



Interview ▶ We talk to the leader of the first party without politicians

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Daniel Vosseler is a candidate for the mayor of Barcelona for Barcelona Ets Tu, a party without politicians, made up of self-employed entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized business professionals. His party aims to remove Ada Colau from the City Council and transform the county town to what it was a few years ago.

Vosseler, lawyer and director and founder of Vosseler Abogados, is a great lover of Andorra, a country he has been visiting often for many years and where he mainly looks for disconnection and good ski slopes, in addition to going shopping. By leading a different proposal for a neighboring city like Barcelona and because of its relationship with the country, from EL PERIÒDIC we wanted to know his proposal in detail.

–You are a party formed by professionals from different sectors and not by professional politicians. How was Barcelona Ets Tu born?

–The party was born from the feeling of belonging to the city of Barcelona and from our unequivocal commitment to our people, seeing on the horizon what a model based on populism would entail. And this is what we see now in the city with the decline, social imbalances... the worst of democracy. This made it necessary to promote a candidacy from civil society with Barcelona DNA to respond to what Barcelona is. The party is made up of freelancers and professionals from small and medium-sized companies, and we are accompanied by people from the public sector and retirees who, with their experience, give us a lot of talent. In addition, we are a municipal party, the vote stays at home, since we only respond to the interests of the people of Barcelona. We do not have and will not have a big brother at the regional or state level. Our way of organizing the party is to do it with temporary mandates of 10 years in order to have time to explain and develop a project.

–What led you to create a party and run in the municipal elections that will be held this Sunday in the county town?

–Everything came when we understood that politics had failed in the city of Barcelona, ideology has devoured the city and in the face of the failure of the politicians we promoted a transversal candidacy from civil society; and I say transversal because it comes from the 73 neighborhoods. The management engines must be started and activism must be stopped.

–You were born as an anti-Colau party, but now all the parties have joined the bandwagon and are against the current municipal government...

–I'm not really against anything, but what is true is that we are not



BARCELONA ETS TU

Daniel Vosseler

Candidate for the mayoralty of Barcelona

«We want to expel populism and recover the city of Barcelona»

compatible with any of the policies that Ada Colau's populist mandate has deployed. That is why since our creation we have been called the anti Colau. Now they have all jumped on the bandwagon of anti-Colau, but they have all agreed with it at one point or another. Junts is the party that has done the most, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) has approved all four bud-

gets and the Partit Socialista de Catalunya (PSC) which has been its natural alliance. The two have governed here for eight years and have brought Barcelona to the worst social records in the history of democracy with 32% of people on the poverty line and there has been no opposition. Barcelona has not had any political voice against the municipal government in eight years.

–Being a party of non-politicians, you bring different things to the citizens of Barcelona. What is its differential value as a party?

–Everything is different. This is a party based on management and disconnected from ideology which is what has really hurt the city. Here we have people from the right, the left, pro-independence and constitutionalists. They have put all the

ideological issues aside to focus on building a new Barcelona based on the principles of the self-employed and SMEs, which are meritocracy, equal opportunities and effort policies. Here we are only talking about management mandates and major projects for the city of Barcelona.

–What do you think Barcelona needs to change?

–Ada Colau has only ruled for her own. All the mayors, better or worse, have been consensus mayors who wanted to govern for the people of Barcelona, not Ada Colau. She has done pure activism and created a city to her liking and for her own. Barcelona is subject to different interests from Barcelona itself, which is why it remains at the head of the Consistory. She has realized that with this 20% that she has, she rules the city and she does it only for her own. It has disconnected from 80% of the population, the vast majority of Barcelona residents. And, as the rest of the politicians do nothing for the exchange of interests, whether with the Generalitat de Catalunya, the state, the provincial councils or all the administrations, the people of Barcelona are in continuous defeat. The reality of the Colau government is: 32% of the population at the poverty line, 10,000 homeless, 2,000 of these destitute spending the night on the streets, we are the mecca of squatters, we are also the center of crime in the entire state Spanish, we are the Spanish city where more companies have closed, we have gone back 20 years in the active population, we have an average rental price of 1,100 euros, she has destroyed the field of construction in the city of Barcelona by promoting the 30% rules new housing intended for social housing, which has caused it not to be built in the city. And this caused 133,000 people to leave last year, most of them talented young people who find it impossible to live in Barcelona. Ada Colau has reached all the negative memories, not a single parameter works with her. We are also one of the cities in southern Europe with the most traffic jams. In fact, to solve this problem, another of our proposals is free public transport, a service that is already offered by 55 European cities.

–What are the city's problems?

–There are three main problems: Housing, which urgently needs to be solved; the insecurity that is already a dramatic issue and the business crisis. In the last four years more than 5,000 companies have left the city of Barcelona. We have disconnected from what used to fill our fridges and this has meant that today the economy of the people of Barcelona is on the ground. Barcelona City Council has a debt of one billion euros, many more companies are destroyed than remain, the vast majority have left for Madrid and yet we keep saying no to the Four Seasons, no to the Hermitage, not the expansion of the air-

port and we are still talking about the Mediterranean corridor. There is a great disconnection from the productive fabric, and that is why we propose to promote a new business habitat based on the self-employed and SMEs that make up 99% of Barcelona's business fabric.

