

## Spain is Podenco land

Spain owed its name to the rabbit. When the Phoenicians reached the Iberian Peninsula around 11<sup>th</sup> century B.C., they found many rabbits there. Because they thought the animals looked very similar to what for them is known as a Saphan, they named the region 'I-saphan-im', land of the Saphan. The Romans later renamed it to 'Hispania'. Originally the rabbit only occurs on the Iberian Peninsula. If Spain was already named Hispania by the Romans, which means 'land of rabbits', then it was inevitable that in this Hispania the most relevant dog breed, the Podenco appeared, a specialist in rabbit hunting. Ever since, the Podenco is the most commonly used hunting dog in Spain, for this reason we could easily rename Spain the Podenco land.

The hunt and the Podenco are seamlessly connected. Just last year there were 850.000 hunting licenses issued. Ninety percent of the hunters hunt with several dogs, only a minority hunt with just one dog. When we assume that there are 4 dogs per hunter, we can conclude that there are at least 3 million dogs used for hunting in Spain. This is just an estimated number because the average Podenquero (hunter/holder of podencos) has usually about 10 to 15 Podencos in his pack.



The exact number of dogs in Spain is unknown, same goes for the exact number of hunting dogs including the Podencos. The Spanish government does regular counts of the amount of dogs based on the number of registered dogs in different regions, according to the government, in 2015 there were 7.438.689 dogs in Spain. This number is used in several official publications as the real number of dogs all over Spain, while it forgets to mention that numbers from the regions Aragon, Asturias, Canary Islands, Castile-La Mancha, Murcia, Navarro and La Rioja were not in and counted yet when they published the total number of dogs. So this number of dogs is not correct because only a small number of the dogs are chipped and therefor registered, and the numbers of several regions are not even mentioned.

## Facts about the hunt

In Spain about 80% of the territory is used for hunting, 90% of this consists of private reserves. Hunting in Spain generates 5 billion euro a year and has the highest numbers of hunters in the EU. To promote hunt activity, some governments provide generous subsidies with public money. The yearly balance of the hunting sport in Spain amounts to 20 million dead animals, including 5.6 million rabbits and 740.000 hares. The hunt is with 10.3%, next to soccer and basketball, the third most practiced federative 'sport'. Over 2% of the total population practices the hunting sport. There are over 5000 hunting clubs and federations in Spain. 70% of dogs abandoned at many shelters are hunting dogs.



## The number of Podencos

The registration of pets (including hunting dogs) is an autonomous competence, every Autonomous Community, (region) also has other criteria with the collection, extraction and exploitation of the data (the consequence of 17 different laws for the protection of pets, 17 different databanks etc.), which makes the gathering of the data about the registered Podencos almost methodological impossible, not even mentioning the law for the protection of personal data, which makes many regions think they don't have to provide the set data. Where some regions do publish the numbers of hunting dogs in the media, others are surrounded by a wall of secrecy. To be able to come to an estimated guess of the number and the spread of Podencos, lots of sources and contacts are used.

There is not a region in Spain where they aren't using Podencos for hunting. After all, they are particularly suitable for hunting in mountainous areas, and Spain is second to Switzerland the most mountainous in Europe. From information on Spanish websites dedicated to hunting shows: "The Podenco is the most popular hunting dog in Spain and the reasons are astounding. A rustic animal, resistant to diseases, doesn't need a lot of food and is effective for hunting all different wildlife, the reason why it's the preference for hunting on the Peninsula. The Podenco can hunt for almost anything, is undefeated with hunting for the rabbit and as effective for the partridge as do other hunting dogs, not even to mention the thousands of years used as the base for the Spanish Rehalas. It's a dog for all sorts of terrain ; responds to his surrounding with wisdom, the wild, the blackberry bush, the fallow, dry land or land irrigated with rivers and creeks, no hunt is too difficult. The success of the Podenco as a hunting dog is based on two very specific points. His resistance to high



temperatures and his effectiveness for track hunting on land with low or no ambient humidity, for where the traditional dogs don't work.

In an article on a known Spanish hunting website there are ten dog breeds published who conform their data are most used by the Spanish hunter. Here too, it appears that the Podenco holds the number one position.

1. Podenco
2. Galgo
3. Sabueso Español
4. Braco alemán (German Brac)
5. Drahthaar (German standing dog)
6. Perdiguero de Burgos
7. Pachón Navarro
8. Epagneul Bretón
9. Pointer
10. Setter Inglés (English Setter)



Reasons why the Podenco is the most used, are among others the fact that the Podenco can be used on all sorts of terrain, even in the most rough areas, while the Galgo is mostly used for flat terrains. Where the Galgo is specialized in hare hunting, the Podenco is a specialist in rabbit hunting. Another reason for the high amount of Podencos are the many variations of types of Podencos used in Spain for hunting: the Podenco Andaluz, Podenco Campanero, Podenco Maneto, Podenco Canario, Podenco Enano, Podenco Ibicenco, Podenco Orito, Podenco Paternino, Xarnego Valenciano, Podenco Gallego, Podenco Malagueño and Podenco Português.



