Beat: Politics

The Popular Party of Rajoy won the local and regional elections in Spain

But conservatives lose support

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USPA NEWS - The conservative Popular Party (PP in its acronym in Spanish) of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy won the local and regional elections in Spain on Sunday May 24, an election that confirmed the appearance on the Spanish political scene populist parties and citizens.

Abstention in these elections was around 35%, slightly higher than in the previous local and regional elections in 2011. The PP won the elections, to get 22,023 councilors for the 20,225 who won the Socialist Party (PSOE in its acronym in Spanish) and just over 3,000 who won the third party in the ranking. The PP won 40 of the 52 provincial capitals in Spain and in 9 of the 13 regions where elections were held. However, the Conservatives have lost support and can not govern alone in almost no capital or in almost any region. For example, in Madrid they lost their absolute majority after 24 years.

But were not the only ones. Between PP and PSOE they have lost three million votes. Despite that, the elections of May 24 in Spain showed that the PP still has a majority of social support, but also that the PSOE did not suffer the debacle that previous surveys had forecast. As they did matched the surveys it is at the entrance to the town councils and regional parliaments of the new parties that have emerged in Spain during the years of economic crisis. The populist Podemos and social party Citizens burst into municipalities and regional parliaments with force, becoming in many cases the only force capable of ensuring the governance of institutions.

The most notable case is that of Barcelona, where a left-wing formation born of the social movements that staged high-profile protests against the government and banking, can govern alone or with the support of other left parties. His victory puts them in a difficult situation the president of the regional government of Catalonia, Artur Mas, who linked their continued independence plan to results that his party, Convergencia i Unio (CiU), obtained in Barcelona. Mas has called early elections for September 27 in a bid to get a social majority sufficient to unilaterally declare independence of Catalonia.

But elections this Sunday leave the sovereignty plan in a difficult situation. Or CiU nor the other great Catalan independence party, ERC (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya), together, manage to garner sufficient majority to wrest the mayoralty of Barcelona the winning party. The coming weeks will be crucial for how the Catalan independence front faces the immediate future.

With regard to Citizens (C's in its acronym in Spanish), it is the first option agreement available to the conservative PP. Because in many municipalities, the Conservatives can not govern alone and face the threat of censure motions, a legal instrument that prevents the winner of an election taking power. For example in capital Madrid, the PP obtained 21 councilors against AhoraMadrid 20, PSOE 9 and 7 C's. Before the elections, PSOE showed AhoraMadrid and prone to compromise to avoid government conservatives. Between these two formations would total 29 councilors, of which 28 would add PP and Citizens. Governance in the capital of Spain will not be easy.

One seat separates the winning Socialist Party by PP in four capitals of traditionally conservative province. In another, both parties are tied; and in others, as in Logrono, the capital of La Rioja, where the PP governs for 20 years, or León, the difference does not allow the Popular Party to govern alone. Although the Spanish Electoral Law provides that, if no party wins an absolute majority, the mayor will announce the candidate of the most voted list, which the law did not foresee when it was drafted is that the vote of an election remained highly fragmented in those of Sunday. And, according to many, these local and regional elections were a preview of what may happen in November legislative elections.

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