promising the institutional and economic “reconstruction” of Spain. Its programme proposes building one million homes, repealing the Housing Law, eliminating rent restrictions in the housing market and cutting taxes on the rich.

Neo-fascist Vox has centred its campaign on mass deportations. In Tenerife, its leader Santiago Abascal described the arrival of 8,000 desperate migrants on the Canary Islands as an “invasion”. Abascal has accused the government of importing “savages who do not respect women” and remaining silent “when a moor murders a woman”. Vox has also sought to deflect anger at the capitalist-induced housing crisis by blaming immigrants, claiming that they have contributed to soaring housing costs.

Under its programme of “remigration”, Vox proposes deporting not only undocumented migrants but also legal residents. It calls for prohibiting landlords from renting accommodation to undocumented migrants, restricting their access to healthcare, taxing remittances sent abroad and militarising the borders.

Vox has called for accelerated military rearmament, expanded police powers, the outlawing of separatist parties and the repeal of legislation on the crimes of the Franco dictatorship.

Its economic programme combines sweeping tax cuts benefiting the wealthy, estimated to cost €64 billion annually, with the privatisation of the pension system and a programme of drastic austerity. The party proposes slashing public spending by at least €112 billion, equivalent to 6.5 percent of GDP—a reduction on the scale of fascistic Argentine President Javier Milei’s first-year austerity programme.

The social force capable of opposing this programme has already emerged in Spain. The mass housing protests and the November 11 general strike, which mobilised millions of workers, have demonstrated the enormous social power of the working class. These struggles developed not under the leadership of the PSOE and its allies, but in opposition to their policies.

Whatever the outcome of Sunday’s election, the social and political contradictions that have given rise to these struggles will remain unresolved. The movement developing in Spain is part of a broader eruption of the class struggle across Europe against austerity, militarism and the growth of the far right.

There is neither an electoral nor a national solution to this international crisis. The central political questions posed by these struggles are the independence of the working class from the PSOE and its allies, the international unification of workers’ struggles, and the fight for socialism.

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