-Security is one of the main concerns of Barcelona residents. From Barcelona Ets Tu are betting on creating a new police force...

-What we are proposing is the creation of a new Urban Guard that has comprehensive powers from the Coast to Montjuic. The police must have power over all criminal activity that occurs in Barcelona. We are talking about a new Urban Guard that will be called the Metropolitan Police and that will have powers throughout the city, with new troops, new tools and instruments and new empowerment from the point of view of authority and the support of its leadership which is the Town hall. The aim is to return coexistence and normalcy to the residents of the city of Barcelona. The data is dramatic. If we look back, in 2019 there were more than 200,000 criminal acts (historic record), in 2022 there were 180,000. It is clear that the city is out of control and in the face of this forcefulness and zero tolerance is required and the security tables must be reformulated. From the party we consider that foreigners who commit crimes must be expelled from the country because these are not the citizens we want. We will deploy the largest police apparatus ever seen in a democracy.

-After safety, dirt is also a concern. What do you propose to deal with this problem? How can civility be controlled in public spaces to avoid a dirty city?

-The main axis is education. An educated society is a clean society. And the second point is rigor; against people who do not take care of the public space, we will apply punitive measures to prevent them from throwing dirt and not taking care of everyone's space. What has also prevailed in Barcelona is homelessness. There are 10,000 destitute in the county town and, in areas such as the Industrial School park behind the Sants station, there are people who are even camped there with tents and who, given their vulnerability, are forced to their needs on the street. And all this is not being controlled. It is intolerable that this is happening in 21st century Barcelona.

-During the campaign you also talked about tourism phobia, which often comes directly from the institutions. In fact, former councilwoman Gala Pin in 2019 described cruise tourism as a 'plague of locusts'...

-Imagine, they attack what fills our fridge. The city's first economic engine is tourism with the impact it has on restaurants, hotels, culture, etc. It's like if the Germans said to close the car factories, that would

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«The three main problems in Barcelona are housing, insecurity and the business crisis»

be crazy. We are a tourist town, but we want quality tourism. The 5,000 companies that have left represent 100,000 people who have stopped coming to our hotels, renting spaces, going to restaurants, taxis... From Barcelona Ets Tu we have a 100% positive approach to tourism, but of quality and that is not boat tourism as happens in Poblenou or the Carmel bunkers. The influx of travelers is very necessary for our productive fabric and for our economy. The economic engines that drive the city are tourism, health-care, culture, construction and technology.

-Another topic that has caused a lot of controversy is the Superilles de Colau. Are you for or against?

-The superilla is an instrument to normalize spaces. The one in Gràcia was agreed upon with the neighbors and does not cause any problems. But what Colau has done is to impose super-blocks against the will of the residents, as for example in Poblenou or Sant Antoni. In fact, a referendum was held in the Poblenou neighborhood and 90% said they did not want this structure, but they still ended up imposing it. That is why I speak of ideological imposition. Superilles are spaces that generate ghettos. The current mayoress is copying the model of the city of Paris and she does not hide it, but the capital of France has a serious problem of ghettos. The

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uniqueness of Barcelona is that the 10 districts with 73 neighborhoods have continuity and everything is uniform, the whole city has a sense of belonging. And now Colau is breaking its connectivity. With us, the works on Via Laietana go away and the cycle paths on Via Augusta also go away.

-It is obvious that there is a housing problem in Barcelona, just as it is happening in the Principality. From your candidacy you propose the construction of more social housing. How do you plan to do it? And also bearing in mind that one of the problems is the lack of land...

-We don't just consider housing as a residential problem but also a business one. The European Medicines Agency and other organiza-

tions cannot set up in Barcelona because its people have nowhere to live; Barcelona does not currently have 1,000 homes. If, for example, the United Nations wanted to come to Barcelona, it could not. And I give this example because I think its European headquarters should be here. We must deploy 50,000 homes, of which 25,000 must be social. In the city, only 4,000 can be made a year due to a lack of manpower and machinery to make more. In 10 years we will have 40,000 and we will convert the 17,000 empty premises in the city and draw up a plan of uses for social housing. These constructions would be located in the Zona Franca, Sagrera, Poblenou and the Coast.ç

-If you get representation in the Barcelona City Council, do you plan to make an agreement with any political force?

-With whom we are clear that we will not agree is Ada Colau. There is no possibility of reaching an agreement with her, besides we have come to expel populism from the city. We are a programmatic party, we have no ideology and, therefore, we can agree with everyone. We will do it with whoever else buys us a program. Whoever except Colau. Barcelona Ets Tu will be the big surprise of the elections, as we represent the decisive vote that expels Ada Colau. We want to expel populism and reclaim the city. ≡

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