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# Political Intelligence

## Catalan Regional Election 21D

Analysis of results, governance scenarios  
and next steps

# Executive Summary: Independentism gets the numbers

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December 21st will be an election day to remember. On the one hand, the participation rate was off the charts reaching 81.41%, the highest levels ever registered in regional elections in Catalonia. **On the other hand, the party Ciudadanos obtained victory in both votes and parliamentary seats, thus earning the privilege of being the first non-nationalist party to accomplish such an achievement since 1980.** However, victory in the polls will not grant the party leaded by Inés Arrimadas the chance to form a government. The pro-independence bloc embodied by JxCAT, ERC and the CUP has once again absolute majority at the Regional Parliament of Catalonia, same as in 2015. This circumstance favours former president Carles Puigdemont, currently shun in Brussels, bringing closer the possibility of re-election which seemed unlikely in previous weeks.

Regardless of the vicissitudes abided by independentism throughout the last months, it has endured maintaining both parliamentary seats (70,

two less than in 2015) and votes turnout (47.5% when in 2015 they attained 47.8%). Notwithstanding the fact that the turnout percentage does not represent the will of the majority of Catalonians, it does confer them enough political capital to form a government. If the hints uttered by the spokespeople throughout election night were to be taken into consideration, it may seem JxCAT and ERC (the former Junts pel Sí coalition) would support an inauguration pact and/or government configuration with the support of the CUP. Hence, the CUP, would retain the key to governance in Catalonia regardless of having lost six parliamentary seats and its parliamentary group.

On the other side of the spectre, the bloc opposed to independentism has gained 65 seats in Parliament (two more than in 2015) and has amassed 51% of the voting turnout (the percentage in 2015 was 48%). However, the aggregate is not enough. The margin of victory is ample in the big cities but overall, it is a narrow margin. The sum of the parliamentary representation of Ciudadanos, PSC and PP would not be sufficient, not even adding the votes of CatComú-Podem which has suffered a severe drop in the polls and thus, it has lost the possibility to act as a hinge party. Furthermore,

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it should be noted that the polarization of the debate and the cast of useful votes has impacted on the Popular Party which has been the most aggrieved party dropping harshly relegating the three seats it has obtained (eight less than in 2015) to the miscellaneous Mixed Group which also contains the CUP. The Socialist Party (OSC) manages to maintain its position and add one seat although it does not restrain the boost of Ciudadanos. Two years later, after the enforcement of constitutional article 155 and a unilateral declaration of independence, it seems the situation may go back to square one. The call for elections, Mariano Rajoy's Government primary action aimed at bringing the situation back to normal, has not worked out. The position of both sides is fixed and, taking into consideration the minimum variation from the 2015 results, stances are more defined than ever. However, none of the blocs achieves a majority broad enough to grant them absolute legitimacy. December 21st bestows once more an uncertain future, a powerless situation to deal with territorial tensions and a polarized Catalonia.

**Uncertainty even extends to candidates, since there may be a possible swing at the time they take office.** Mr. Puigdemont (JxCAT) is abroad, Mr. Junqueras (ERC) in jail and eight members of parliament from JxCAT and ERC are either in jail or missing. Their possible absence from Parliament and thus, their inability to cast votes, may be decisive in a hypothetical appointment of Puigdemont as president. There is still a thick plot which remains unsolved.