Only in the eighties and nineties of the twentieth century did the RSCE (Spanish Kennel Club) approve the Podenco Ibicenco, Podenco Canario and Podenco Andaluz as a breed. Until that time there were no written standards about how a Podenco should look. Despite that the hunters knew exactly how a Podenco should be built to get the best outcome during a hunt. Large upstanding ears were important and they are still the characteristic of these breeds today. But also a slim muscular body with long legs, although there are exceptions to this rule, like the Maneto. If these characteristics weren't present, the dog would not be marked as a Podenco. Colors and coats were less important, there were red, black and chocolate brown Podencos being bred, but despite all that, they were still classed as a Podenco. Nowadays Podencos used for hunting who don't fully match up to the standards are still classed as one by the Spanish hunters. In the hunting context there is a wider tolerance about how a Podenco should look. When they are equipped with all the external characteristics, the temperament and the hunting instinct, they are named Podencos by the hunters. These are the hunting Podencos .

For a lot of hunters it's not the purity that matters, but his hunting qualities, endurance and wild focus. Because of this hunters are fully experimenting with crossing different breeds with the Podenco to get to the perfect hunting dog.



For that reason the current population in Spanish shelters consists of many different Podenco mixes. The mixes are also the most registered dog in all of Spain, in every region the number of mixes is larger than the number of registered breeds.

Famous mixes among hunters are the :

Garabitos: Traditionally the crossbreed of a Podenco mixed with a Panchon although they are also being crossbred with a Pointer.

Regalcos: As a base they used a Podenco crossbred with a Galgo, this mix is because of its versatility suitable for hunting the rabbit and the hare.

Zarzeros: The stud is a Podenco and the female a Dachshund or a small sized Terrier.

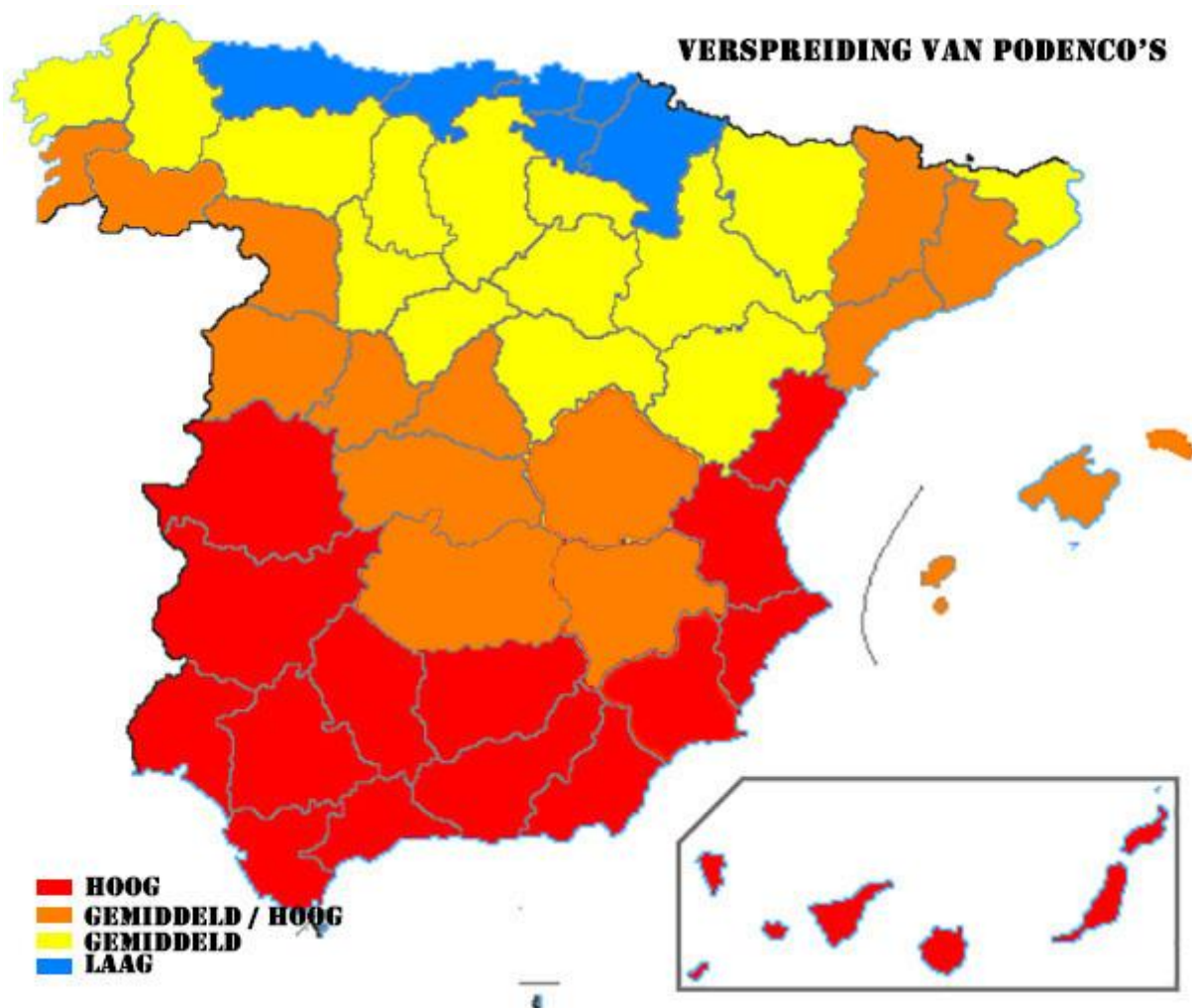
It obviously also happens that due to Podencos being abandoned by their hunters they come in contact with other strays and reproduce which creates all sorts of mixed dog breeds. In a large number of the Spanish mixes DNA of the Podenco is found.



