



For a fairer, more equal, and more sustainable country: let's regain the initiative and go on the offensive

Statement by the Federal Board of Izquierda Unida –29/05/2023

The local and regional elections have shown very negative results for the left, and their possible consequences in terms of democratic and social setbacks are deeply worrying. The conservative and reactionary right-wing forces, which used to be adjacent and now overlap, have made significant advances winning a lot of ground from the progressive forces. Many progressive governments have been lost. In short, our assessment is very negative.

The Spanish right is part of a reactionary wave that is not only national and is successfully channelling citizen's frustration and political disaffection. The succession of economic crises, the pandemic, and the proliferation of fears and anxieties about our possible futures have likely led a good part of the population into a state of great emotional vulnerability. The ability of the right to increase its influence in these circumstances is proving very efficient.

The left, in general, is in a state of confusion. Our governments have promoted policies to provide additional protection to working families - it is true that some with more courage and depth than others – and there has been an attempt to capitalise this in the form of popular recognition. It is true that the last crisis has been managed so that its impact has not fallen exclusively on the usual victims. This is a significant difference from previous times, as wages have been raised, and public services have been strengthened. But all this has not been enough. And the left, generally prone to objectivist and hyper-rational descriptions of political behaviour, is confused. If we tell 'the truth' and if we approve policies for the benefit of the majority but then people do not vote for us as we expect, there is a risk of blaming the voter. This is a childish mistake.

That we have managed the crisis better than the right would have done and in the interest of the working class does not mean that there are not severe impacts on the lives of the majority of the population. The loss of purchasing power, for example, is very noticeable. The deterioration of the quality of life and, above all, the lack of perspectives, is exhausting for families. In daily life it is rarely enough to say 'it could have been worse'. The material context in which we operate is important, but it certainly cannot explain everything.

The right has successfully constructed a narrative against the coalition government that has permeated almost everywhere. This narrative has been favoured, undoubtedly, by the myriad of media actors willing to repeat their mantras, but also by pre-existing elements that have boosted their capacity to penetrate. In Spain, the right has never tolerated not being the one in charge and has always characterised the rest as being part of an 'anti-Spain'. This works very well in the dimension of identity. Left-wing politics need more than the greyness of public management; they need a political project adapted to this time and capable of awakening a more mobilizing feeling than the mere - and theoretic - conciliation of objective interests.

For this reason, we must offer a serious and reliable proposal of a project for our country, a proposal that Izquierda Unida has and has defended all these years. There is no time for laments, the call for general elections challenges us to live up to our country and defend that we can all have a dignified life with guaranteed rights; it challenges us to regain the initiative and go on the offensive.

Despite the fact that the election results have been bad, Izquierda Unida maintains a very important territorial representation, composed of councillors, regional, and provincial deputies, and a good number of mayors. For this reason, we put all our territorial capillarity, our representation and our organizational capacity at the disposal of the country as a whole and of the left to face the process of the general elections with strength and enthusiasm: the future is not written. Neither the political right, nor the economic oligarchies, nor the media elites are going to take away from us the ability to write our own history.

We can only build a serious, exciting, and intelligible alternative for our country from the sum of political organisations and civil society. The SUMAR project and the candidacy of Yolanda Díaz are the best opportunity to offer that project and win the general elections. There still is a social majority that truly expects a new call that serves not only to defend the rights we have conquered and that the right-wing parties threaten, but to conquer new advances.

The priority is the Spanish people, the priority are the working families - so once again it is time to roll up our sleeves and collectively build a better future for the citizens of our country.

Joy to struggle and organisation to win.