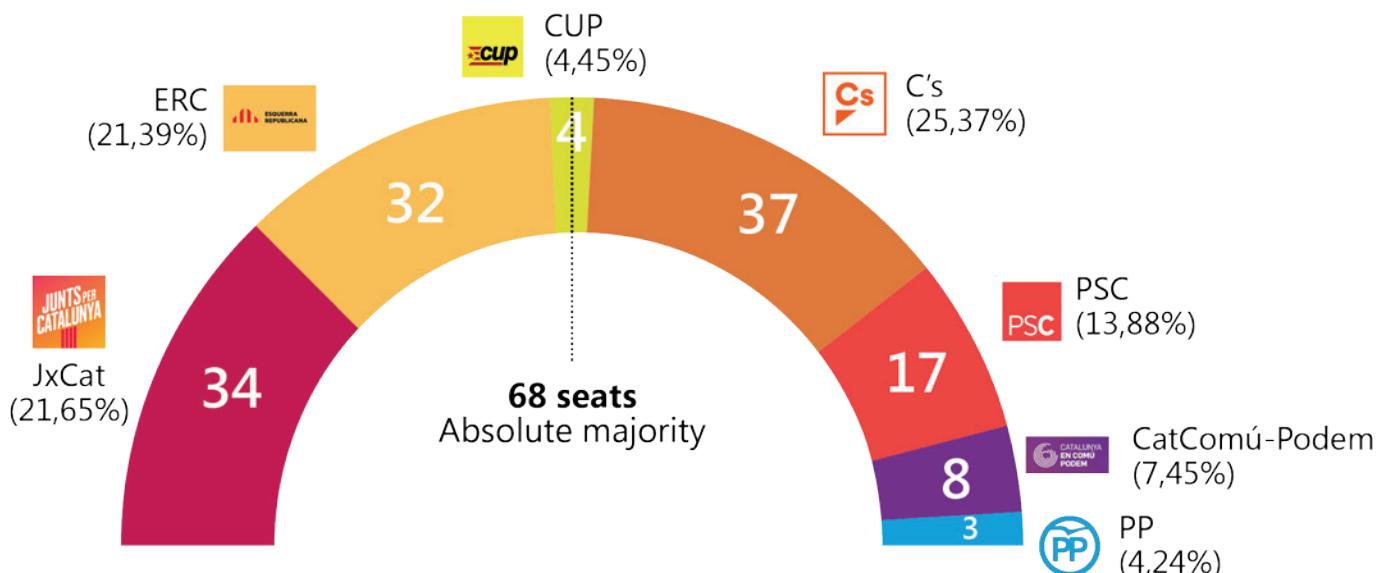
# The Parliament's aftermath

The Catalan Parliament remains fragmented. After several years of nationalist hegemony in Catalonia, Ciudadanos ascends to the first position as the main constitutionalist force with a historic win which confers them 37 seats in Parliament. However, the pro-independence parties - JxCAT, ERC and the CUP – attain a narrow absolute majority with 47.4% of the votes which translates in 70 seats.

In contrast with the previous elections, the Catalan Socialists gain one seat while the Popular Party drop to a representation of 3 seats. Hence, the aggregate of the constitutionalist parties, with a total 43.4% of the votes, does not reach the numbers required to appoint a president.

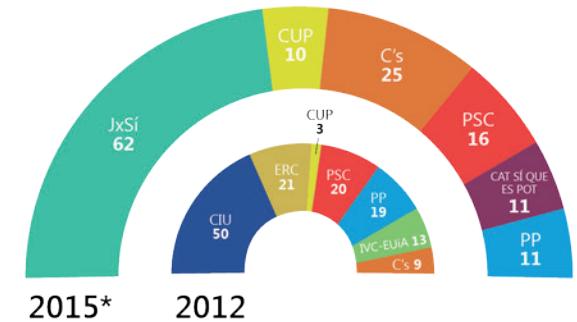
Catalunya – En Comù Podem, despite having lost three seats, remains the fifth political force with the 7.44% of the votes.

Seats and voting percentage



Source: Generalitat of Catalonia.

