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Pro-Independence Bloc Retains Absolute Majority in Catalonia

Ciudadanos consolidate as first political force in votes and seats

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BARCELONA.- Although the Ciudadanos right-wing party rose as the main political force in votes and seats, this Thursday's elections in Catalonia validated the pro-independence bloc – made up by ERC, Junts per Catalunya and CUP- winning the absolute majority, press agencies reported.

The pro-independence parties retained the absolute majority, the previous legislature had 70 seats, two less than in 2015 elections, and added up to 47.57% of votes, with 95% of the votes counted. JuntsxCat received 898 546 votes, 21,70 percent; ERC 887 739 votes, 21,44 percent, and CUP 183 632, 4,43%, retaining results in the elections which were seen as a support to the pro-independence process or to the application of the article 155 of the Constitution. Although they won more seats.

However, Ciudadanos candidate Inés Arrimadas led the votes with 1 049 727 and the seats with 37.

When 99.3% of votes had been counted, the results by seats in the Parliament were: Ciutadans 37, JxCat 34, ERC 32, PSC 17, Catalunya En Comú-Podem 8, CUP 4 and PP 3.

In Brussels, ousted president Carles Puigdemont, who wanted to set up a joint pro-independence list, showed his emotions at the results and said: "We have won the elections in an exceptional situation. With candidates in

prison, with a government in exile and without the tools the State has.”

La Vanguardia pointed out that it is not clear that the Supreme Court will allow former President Oriol Junqueras to leave prison and take back his seat in the Parliament. And the same for Jordi Sánchez. Regarding Puigdemont, the former president could be arrested if he returns from Brussels. The fact that some pro-independence deputies are in prison makes the investiture process difficult, because without them, the absolute majority needed to invest a president in the first round would not be reached.

Translated by ESTI

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