

GZ.I Galiza International





BNG, the Strength of Galiza

The Galizan Nationalist Bloc (BNG) is a left-wing, patriotic organisation fighting for the sovereignty of Galiza in order to build a new, truly democratic, fair, free and equal society. The BNG was founded in 1982 as a Patriotic Front uniting several parties, organisations and groups working for the national and social liberation of Galiza. The BNG represents a long-standing tradition of fighting for Galizan self-determination going back to the 1930s with the Galizanist Party led by Daniel Castelao and Alexandre Bóveda, as well as the patriotic movement which grew up in the 1960s.

Today the BNG enjoys wide-ranging support in Galizan society, especially in the workplace and the trade-union movement, supporting the Galizan Interunion Confederation (CIG), the largest, most active and militant union in Galiza. The BNG is also the driving force behind many grassroots organisations, whilst at the same time having an important institu-

tional presence, with over 600 councillors and 24 mayors, including the main city of Pontevedra in the last local elections, as well as 7 MPs in the Galizan Parliament and 2 MPs in the Spanish Parliament. Since 1999 Galiza was represented in Brussels by the Europe of the Peoples electoral coalition made up of left-wing nationalist organisations from the Basque Country and Catalonia, and won one seat in the latest European elections held in May this year with The Peoples Decide coalition when the BNG ran together with the Basque organisation EH Bildu. Between 2005 and 2009 it was part of the ruling Galizan government and today continues to spearhead social protests and mobilisations against the unpopular policies imposed by the Troika and applied by the Spanish government in Galiza, with extremely negative consequences for the Galizan working classes and for Galiza as a nation.

Galizan National Day

On 25 July, 15,000 people took to the streets during the massive demonstration organised by the BNG under the banner 'Stand up for Galiza: Sovereignty, Democracy and Rights', attended by several international delegations, with many more sending fraternal greetings.

In a political context marked by 7 years of crisis used by the banks and the oligopolies responsible for the unfair and unequal social model for their own private gain, the BNG once again reiterated its opposition to the policy of cutbacks imposed by the Troika and applied by the ruling Spanish People's Party,

as well as the ongoing recentralisation of the State which refuses stateless nation the right to decide their own future.

The BNG firmly believes that the peoples should have the necessary tools to govern themselves in order to overcome the crisis and to build a better future, as the National Spokesperson of the BNG, Xavier Vence, stated during the closing rally when he addressed the packed main square of the Galizan capital in front of a huge Galizan flag. The demonstration was followed by the Festigal culture and music festival.



Galiza, a nation fighting for its freedom

Galiza is an ancient nation with a strong national identity built up through the ages. The Kingdom of Galiza founded in 411 by the Suebi was the first in the Iberian Peninsula, even before the emergence of the Roman Empire and enjoyed a vibrant political and cultural period throughout the Middle Ages. It was during the VIII Century that the ancient Roman Gallaecia gave birth to what was to become one of the major Romance languages that Galizans refer to as 'Galizan', but known internationally as Portuguese, the language used to compose the renowned mediaeval Galizan-Portuguese poetry.

It was only in the XV Century, at the same time that Portugal became an independent kingdom, that Galiza fell under the control, first of Castile, then later Spain. The resulting political dependence and the inability to govern itself according to its own best interests effectively stunted Galiza's economic growth, turning a country rich in natural resources into an impoverished country, hitting the working classes hardest. But the process of colonisation and assimilation never completely succeeded in wiping out to the desire for an independent Galiza, with the Galizan people clinging to its language and giving rise in the XIX Century to a movement which sought to win back the country's lost freedom.



Galiza need national sovereignty

There is a growing awareness in Galiza that national sovereignty is essential in order to be able to make decisions in its own best interests and turn around the policies which have systematically undermined the Galizan economy by dismantling its key productive sectors, which is why the BNG sets national sovereignty as strategic aim by exercising its right to self-determination in order to build a democratic, secular state: the Republic of Galiza.

Not only does Galiza need national sovereignty in order to defend its language, culture and distinctive personality, but also to break free from market domination and win back the democracy now in the hands of the economic forces and the lobbies, to defend the social conquests and to put power over the economy back into the hands of the people in order to guarantee a future with employment and better living conditions for all Galizans.

The BNG is a patriotic, left-wing organisation working for the whole of the working classes, defending the interests of the social majority. The BNG is the political reference for all politically aware citizens in Galiza who aspire to national sovereignty and independence, as well as all of those who hope for a fairer and more prosperous future for our country.

The BNG is also clearly internationalist, defending the right of the people of the world to self-determination, as well as human rights, anti-imperialism, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and international solidarity. We have strong ties with other nationalist organisations within the rest of the Spanish State as well as many similar-minded organisations in Latin America, Africa and Asia and take part in various international political, social, pacifist, linguistic and cultural, environmentalist and equality forums and events.

We stand with the Palestinian people

Above and beyond the humanitarian crisis, the continued Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip and the ongoing construction of settlements on the West Bank are part of a much deeper political problem, two sides of one and the same Israeli goal of preventing the construction of an economically and socially viable free, sovereign Palestinian state.