Previous results



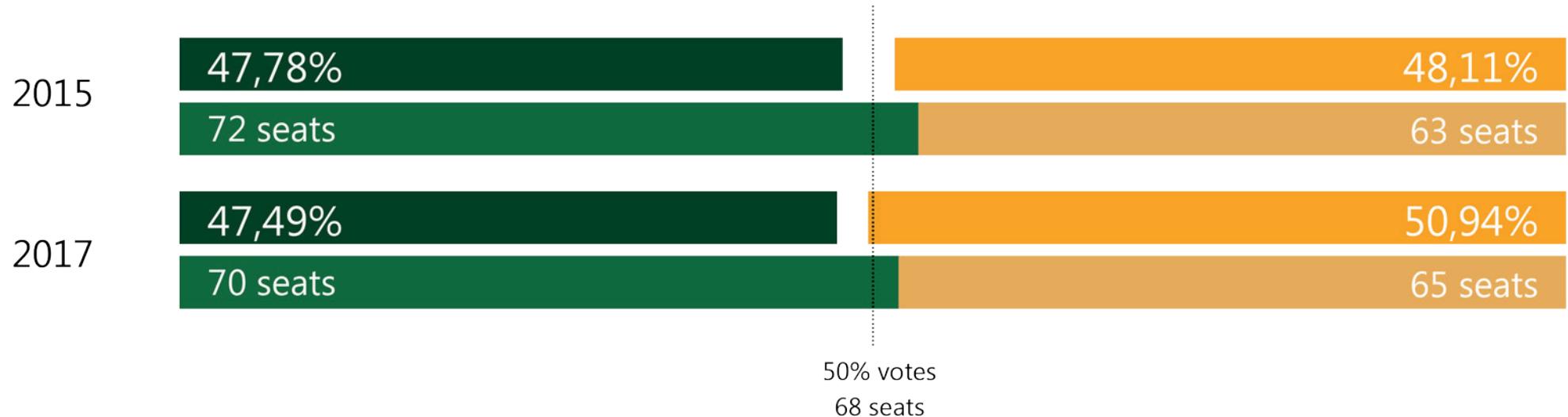
\*In the elections of 2015, "Junts pel Sí" included the candidacies of "Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya" (now "Junts per Catalunya") and "Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya" (62 seats and 39.59% of votes).

# Secessionists VS Non-Secessionists

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■ Pro-independence block ■ Non-independentist block

In 2015 the pro-independence block includes the coalition of JxSí and CUP, while the non-independentist block is formed by PSC, C's, Cat Sí Que Es Pot and PP. In 2017, the pro-independence block is formed by JxCat, ERC and CUP and by C's, PSC, Cat. Comú-Podem and PP for the non-independentist block.