### **The spread**

The Podenco occurs throughout the Spanish territory, although there is a difference to the extent where the different types of Podenco are used in a certain region. The Podenco Ibicenco is most commonly used in the region that descends of the Balearic Islands, in addition to Catalonia and Valencia and as part of a Rehala, also on a smaller scale in all of Spain. The Podenco Andaluz is the most popular hunting dog in Spain, most commonly used in the South and along the Levantine Coast and as the core of the Rehala. The Xarnago Valenciano, most common in Valencia, Southern Catalonia, East of Aragon, Cuenca and Albacete and the Southeast of Andalusia. The Podenco Canario is the hunting dog of the Canary Islands and is also used for hunting throughout all of Spain. The Podenco Paternino, originating from Huelva, is part of a Rehala and is found in Andalusia, Aragon, Catalonia, Extremadura and Castilla La Mancha. The Podenco Maneto originating from Andalusia is used in many regions of Spain. The Podenco Gallego is widely spread all over Galicia, but mostly in provinces like Pontevedra and Ourense.

In every region the Podenco is used for hunting. Below you will find a map in which colors are distinguished from the distribution and density of the Podenco population in Spain.



### Hunting licenses

In 2013 there were 848.243 hunting licenses issued to hunters based on the statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. In 2016 there were around 850.000 hunting licenses issued. As a reference year the numbers of the year 2013 are used because of that year most of the statistics are easily found.

Overview hunting licenses 2013, source Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Comunidades autónomas	Caza: licencias expedidas
ANDALUCÍA	252.779
ARAGÓN	49.375
CANARIAS	16.834
CANTABRIA	5.671
CASTILLA-LA MANCHA	89.382
CASTILLA Y LEÓN	101.620
CATALUÑA	59.812
COMUNIDAD DE MADRID	15.726
COMUNIDAD FORAL DE NAVARRA	25.583
COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA	51.228
EXTREMADURA	54.461
GALICIA	46.312
ISLAS BALEARES	14.188
LA RIOJA	8.355
PAÍS VASCO	38.351
P. DE ASTURIAS	7.353
R. DE MURCIA	11.213
<b>ESPAÑA</b>	<b>848.243</b>

### Actual number of hunting licenses

Yearly the Spanish newspapers publish articles about the number of hunting licenses and the amount of hunters and then assume the number of hunting licenses that are issued on a yearly basis. According to that there would have been 848.243 hunters participating in 2013. Men forgets to mention that this is not the total number of hunters.

Further research has shown that there are different types of hunting licenses issued by different regions. In some regions a hunting license is only valid for one year, while in other regions a license can be issued for 1,2,3 or 5 years. This means that in 2013 there were still hunting licenses valid from a previous year.

This implies that the actual amount of hunters with a hunting license was much higher than the hunting licenses that have been issued. In 2013 it concerns 848.243 issued licenses (expedidas) + 727.362 still valid licenses (vigentes) = 1.575.605 hunting licenses valid for hunters to hunt in 2013. See table below.

More than 1,5 million hunters with a license is a huge amount of hunters. Of course I have made inquiries at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries whether the calculation is correct.

Directorate General for Rural Development and Forest Policy, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries:

“In principle, the calculation you have made is correct, although it has to be taken into account that many of the licenses that are in effect at the beginning of the year, are measured, will no longer be valid by the passing of the months. In other words, it's usual to renew the license before it expires, so during this short period the two licenses are valid. This fact reduces the number of hunters that practice the activity during the year considerably. We have not made the full calculation of the

number of people in this situation, but based on the number multi-year licenses (who are becoming less available) we estimate that the number of hunters throughout the year doesn't go over a million.

Such a reaction by the Spanish Government was to be expected. Constantly everything that concerns hunting is weakened and trivialized. Currently (2017) the same hunting licenses are still being issued in different regions as in 2013, which are valid for 1,2,3, or 5 years.

