

SUMMARY

Summary of Report 19/2016, relating to the elections to the Parliament of Catalonia in 2015

Barcelona, 14 September 2016

The Public Audit Office for Catalonia has issued Report 19/2016, relating to the elections to the Parliament of Catalonia held in 2015, 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 26 July 2016.

The aim of the report was to offer an opinion on the regularity of the election accounts presented by the political groups which ran in the elections held on 27 September 2015 and obtained representation at the Catalan Parliament and, in the event of detecting any irregularities, to propose the non-awarding or reduction of their electoral grants.

In the Conclusions section of the report, the Audit Office notes that all the political groups required to do so submitted their election accounts to the Public Audit Office before the legally established deadline.

All the candidacies kept within the upper limit for election expenses, except Junts pel Sí (JxSí), which was 0.42% over, a percentage which is below the 1% defined by law as an infringement. All the political groups kept within the sublimits for advertising (street advertising and advertisements in the press and on private radio stations) as laid down by the General Electoral Regime Organic Act (LOREG – *Ley orgánica del régimen electoral general*).

The figures relating to maximum grants and computable or justifiable electoral expenses are as follows:

Grants and computable or justifiable expenses

Candidacy	Grant for general expenses	Grant for mailshots	Total grant	30% advance of electoral grant	Remainder of grant pending
JxSí	1,991,814.74	711,152.87	2,702,967.61	935,918.19	1,767,049.42
C's	851,722.04	371,530.82	1,223,252.86	141,036.93	1,082,215.93
PSC-PSOE	576,828.23	903,572.44	1,480,400.67	462,359.24	1,018,041.43
CSQP	395,335.34	440,796.57	836,131.91	396,759.19	439,372.72
PP	390,125.33	556,516.87	946,642.20	382,653.48	563,988.72
CUP	220,592.58	193,467.38	414,059.96	30,550.16	383,509.80
Total	4,426,418.26	3,177,036.95	7,603,455.21	2,349,277.19	5,254,178.02

Amounts in euros.

Source: Prepared internally.

Based on the aim and scope of this report, the Public Audit Office proposes that there should not be any reductions to or non-awarding of the election grants envisaged by electoral legislation.

The Audit Office gives eleven findings in the report, which are explained in section 3, Conclusions. It also makes some recommendations, of which the following are the most significant:

- The legislator should enact legislation for the legal vacuum existing in respect of new forms of private funding, such as mini loans provided through digital crowd funding platforms. This type of funding is not specifically envisaged in the legislation on party political funding or in the LOREG electoral act.
- There is a need to identify more clearly, in regulations, exactly what expenditure items can be included in advertising costs, and to provide regulations on formats based on information technology (web pages, online press and social networks).
- The advisability of reducing mailing costs should be studied. Spending on mailshots as declared by the political groups which achieved parliamentary representation came to €3,407,542.24. This represents 31.1% of total expenditure. An analysis of the unit costs of sending out election voting slips and envelopes showed significant differences between the various candidacies. In certain cases the unit cost of a particular candidacy was double that of others.

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