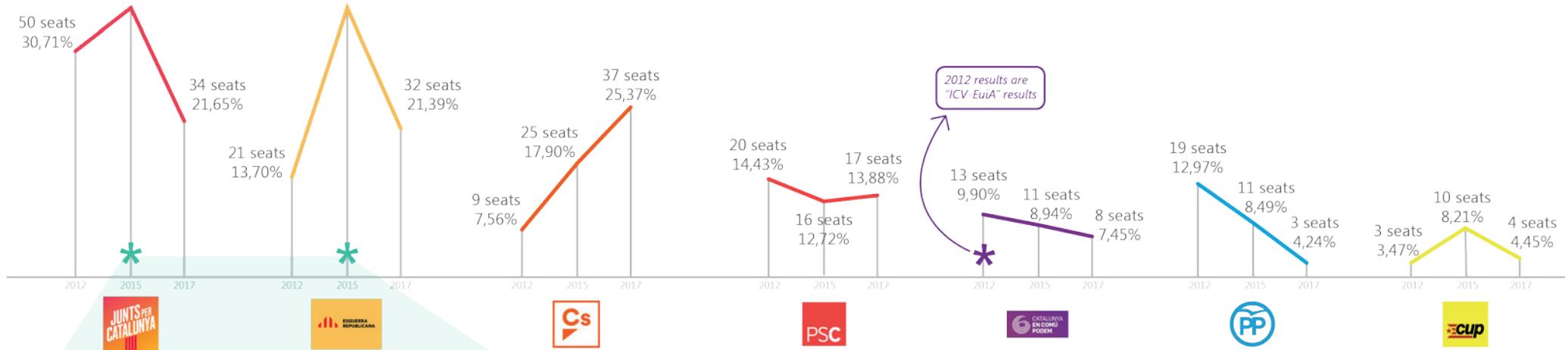


Ines Arrimadas' victory in the number of seats gained does not grant her the key to form Government nor impose prevalence to independentism. Despite the instability situation endure throughout the last months, pro-independence parties have managed to stand their ground. The support has somewhat decreased to a 42.52% due to the increase of participation duly capitalised by Ciudadanos. **The fact remains that pro-independence parties win in number of parliamentary seats but not in number of votes. The opposite of the situation non-independentist parties experience reaching a 51% support in votes which does not translate into a majority in Parliament.** As such, regardless of Ciudadanos being the most voted list, the rest of the constitutional parties (Popular Party and Socialist Party) fail to reach enough representative capital to overcome pro-independence.

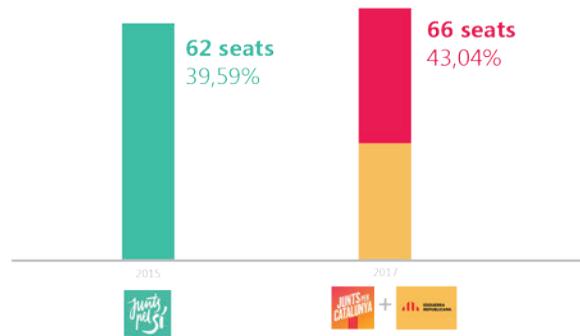
# Comparative Analysis: the third round of elections in 6 years

## Evolution of the seats and voting percentage

Compared to regional elections results of 2012 and 2015.



### Evolution of the coalition Junts pel Sí (JxCat+ERC)



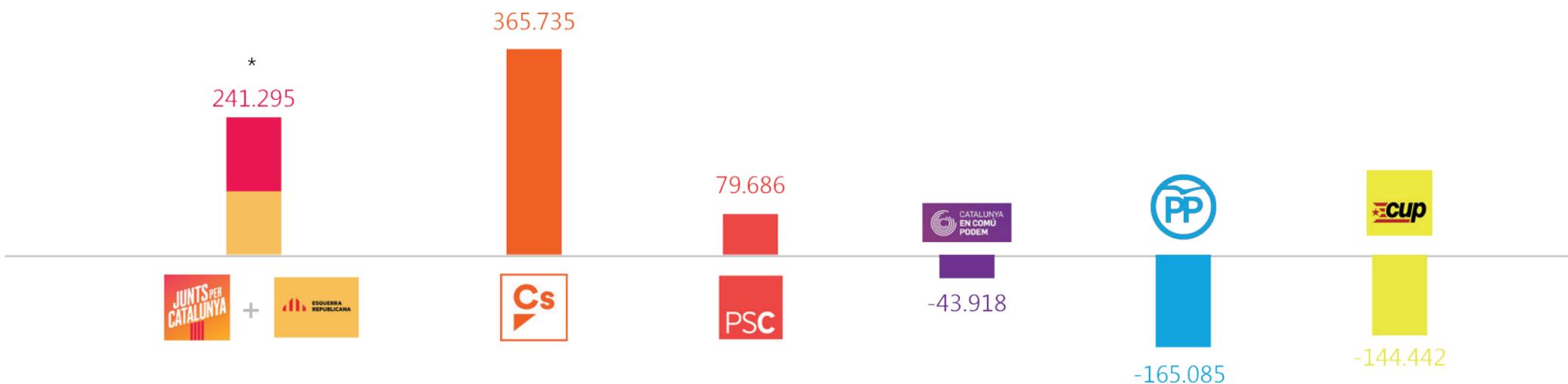
Regardless of JxCAT and ERC attending the polls separately, the results on December 21st prove have been better than in 2015 when they attended the elections a the Junts Pel Sí coalition. They have attained 43.07% of the votes which translates in 66 parliamentary seats (4 more than the number of seats obtained two years ago). However, they still require the support of the CUP to sustain independentism. The polarization experienced throughout the electoral campaign has had a negative impact on the smaller parties: Popular Party and the CYM. They have both suffered severe drops with regards to the previous elections (correspondently, 7 and 6 parliamentary seats less) as a result of the cast of useful votes. Hence, it may be reasoned that there has been a drain in votes supporting the Popular Party in favour of Ciudadanos as an explanation to its raise of 12 more parliamentary seats. Moreover, the CUP voters have opted for ERC.