Over half a million duplications of hunting licenses per year is not real. The actual number of hunters are for sure over one million. In a publication by the government of Extremadura is reported that there are about 90.000 hunting licenses in force in this region, which corresponds to the number of issued licenses 54.461 (expedidas) + the still valid licenses 40.157 (vigentes). Andalusia has in 2013 a higher number of licenses still valid from previous years (558.285), than in 2013 provided (252.779). This means that there were at least 558.285 hunting licenses valid in Andalusia in 2013. This brings the total number of hunting licenses in Spain in 2013 to at least 1.1 million, for the following years the same applies. You can imagine what this means for the number of hunting dogs used by all these hunters, as 90% of the hunters hunt with dogs, it would be about 4 million hunting dogs in the hands of hunters.

According to Faada.org, the number of hunters with a license is effortlessly doubled by the number of hunters that secretly hunts without a permit.



## ANUARIO DE ESTADÍSTICA FORESTAL 2013

ANUARIO DE ESTADÍSTICA FORESTAL 2013							
Número e importe de las licencias expedidas en 2013 y de las expedidas en años anteriores pero que continúan vigentes en 2013.							
					Año 2013		
					CAZA		
CC.AA.	provincia	licencias expedidas	importe licencias expedidas	licencias vigentes			
Andalucía	Almería	21,762	390,796	49,371			
	Cádiz	23,183	333,484	51,575			
	Córdoba	40,328	552,910	85,396			
	Granada	30,420	455,955	66,635			
	Huelva	23,666	375,645	46,393			
	Jaén	31,133	451,959	62,788			
	Málaga	26,089	406,865	62,208			
	Sevilla	56,198	787,751	133,919			
Total Andalucía		252,779	3,755,365	558,285			
Aragón	Huesca	0	0				
	Teruel	0	0				
	Zaragoza	49,375	1,314,829				
Total Aragón		49,375	1,314,829				
Asturias	Asturias	7,353	306,943	11,856			
Total Asturias		7,353	306,943	11,856			
Baleares	Baleares	14,188	141,131	33,242			
Total Baleares		14,188	141,131	33,242			
C. Valenciana	Alicante	14,263	178,288				
	Castellón	16,563	207,038				
	Valencia	20,402	255,025				
Total C. Valenciana		51,228	640,350				
Canarias	Las Palmas	7,206					
	Tenerife	9,628					
Total Canarias		16,834					
Cantabria	Cantabria	5,671	97,953	2,977			
Total Cantabria		5,671	97,953	2,977			
Castilla y León	Ávila	6,072	248,568	472			
	Burgos	7,885	324,387	810			
	León	9,326	359,961	1,613			
	Palencia	6,330	250,249	619			
	Salamanca	6,007	238,323	837			
	Segovia	3,120	129,193	361			
	Soria	4,112	181,695	344			
	Valladolid	52,874	2,148,919	10,510			
	Zamora	5,894	213,133	813			
Total Castilla y León		101,620	4,094,428	16,379			
Castilla-La Mancha	Albacete	13,209	588,240	7,297			
	Ciudad Real	19,798	878,108	7,707			
	Cuenca	15,071	642,303	4,371			
	Guadalajara	13,455	615,037	2,980			
	Toledo	27,849	1,225,973	8,397			
Total Castilla-La Mancha		89,382	3,949,661	30,752			
Cataluña	Barcelona	20,887	498,562	1,055			
	Gerona	13,317	317,037	577			
	Lérida	12,174	285,669	553			
	Tarragona	13,434	317,410	621			
Total Cataluña		59,812	1,418,678	2,806			
Extremadura	Badajoz	34,095		25,140			
	Cáceres	20,366		15,017			
Total Extremadura		54,461		40,157			
Galicia	La Coruña	14,786	381,277				
	Lugo	10,161	262,522				
	Orense	9,697	245,131				
	Pontevedra	11,668	303,361				
Total Galicia		46,312	1,192,292				
La Rioja	La Rioja	8,355	211,374	3,322			
Total La Rioja		8,355	211,374	3,322			
Madrid	Madrid	15,726	374,528	19,755			
Total Madrid		15,726	374,528	19,755			
Murcia	Murcia	11,213	298,345	7,831			
Total Murcia		11,213	298,345	7,831			
Navarra	Navarra	25,583	306,996				
Total Navarra		25,583	306,996				
País Vasco	Álava	7,759	68,438				
	Guipuzcoa	17,262	177,247				
	Vizcaya	13,330	141,903				
Total País Vasco		38,351	387,588				
Total		848,243	18,490,461	727,362			

According to estimates by the Oficina Nacional de la Caza (ONC), last year the hunting sector generated more than 5.000 million euros and 54.000 jobs per year, and includes directly or indirectly, five million people. It is one of the most important pillars of the economy of the rural areas in Spain.

### **Podencos per region**

From a number of regions the amount of registered dogs is known. Of the remaining regions it was for some reason not possible to get the figures. The figures are forming just an indication of the number of Podencos, because there are only a small amount of Podencos registered.

### **Andalusia**

Andalusia has a population of 8.449.985, and is therefore the largest Spanish autonomous region according to the population. It is traditionally the region with the most hunters and the biggest number of hunting licenses: expedidas 252.779 + vigentes 558.285 = 811.064 licenses can be used for hunters for hunting (2013). When we take into account the comments of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the number is somewhere between 252.779 and 811.064 hunting licenses. However in Andalusia there are more licenses still valid from previous years than were issued, namely 558.285, it is the most logical to assume this number.

