

SUMMARY

Summary of Report 27/2016, relating to the elections to determine the representativity of farmers' professional organisations in Catalonia in 2016

Barcelona, 15 February 2017

The Public Audit Office for Catalonia has issued Report 27/2016, relating to the elections held in 2016 to determine the representativity of farmers' professional organisations in Catalonia, in accordance with its Annual Programme of Activities.

The report, which was presented by the Chairman, Mr Jaume Amat, was approved by the Audit Office Board at its meeting on 23 and 24 November 2016.

The purpose of the audit was to offer an opinion on the regularity of the election accounts presented by the farmers' professional bodies which achieved representative status in the elections held last 28 February 2016 and, in the event of detecting any irregularities, to propose to the Department for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Foodstuffs (DARPA) the non-awarding or reduction of their electoral grants.

These elections represented an important change in relation to previous ballots, which had been regulated by the Chambers of Agriculture Act (Act 17/1993, of 28 December), which was repealed by the Farmers' Professional Organisations' Representativity Act (LROPA) (Act 17/2014, of 23 December). The most significant changes were as follows: the provincial chambers of agriculture were dissolved; a new model was set up, based on the representative status of farmers' professional organisations, this being established according to the percentage of votes obtained by each candidacy; the most representative farmers' professional organisations would acquire official representative status; and elections were to be called every five years.

The regulations pertaining to these elections were the LROPA and Departmental Order ARP/334/2015, of 29 October, which called the elections.

The electoral results were as follows:

Electoral results

Farmers' professional organisation	Total votes cast	Valid votes obtained	Representativity as percentage*
UP – Unió de Pagesos (Farmers' Union)	7,926	7,926	56.78
JARC – Joves Agricultors i Ramaders de Catalunya (Young Crop and Livestock Farmers of Catalonia)	3,839	3,839	27.50
ASAJA – Asociación Agraria Jóvenes Agricultores (Agrarian Association of Young Farmers)	1,791	1,791	12.83
Blank votes	404	404	2.89
Spoiled votes	56	-	-
Total	14,016	13,960	100.00

Source: Prepared internally using data published on the DARPA website.

The population of eligible voters was 26,001 persons.

* Representativity is calculated as a percentage of total valid votes cast. *Valid votes* is understood to be the votes cast for each candidacy plus blank votes.

Article 8 of Order ARP/334/2015 established an electoral subsidy to be granted by the DARPA, with a budget limit of €318,547, to be shared out among those candidatures obtaining a percentage of votes equal to, or above, 3% of all valid votes.

Tables giving a summary of the main figures for correctly submitted electoral expenses for each professional organisation, the statutory spending limits and the grants to be received, are as follows:

Spending limits and electoral expenses

Farmers' professional organisation	Electoral spending limits	Total subsidisable expenses (A)	Theoretical grant amount (B)	Grant to be awarded for expenses (the lower of A or B)
UP	238,910.00	209,250.65	180,870.99	180,870.99
JARC	238,910.00	77,789.01	87,600.42	77,789.01
ASAJA	238,910.00	40,891.79	40,869.58	40,869.58
Total	716,730.00	327,931.45	309,340.99	299,529.58

Amounts in euros.

Source: Prepared internally.

Grants and advances already received

Farmers' professional organisation	Grant for general expenses	50% advance of electoral grant (received in February 2016)	Remainder of grant pending
UP	180,870.99	93,850.00	87,020.99
JARC	77,789.01	36,672.25	41,116.76
ASAJA	40,869.58	23,926.25	16,943.33
Total	299,529.58	154,448.50	145,081.08

Amounts in euros.

Source: Prepared internally.

In the Conclusions section of the report, the Audit Office notes that all the farmers' professional organisations required to do so submitted their election accounts to the Public Audit Office before the legally established deadline. All the organisations complied with the statutory overall maximum limit for general electoral expenditures and the sublimits for advertising.

Based on the aim and scope of this report, the Public Audit Office proposes that no reductions are applied and that the election grants are awarded as envisaged by electoral legislation.

This summary is solely for information purposes. The audit report (in Catalan and Spanish) can be consulted at www.sindicatura.cat.