# Comparative Analysis: the third round of elections in 6 years

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## Fluctuation of votes with regards to 2015

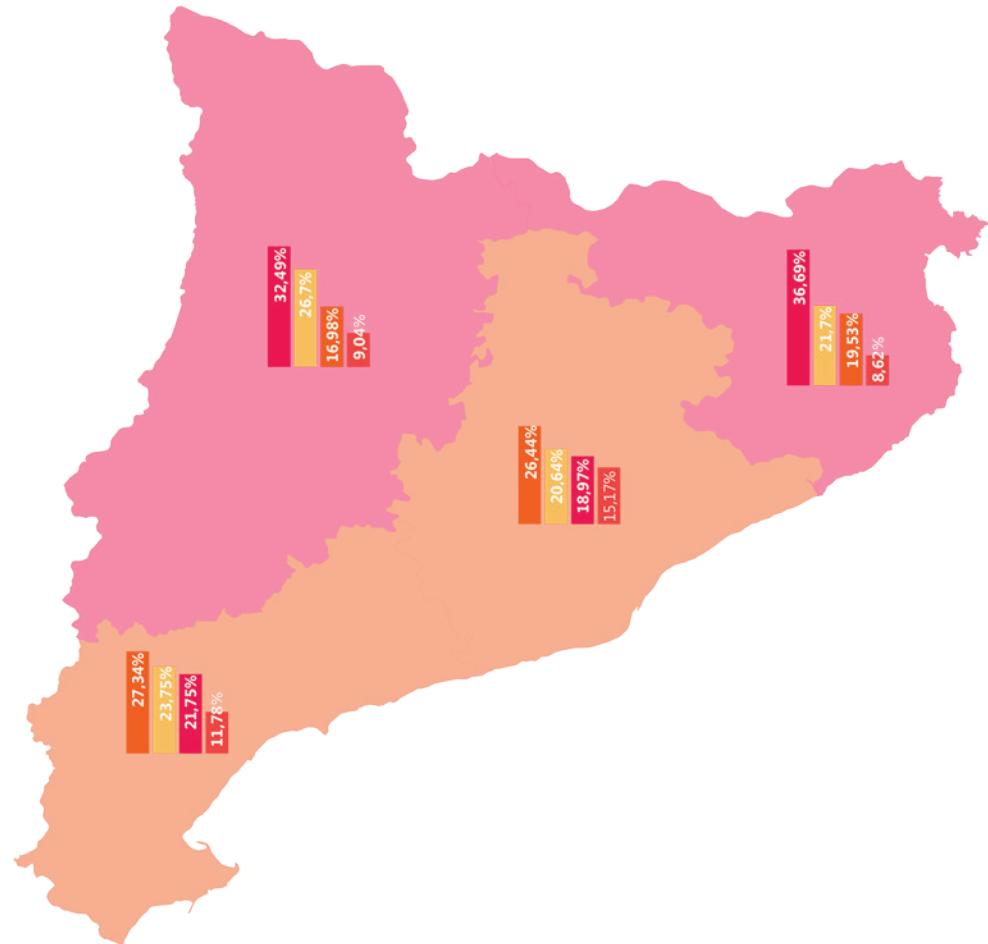
If there is a representative image of the December 21st (21D) election is the number of votes gained and lost by each party. However, the unprecedented 4.38 increase in the participation requires an assessment on the voting percentages to belittle the increase of votes in absolute numbers experienced by the main parties. As such, Catalunya en Comù – Podem, the Popular Party and the CUP are the political forces losing more votes. In the case of the Popular Party the loss has been more significant (165.000 supporters). Ciudadanos has capitalised the increase in participation gaining 7.44% more votes (in absolute numbers this records 365.735 new supporters). Similarly, JxCAT has gained a voting percentage of 3.5%.