It is about approximately 50% of the total number of hunting licenses in Spain. The statistics of these regions form an important indicator for the number of Podencos in Spain.

Andalusia is the region of origin of the Podenco Andaluz, Campanero, Maneto, Orito, Paternino and Malagueño.

According to statistics of the Registro Andaluz de Identificación de Animal there are 2.291.747 dogs registered in Andalusia (2016). The most registered dog breed in the region Andalusia is the Podenco, as you can see below.



Source: [http://www.diariodesevilla.es/sevilla/perro-habitantes\\_0\\_1062494028.html](http://www.diariodesevilla.es/sevilla/perro-habitantes_0_1062494028.html)

### Number of Podencos in Andalusia

Through a contact we have been able to get the figures of the number of registered Podencos and Galgos in Andalusia from the government (Junta de Andalusia). These are the actual numbers of 2017:

PODENCOS		GALGOS	
Podenco	286.218	Galgo afgano	427
Podenco andaluz	9.825	Galgo anglo español	3.276
Podenco canario	2.721	Galgo español	106.285
Podenco ibérico	3.113		<b>109.988</b>
Podenco ibicenco	2.392		
Podenco maneto	1.495		
Podenco orito español	545		
Podenco portugues grande	61		
Podenco portugues mediano	735		
Podenco portugues pequeño	452		
	<b>307.557</b>		

In 2017 there is a total of 469.424 dogs who are being used for hunting (perros de caza) in Andalusia registered, far more the largest part of these are Podencos. The number of 307.557 is obviously not the actual number Podencos in Andalusia being kept by hunters. It's known that only a minority of the Podencos are provided with a microchip, therefor registered.



There are shelters that say only 1 out of 4-5 Podencos that enter the shelter are chipped, while others say that only 1 out of 10 Podencos are provided with a chip, then there are also shelters that say that 99% of the Podencos entering are not microchipped.

Studies made by the Fundacion Affinity show that in 2016 only 30% of the total abandoned dogs in Spain are provided with a microchip. This is an average, because hunting dogs are most likely not chipped in contrast to dogs that are a part of a family.

It is also a well-known practice of hunters that when a Podenco hasn't reached the approximate age yet in which a dog has proven its hunting skills, the owner isn't willing to carry the costs of the identification. All over Spain there is a gap in the registration of Podencos between the age of 3-18 months, these animals seem to not exist.

There is a clear discrepancy between the number of licensed hunters and the number of registered hunting dogs in Andalusia. The number of 469.424 registered hunting dogs is absurd when we look at the amount of hunting licenses.

The actual number of Podencos in Andalusia would be approximately 900.000, however when we take into account the number of hunters in this region, the number of Podencos would be much higher because traditionally the majority of the hunters in Andalusia hunt with Podencos. Presumably there are at least 250.000 Podenqueros active in Andalusia.

The region Andalusia is one big hunting area, almost 97% of the territory, approximately 7.000.000 hectares.

This region has about 1.600 hunting clubs. There are 7500 reserves, 1553 are exploited for large game, 5958 for small game. The truth is that in the Andalusian rural world the hunting activity is very important, and a hobby that is 'not elitist'. The hunting activity is also a source of income for the Junta de Andalucía, which charges costs for every permit granted and also offers public domains every year, the winners paying the Andalusian government a fee. In Andalusia thousands of Monterias are held annually and the prices paid by a guest fighter vary from 150 to 9.000 or 10.000 euros. It is clear that these revenues are an important addition to an agricultural or livestock farm, for many of these companies the management of hunting is the only source of income.



## Canary Islands

The number one hunting dog in the Canary Islands is the Podenco Canario. The number of Podencos on the islands will probably amaze you. Just for the sake of clarity here too there is a big difference between the number of registered hunters and Podencos and the actual number. At the moment, more than 20.000 hunters and approximately 90.000 Podencos Canario are registered on the islands. Several sources report that only in Tenerife the number of Podencos is already about 100.000. An average Podenquero has about ten to fifteen Podencos Canarios in his pack. The total number of Podencos on the islands is probably between 200.000 and 250.000. Nobody knows the exact number because checking this is a farce. When we talk about the Canary Islands in terms of animal welfare, we talk about 'The Wild West' of Spain, the laws are barely complied with by the hunters.