The current geopolitical situation is against Palestine, with almost the entire Arab world as well as the USA and the European Union refusing to back the creation of a Palestinian state on the grounds that it would weaken Israel.

Israel seeks to ensure the irreversibility of the current status quo in order to dash any hopes of an independent Palestine in the future because it knows that time is running out for three main rea-

sons, i.e. the clearly unfavourable internal demographic time-bomb, the continued loss of political and economic influence on the part of the USA and the EU working in tandem and the growing instability of the Arab world.

It is precisely this instability and concerns regarding the inroads made on the ground by several different political and/or military groups directly opposed to Western and Israeli interests that explains the complacency and even the outright complicity of the so-called 'international community' regarding the recent attacks on Gaza.

Israel is well aware that within the medium-term of 10-50 years, these three factors could turn the tide in favour of Palestine, which explains its brutal policy of genocide.



Galiza around the world

EUROPE



www.e-f-a.org

The BNG took part in the European elections held on 25 May as part of 'The Peoples Decide' electoral coalition together with the Basque organisation EH Bildu, winning one seat in the European Parliament between them, with Ana Miranda as the elected Galizan nationalist candidate.

The BNG is part of the European political party the European Free Alliance (EFA), together with 32 other nationalist organisations from all over Europe.

FOUNDATIONS



The foundation belonging to the BNG, the Galiza Sempre Foundation (FGS), holds the current presidency of the foundation of the EFA, the Maurits Coppieters Centre, presided by Xabier Macías.

<http://www.galzasempre.org> // <http://www.ideasforeurope.eu>

LATIN AMERICA

The BNG and the FGS took part in the 20th Sao Paulo Forum, bringing together left-wing political parties from all over South and Central America and the Caribbean, held between 24-29 August in La Paz, in the plurinational State of Bolivia.

THE GALIZAN DIÁSPORA

The assembly of BNG members living outside Galiza elected its new governing body on 24 July.

GALIZA AND PORTUGAL WITH PALESTINE

A joint demonstration was held on the bridge across the River Minho linking Galiza and Portugal in support of the Palestinian people, denouncing the genocide in Gaza.



The right of the peoples to decide

The BNG with Scotland and Catalonia in their bid for independence

At this historical moment, two stateless European nations stand poised to decide their own destiny. The right to decide, or national self-determination, is the maximum expression of democracy. On 18 September, Scotland will be the first to hold a referendum, shortly followed by Catalonia on 9 November. The BNG fully supports both of these processes and will send representatives to stand by the Scottish and Catalan peoples in their historic bid to decide their own future. Unlike in Scotland where an agreement has been reached with Westminster, the Spanish government remains firmly opposed to holding a referendum in Catalonia.

Catalonia



The process leading up to the referendum set for the 9 November was launched on 11 September coinciding with the Catalan National Day with a historic human chain around the whole of Catalonia, with over 80% in favour of holding a referendum on Catalan independence. Having lost its independence in 1714, Catalonia never gave up its fight for the right to govern itself, proclaiming the Republic in 1931, only to be abolished eight years later when Franco seized power, leading to a ban on the Catalan language and driving 500,000 people into exile. As in the case of Galiza, the Spanish Constitution of 1978 failed to recognise the national diversity of the State and, following several aborted attempts to change the Autonomous Statutes and in the light of the increasing recentralisation of the State, the Catalan people is determined to decide its own future in the ballot box, which is the slogan they have chosen for their campaign: #Volem votar un Nou País ('We want to vote for a new country').

The Catalan citizenry has joined forces in the grassroots movement known as the Catalan National Assembly (<https://assemblea.cat>) which is pushing for the right to hold a referendum, backed by pro-independence political organisations such as the Catalan Republican Left (ERC) and the Popular Unity Candidates (CUP).



The BNG supports the right of the Catalan people to decide its own future via a referendum as the expression of this democratic value and will take part in Catalan National Day celebrations on 11 September.



Scotland

Today Scotland is an administrative area and one of the nations that make up the United Kingdom with its own legislative body, the Scottish Parliament. Scotland was an independent country until the Treaty of Union came into force in 1707, when the Kingdom of Scotland was joined with the Kingdom of England to form the united Kingdom of Great Britain. Since then, the quest for independence has never died. According to the terms of the agreement reached between the Scottish Parliament and Westminster, the question posed during the referendum will be: "Should Scotland be an independent country?"

The grassroots organisation YES SCOTLAND is campaigning for independence, with the full support of the Scottish National Party (SNP)

which, like the BNG, is a member of the EFA. A BNG delegation led by the Nation Spokesperson, Xavier Vence, will be in Edinburgh on 18 September to back the referendum.



In Galiza a group of people have set up the campaign #SolidaritywithScotland
<http://solidaritywithscotland.com>



Galizan Nationalist Bloc (BNG)

Avenida Rodríguez de Viguri 16 baixo, 15702 Santiago de Compostela (Galiza)

<http://bng.gal>

Twitter: @obloque

sedenacional@bng-galiza.org