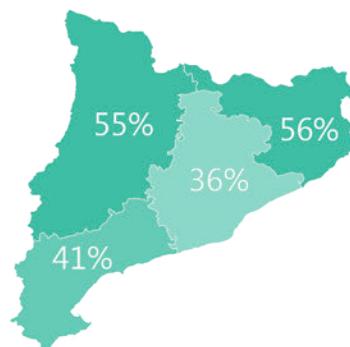
\*The fluctuation of the total JxCat and ERC votes is computed with regards to the results of the coalition Junts Pel Sí in 2015.

# Differences in vote according to constituencies

## Results

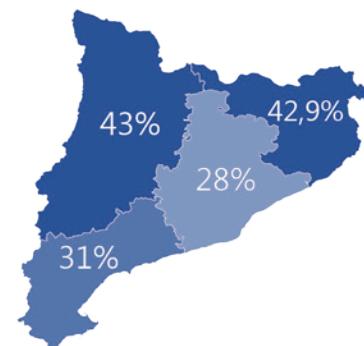


## Voting percentage



2015

JxCat



2012

CiU

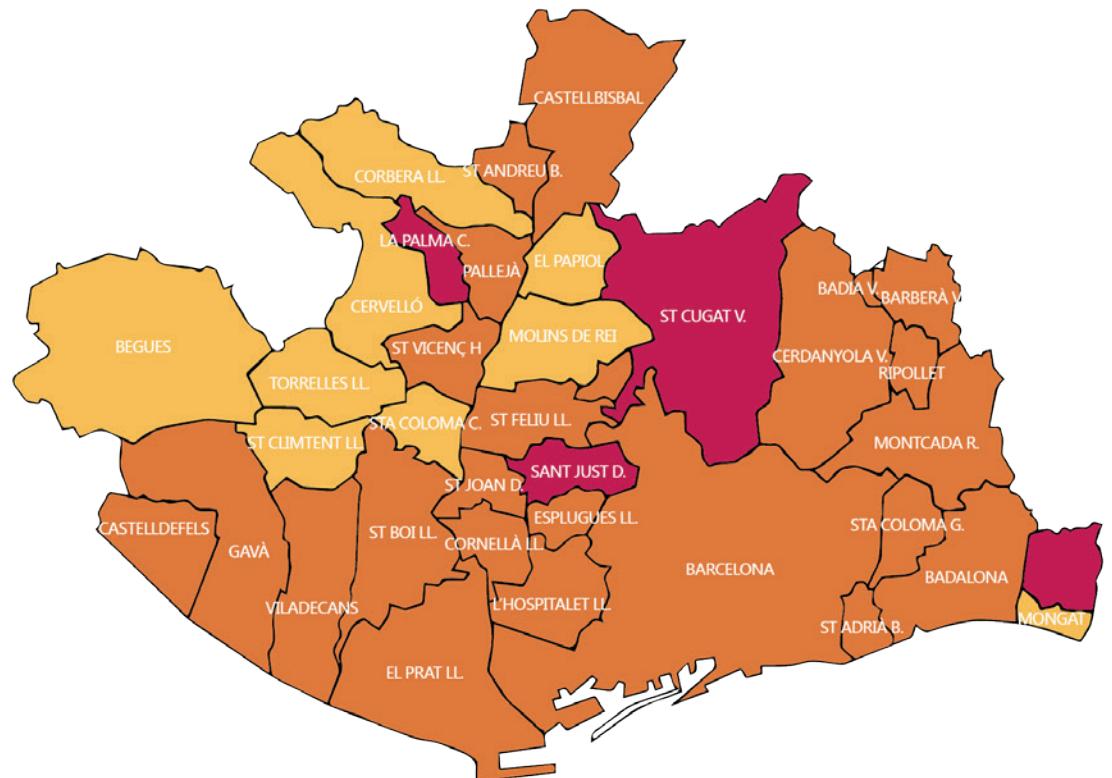
# Differences in vote according to constituencies

