

Beat: Politics

Almost 35.5 million Spaniards are called to the polls this Sunday

To elect 12 regional parliaments

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USPA NEWS - Almost 35.5 million Spaniards are called to the polls this Sunday to elect the parliaments of 12 of the 17 regions into which the country is divided, and 8,000 municipalities. Elections that, despite being local and regional, are read in a national key as a preview of what may happen next November, when legislative elections are held in Spain. Andalusia, Catalonia, Madrid and Valencia will set the trend for the November elections in these elections.

The campaign for the local and regional elections this Sunday was contaminated by the news of vote buying in various towns in the south of Spain, from which the Socialist Party would try to benefit. Some of its candidates and local leaders have been arrested and an investigation is underway. Suspicions about the fairness of the elections were used by the conservative Popular Party and the far-right formation Vox to undermine the chances of the Socialist Party. The polls show the Popular Party as the winner, nationally, and predict the collapse of the extreme left represented by Podemos (We can) and the disappearance of the centrist Ciudadanos (Citizens).

But in these local and regional elections the regionalist parties play a prominent role, the results of which could undermine the strength of the two main Spanish parties, the conservative Popular Party and the Socialist Party. This is what can happen in Catalonia and the Basque Country, where regionalist parties can decide the future of these regions, their chances of declaring independence and their relations with the Government of Spain.

The attempts to buy votes, through which, according to the Spanish media, socialist leaders in the North African city of Melilla and several cities in Andalusia and the Region of Murcia would have tried to capture the votes of immigrants, focused the attention of the Spaniards on the days end of the electoral campaign. This Sunday it will be known if they influence the results of the elections.

Polls will open at 9:00 a.m. and will close at 8:00 p.m. A total of 1,055,653 Spaniards residing abroad have been able to vote by mail in the previous weeks, 93,594 of them residing in the United States. Only Argentina, with 117,942 Spanish residents, and France, with 105,765 residents, surpass the United States.

The electoral campaign ended at midnight on Friday, May 26. Saturday was a day of reflection, during which messages to capture the vote are prohibited and the candidates dedicate their time to their families and to rest after 15 days of intense electoral activity. In these elections, 67,152 councilors, 97 mayors, 1,038 regional deputies and 207 positions at another level will be elected. 215,000 ballot boxes and 59,000 booths will be installed to guarantee voter secrecy.

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