Source: <https://www.podencoworld.nl/nieuws/1226-canarische-eilanden>

Below are the numbers of dogs registered in 2017 from Zoocan (Registro Canario de Identificación Animal):

# Censos insulares

Isla	Perros	Gatos	Équidos	Otros	Total	Caza	Peligrosos	Propietarios
Gran Canaria	195.128	12.287	2.235	1.126	210.776	29.101	9.569	127.249
La Palma	32.803	1.262	165	150	34.380	10.408	1.258	12.976
Lanzarote	41.324	5.277	222	256	47.079	4.823	1.670	28.920
Fuerteventura	40.172	3.684	149	366	44.371	6.331	1.829	24.504
Tenerife	238.418	17.100	2.034	1.110	258.662	40.505	11.468	143.952
La Gomera	5.316	480	21	68	5.885	1.246	129	2.760
El Hierro	3.276	73	52	14	3.415	1.685	67	1.463
Total	556.437	40.163	4.878	3.090	604.568	94.099	25.990	341.824

It is notable that the president of the Federación de Gestión Cinegética de Tenerife says in an article in Diariodeavisos on 17/03/2017 that 170.000 dogs are used for hunting on the islands. While there are 94.099 hunting dogs with microchips registered with Zoocan, with which he in fact admits that many hunters do not register their dogs and thus do not comply with the law. (A tattoo is also recognized as identification, but only a minority of the hunting dogs have a tattoo.)

Video Podencos Mogan:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jydAy-egY0>

## Extremadura

In Extremadura, 343.216 dogs were registered in January 2017, in Cáceres 133.728 and in Badajoz 209.488. After the crosses, the Galgo and Podenco are most often registered. Extremadura is one of the four regions where the Galgo is used intensively for hunting, also the Podenco is frequently used here, among others at the Monteria and rabbit hunting. Hunting and fishing is an important economic sector in this region that generates 400 million euro per year. In 2017 there were 90.000 hunters active in this region.



Source: [http://www.elperiodicoextremadura.com/noticias/extremadura/perro-tres-extremenos\\_996350.html](http://www.elperiodicoextremadura.com/noticias/extremadura/perro-tres-extremenos_996350.html)



Podencos and Podenco crosses are one of the most abandoned dogs in Extremadura. It is known that hunters keep more than five dogs in deserted places in the countryside, without a chip, without control and nobody knows that the dogs are trapped there. There are many animal protection organizations in Extremadura and they all have Podencos or Podenco crosses in their kennels. People are afraid to adopt Podencos because they would be active.

The number of Podencos (and crosses) in this region is at least 80.000.

## **Valencia**

The Valencia region is divided into three provinces: Alicante (1.732.389 inhabitants), Castellón (543.435 inhabitants) and Valencia (2.416.628 inhabitants). In the entire region of Valencia the Podenco is the most common dog because the Podenco is extremely suitable for the mountainous terrain that characterizes Valencia. In this region there are 567 hunting associations and 70% of the abandoned dogs in this area are Podencos. In many villages the majority of the inhabitants practice 'hunting sport'. For example, In Sagunto municipality in the province of Valencia, there are 3000 Podencos in the hands of hunters. In Canal de Navarres, a village with 3000 inhabitants, there are 600 connected to the hunting association, almost all of them hunt with Podencos. In the province of Castellón there are 151.311 dogs registered, the Podenco after the crosses is the most common dog.

1. Cross Breeds 60.317
2. Podenco 21.936
3. Yorkshire Terrier 10.526
4. German Shepherd 8.708
5. Breton Espagnol 8.179
6. Brac 4.169

The fact that only a part of the dogs are registered, is evident from the data of the capital of this province where according to the database of the veterinarians (Rivia) 39.397 dogs are registered. However, according to the census of the government, there are 18.400. The explanation is simple, although according to the law all owners have to register their dog in the censo municipal, there are still many who don't.

Source: [http://www.elperiodicomediterraneo.com/noticias/castellon/mas-perros-nunca-castellon\\_1045977.html](http://www.elperiodicomediterraneo.com/noticias/castellon/mas-perros-nunca-castellon_1045977.html)

Based on the number of hunters in Castellón and the fact that most of them are hunting with Podencos and only a small number of the Podencos are registered. The actual number of Podencos in this province will be above 60.000.

The total number of registered dogs in the Valencia region is 1.013.235 (2015). We have not been able to obtain the figures from the provinces of Valencia and Alicante, it is expected that at least 20.000 Podencos will be registered in each of these provinces. Furthermore, it is known from the Xarnego Valenciano (Podenco) to have around 54.000 dogs of this breed, the majority of which are in the Valencia region. The number of hunters in the region is about 50.000. Using a variety of data, we can conclude that there are at least 250.000 Podencos in the Valencia region.

Feria Castellon:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2La4rumi-g>

## Aragón

In the three provinces of Aragón 190,026 dogs are registered. According to RIACA data, the following dogs are the most registered:

1. Cross Breeds 97.013
2. Yorkshire terrier 13,403
3. German Shepherd 10,906
4. Podenco Andaluz 8.245
5. Breton Espagnol 6.855
6. Podenco Ibicenco 5,766
7. Podenco 5.522
8. Maltese 5.172
9. Labrador 4.705
10. Brac 4.605

Source: <http://www.heraldo.es/noticias/aragon/2016/09/08/yorkshire-pastor-aleman-podenco-andaluz-spaniel-breton-las-razas-que-mas-triunfan-aragon-1049121-300.html>

That makes a total of at least 19.533 registered Podencos in the Aragon region, together more than any other registered dog breed and more than 10% of the total number of registered dogs. Here too, the actual number of Podencos is higher, probably above 60.000.



