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Spanish state

Euskal Herria: a new victory for EH Bildu

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A year after municipal and parliamentary elections in ten of Spain's 17 autonomous communities, as well as two autonomous cities [1], it is now the turn of Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country to elect their parliaments. The election in the Basque country took place on 21 April.

In the three provinces of *Hegoalde* (Spanish Basque Country), the *Eskualdunak* (Basques) elected the 75 deputies of the autonomous parliament, who appoint the *lehendakari*, the head of government of the autonomous community, who forms a government.

2022-2023: fall of the PSOE, victory for the PP

Elections for the autonomous communities have been held between 2022 and 2024. The 2022 elections were marked by the victory of the Partido Popular (conservative right) in Castilla-y-Léon and Andalucía, and this trend was confirmed in 2023 with its victory, increasing the number of autonomous communities governed from 3 to 10. The PSOE, then in power at national level, lost 6 autonomous regions and retained 3. The Partido Regionalista de Cantabria (autonomist left), allied to the PSOE, lost the leadership of Cantabria. Ciudadanos (liberals) lost the autonomous city of Melilla, and the Coalición Canaria (pro-independence right) came to power in the Canary Islands. The Partido Popular was not the only winner: it chose to co-manage 5 autonomous regions with the far-right Vox party, starting in the 2022 elections in Castilla-y-Léon. Podemos disappeared at regional level.

2024: last three autonomous elections

Although the Partido Popular also made progress in the legislative elections (from 89 to 137 deputies), it was unable to secure a majority in parliament and did not enter into an alliance with Vox. The PSOE was able to hold on to power via a broad coalition comprising Sumar (reformist left) and various pro-independence parties. In 2024, the polls in Galicia, the Basque Country and Catalonia were to be held. Galicia confirmed a number of electoral trends: the Partido Popular held firm, the Socialist Party resisted, Podemos collapsed in favour of the Bloque Nacionalista Gallego (pro-independence left), which came second in this election.

In Euskal Herria, it is EH Bildu that is making progress. Founded in 2011 after more than a decade of bans on left-wing pro-independence parties, EH Bildu - accused of being close to ETA (Euskadi ta Askatasuna) - has gradually established itself on the Basque and Spanish political scene. The year 2023 was one of many victories for the Basque pro-independence party: a hundred or so mayoralties in the Basque Country and Navarre, including that of Iruña/Pamplona with the help of the Socialist Party, second in the legislative elections ahead of EAJ/PNV (pro-independence right), second in the general elections in the Basque Country.

The result of the elections on Sunday 21 April was a real surprise, with a tie between EAJ/PNV, the historic and hegemonic pro-independence party, and EH Bildu. Each won 27 seats in the Basque autonomous parliament. EH Bildu came first in two provinces: Alava and Gipuzkoa, while EAJ/PNV retained its stronghold in Bizkaia.

A PSOE that remains central for the

pro-independence movement

However, thanks to the 12 elected members of the PSOE, EAJ/PNV knows that it will be able to keep the Basque region, as the PSOE and EAJ/PNV refuse any local alliance with EH Bildu, raising the spectre of ETA to refuse to govern with them. Both the 2023 general elections and the elections for Basque autonomy were marked by attacks on the pro-independence vote from the right and far right. The PSOE was accused by the right and far right of wanting to sell off and carve up Spain, while EH Bildu was constantly linked to ETA, notably on 14 April 2024 when Pello Otxandiano, head of the EH Bildu list, found himself at the heart of a controversy after refusing to describe ETA as “terrorist” and taking two days to apologize to the victims and their families.

On 12 May, Catalonia is due to elect its members of parliament, with Esquerra Republicana Catalunya (pro-independence left) and Junts (pro-independence right) facing off after breaking off their local alliance in 2022. However, the PSOE is assured of their support at national level, as the Spanish parliament will vote on the amnesty law for those indicted in the 2017 referendum on Catalan independence at the end of May/beginning of June.

3 May 2024

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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[1] Wikipedia, [2023 Spanish regional elections](#).