Regarding results by province, it should be underlined that the hegemony of the nationalist forces throughout the territory (with the coalitions of Junts pel Si in 2015 and Convergència y Unió in 2012) has ended. Ciudadanos bursts into the picture as the most voted list and gains the majority representation in the provinces of Barcelona and Tarragona. On the other hand, JxCAT maintains its historic hegemony in Girona and Lleida.

The Popular Party is the list with the most extensive drop in votes across the constituencies territories losing a significant percentage of voters and losing representation in the provinces of Girona, Lleida and Tarragona.

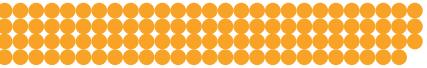
With regards to the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona where the capital number of voters of Catalonia is located, the main highlight is the victory of Inés Arrimadas as the main political force in prominent municipalities of the Barcelona ring such as Hospitalet de Llobregat, Cornellà or Santa Coloma which were historic Socialist feuds. In the city of Barcelona, Ciudadanos has also become the most voted list for its first time in history gaining 23.92 of the votes, six points more than in the 2015 elections.

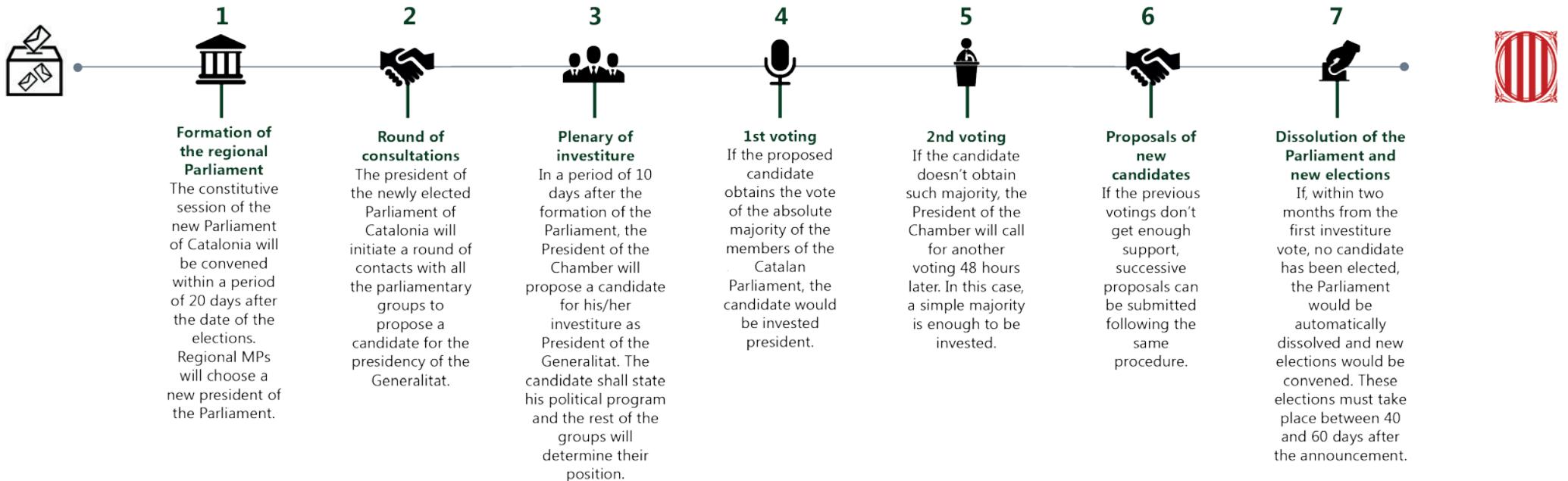
## Winners at the "Barcelona Belt"



# Next steps

If the supports are gathered, the new President of the Regional Government of Catalonia could be appointed between January and April 2018. From today, this process will follow.