## **Other regions**

### **Balearic Islands**

The number of registered dogs has increased by 17% to 330.407 since 2014. 263.728 dogs are registered on Mallorca; Menorca, 24.601; Ibiza, 38.703; and Formentera, 3.375. Mallorca has more than 20.000 hunters, Menorca around 2.000, Ibiza 2.500 and Formentera 300. The most popular hunting dog in the Balearic Islands is the Podenco Ibicenco.

### **Castilla-La Mancha**

This region is often mentioned as the region where mostly the Galgo is used for hunting. However, the Podenco is also used in this region.

Soria: 30% of the abandoned dogs that the animal protection collects in Soria are hunting dogs. Between Soriadopción and Redención, “there are more than 30 found in the mountains of the province after their owners decided that they were too old for the hunting sport. The majority, Podencos”.

Salamanca: Asociación Salmantina Protectora de Animales y Plantas (Aspap) doesn't forget the role of the hunters. Over half of the animals they care for in their refuge are “Podenco crosses”.

Zamora: “The most drop-outs at this time are when the hunting season has ended, mostly Podencos and Pointers”.

<http://www.elnortedecastilla.es/soria/ciento-perros-abandonados-20171102071702-nt.html>

<http://www.elnortedecastilla.es/salamanca/protectoras-exigen-controles-20170809103123-nt.html>

### **Catalonia**

In Catalonia more than 70% of the abandoned dogs in the shelters originates from hunters. Of this region is known that in the whole region, but mostly in the provinces Barcelona and Tarragona Podencos are used for hunting.

### **Murcia**

In 2015 there were 130.000 dogs with a microchip registered in this region, only a small number because the College of Veterinarians estimate that at least 180.000 dogs aren't registered. In Cartagena for example there are 27.000 animals registered in Siamu (the identification database of the region Murcia) while there are 8.300 registered in the census municipal.

In Murcia there are around 18.000 hunting licenses issued, most hunters are using Podencos or Galgos.



## **Madrid**

“Do you know the pace we experience of drop-outs in the middle of the campo or in dumpsters? Around 40 and 50% are hunting dogs, mainly Podencos”, said Matilde Cubillo, Presidenta de la Federación de Asociaciones Protectoras y de Defensa Animal de la Comunidad de Madrid.

<http://www.publico.es/sociedad/proteccion-animal-madrid-resiste-prohibir-cria-perros-particulares-cazadores.html>

The Justicia Animal Association has reported that in 2015 and till now in 2016, the associations who are committed to the protection of animals collected ‘a large number’ hunting dogs known as the Podenco in the region of Madrid.

These animals “used as tools, when they are no longer useful, injured, scared of gunshots, not fit’ they are abandoned at highways, in reserves or at the countryside. Many of them, “die alongside the road, get run over, get illnesses, starve or are euthanized in public shelters”.

The chairman of the Justicia Animal, Matilde Cubillo, says that 99% of these dogs don’t have a microchip, “so it’s practically impossible to trace the owner and the abandonment stays unpunished’.

“The shelters are crowded and saturated, there is no end to the Podencos entering in the most harsh circumstances. This is the result of lack of control over clandestine Rehals in the region of Madrid.” ,says Cubillo

When the associations report these illegal Rehals, everything is in order according to the intervening agents and technicians of the town hall.

“We see chained dogs with little mobility, animals with their ears and tails cut off, with the floor covered in feces and urine, where they can’t relax and where females can’t bare their pups without veterinarian care.”

<http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20160731/403597311293/defensora-de-animales-denuncia-abandono-de-perros-podencos-en-madrid.html>

## **Galicia**

Already in 2009 it was known that Podencos and Podenco crosses, were the most neglected, abused and by far the most abandoned breed in Galicia.

<https://ponteareasanimal.wordpress.com/2009/10/30/sos-podencos-los-transparentes/>

<http://www.farodevigo.es/comarcas/2013/07/24/perros-gatos-buscan-refugio/850263.html>

## **La Rioja**

The region La Rioja has approximately 332.000 residents, in 2016 around 11.000 hunting licenses were issued. Many of the hunters use Podencos. According to statistics by the government of La Rioja, there are annually over 3000 dogs abandoned. This means that there are 50 dogs per week being put to sleep. 80% originates from the countryside and are hunting dogs. About 70% of the total aren’t abandoned, but are voluntarily signed over by their owner to be killed. (‘free’, public money). These dogs are killed within 12 hours, the others within 9 to 15 days.

APARIOJA: The worst time for these shelters is the end of the different hunting seasons, the largest amount of dogs staying at the shelter are hunting dogs like Podencos...

<http://aplarioja.org/tematica/moda-o-etica>

<http://reporteroescolar.unir.net/2014/expansion/una-fundacion-luchadora/index.html>

## **Other Northern Regions**

### **Asturias, Basque Country, Cantabria and Navarre**

In these northern regions traditionally other breeds are used in the hunt for small game, such as the Setter and Pointer, the Podenco is also used but to a lesser extent and sometimes complements the pack. When hunting big game, the Podenco is the core of the Rehala.