<b>Carles Puigdemont 2016</b> 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2015 - 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2016		<b>107 Days</b>	<b>José Montilla 2006</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> November - 24 <sup>th</sup> November		<b>23 Days</b>
<b>Artur Mas 2012</b> 25 <sup>th</sup> November - 21 <sup>st</sup> December		<b>26 Days</b>	<b>Pasqual Maragall 2003</b> 16 <sup>th</sup> November - 13 <sup>th</sup> December		<b>27 Days</b>
<b>Artur Mas 2010</b> 28 <sup>th</sup> November - 23 <sup>rd</sup> December		<b>25 Days</b>	<b>Jordi Pujol 1999</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> October - 16 <sup>th</sup> November		<b>30 Days</b>



# Agreement scenarios to appoint a new president

## SCENARIO 1

### JxCat + ERC + CUP

Regardless of the victory accomplished by Ciudadanos, this option seems more likely since the pro-independence parties have managed to ratify their majority with 70 members of parliament. For this scenario to take place, Carles Puigdemont party, JxCAT, needs to reach an agreement with ERC and the CUP. The main issue remains if Mr Puigdemont could be appointed president from Brussels and which will be the new strategy outline towards independence and the consequences of unilateralism. The latter may also cause tension in between the pro-independence parties.



#### In favour:

JxCat, ERC, CUP

70 seats

#### Against:

C's, PSC, CatComú-Podem, PP

65 seats

Absolute majority  
68

## SCENARIO 2

### JxCat + ERC - CUP abstention

JxCAT and ERC improve the result from the 2015 elections results with 4 more members of parliament. The abstention of the CUP in the second voting round would be sufficient to form a government supported on the pact in between both parties.



#### In favour:

JxCat, ERC

66 seats

#### Abstention:

CUP

#### Against:

C's, PSC, CatComú-Podem, PP

65 seats

Absolute majority  
68

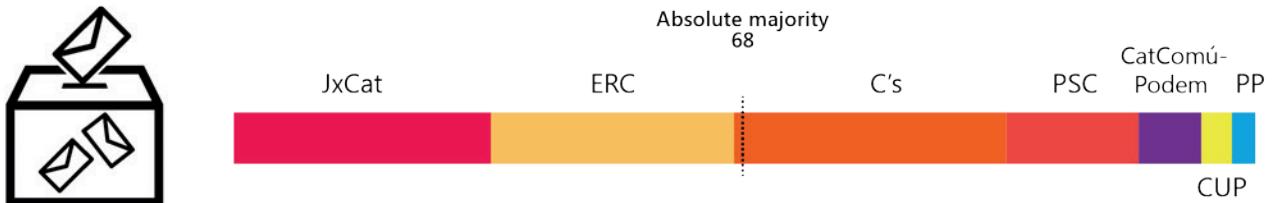
# Scenarios to reach an investiture agreement

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## SCENARIO 3

### No Agreement

Despite the number of seats gathered by the pro-independence parties the internal divisions are so profound after the enforcement of article 155 and the elections, plus the differences on the strategy towards independence, that reaching an agreement to govern is impossible. This would be topped by the judicial situation of the Puigdemont and Junqueras and the eight members of parliament out of the 66 representatives of JxCAT and ERC which may cause a destabilization of parliamentary majorities if they fail to cast their votes.





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