## **Rehala**

Approximately 3.000 Rehalas are registered in Spain, which are used in the Monteria, the hunt for big game, such as red deer and wild boar. It is known that there are also many illegal Rehalas in Spain. A Rehala is composed of 20 to sometimes 80 dogs, the majority of which are Podencos Andaluz talla grande (the Podenco Campanero). The number of Podencos (and crosses) that are part of the Rehalas in Spain are at least 120.000. There are sometimes 40 Rehalas deployed during a Monteria. The Rehalas are located throughout Spain, with the largest concentration in Andalusia and Castilla-La Mancha.

List Rehalas: [http://javierferrero.es/\\_retiradas/voydemonteria/?page\\_id=74](http://javierferrero.es/_retiradas/voydemonteria/?page_id=74)

Explanation Monteria: <https://www.podencoworld.nl/nieuws/1158-monteria>



## **Galgos and Podencos**

According to the la Federación Española de Galgos there are 200.000 Galgos with registered chip.

PACMA states that in Spain there are "190.000 Galgueros, with approximately 500.000 Galgos registered to hunt, especially in areas such as Andalusia, Extremadura and the two Castillas, and it is estimated that there are more than 900.000 Galgos in the hands of these hunters."

The investigation into the number and distribution of the Podencos in Spain has shown that in several regions the Podenco is number 1 as the most registered dog breed. In only two of the seventeen autonomous regions, Andalusia and the Canary Islands, 400.000 Podencos have been registered. Also from publications on renowned Spanish hunting websites it appears that the most popular and used hunting dog is the Podenco. When looking at the four regions where according to Pacma, the Galgo mainly occurs, it appears that in Andalusia almost three times as many Podencos as Galgos are registered. In Extremadura, Castilla La Mancha and Castilla y Leon they also hunt with the Podenco, although in these regions more hunt with the Galgo than the Podenco, it does not outweigh the abundance of Podencos in the other regions. There are without doubt more Podencos than Galgos in Spain.

When people in Spain talk about maltreatment of hunting dogs, one thinks of the Galgo and also outside of Spain this breed is best known for the abuse they are exposed to and the cruel way their owners end their lives. One of the most cruel and well-known forms is hanging, but people in Spain,



outside the Animal Protection, don't know that not only Galgos are hung, but also the Podencos are suffering the same fate.

Fortunately, Galgos are increasingly appreciated both in Spain and abroad. However, the Podenco is hardly visible as a pet in Spain, people do not see people walking in the streets with their Podenco, as is seen with the Galgo. Podencos are the eternal forgotten and suffer the same during their lives that is entirely all about hunting, and when they are no longer useful, their chained lives end in the same barbarous way. Many shelters do not pick up Podencos because they are not adopted anyway, there is no output. The shelters that do take them become overcrowded and can in time no longer accept Podencos. The shelters consider the Podenco as "the great forgotten": No one notices them despite their great personalities and their remarkable character to live with a family, they undergo the same gruesomeness as 'their cousins' the Galgos, which not many people know. Men thinks it's time for a national campagne to focus on the situation of the Podencos, to increase the awareness of the population, to prevent the abandonment of Podencos and to promote adoptions, given the high number of dogs of this breed that stay in shelters throughout Spain and wait for a well-deserved home.



### **Podenco land**

Spanish shelters are flooded with Podencos, hundreds of calls for help throughout Spain for Podencos who are found in the most horrendous circumstances. It's a rearguard fight against a superiority of hunters and a government that allows economic interests to prevail over animal welfare. Local authorities that have contracts for the management of the perreras with companies specialized in pest control, the cheapest possible solution for the stray problem, the waste of the Spanish society. It is the daily reality for the Podencos in Spain, but in the twilight world of hunting everything has to stay hidden and everything is denied. In the meantime, tens of thousands of Podencos are sacrificed every year and receive virtually no attention. Does a Podenco life have no value?

Nobody knows exactly how many dogs and hunting dogs are in Spain because only a small part is registered and there is hardly any control. It is clear that in no region does the number of hunters correspond to the number of registered hunting dogs. All over Spain the Podenco is being used in hunting, and in addition a legion of Podenco crosses are used. The Podenco is the most popular and widely used hunting dog in Spain. Based on the numerous sources, the number of registered Podencos, and the high percentage of Podencos in the shelters in the different regions, it can be concluded that there are more Podencos in Spain than any other dog breed.

I estimate that at least 450.000 Podenqueros are active throughout Spain and at least 1.800.000 Podencos (and crosses) are in the hands of these hunters.

Spain is Podenco land, the downside of the coin is that this is accompanied by an incredible amount of animal suffering. The Podenco could be a national symbol of Spain, at this moment it is the national shame, with the flag soaked in Podenco blood. Although more Podencos have found their luck abroad, the shelters in Spain remain overcrowded with abandoned Podencos. How long will their sad fate remain invisible, how long will they be forgotten in their homeland?

Edwin Verhaegen

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Advocate of Podencos rights since 2005

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