

THE CATALAN LAW IN BUSINESSES

Concòrdia hardens

Councilor Cerni Escalé warns of legal action if sanctions are not applied in the Catalan Law

CONSELL GENERAL



The president of the Concòrdia parliamentary group, Cerni Escalé.

PARIS MAMEGHANI
ANDORRA LA VELLA

Last Thursday afternoon, the General Council held a session in which the deployment of the Catalan Law was addressed, based on an urgent question posed by the president of the Concòrdia parliamentary group, Cerni Escalé. The main interest was the monitoring of the implementation of the law and the actions of the Government in linguistic matters, especially in the commercial sector. The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Mònica Bonell, was in charge of answering the questions raised by the Concòrdia parliamentary group. Bonell confirmed that «the regulation for the creation of the language's own council is in the process of being approved», and that the Government is

working on a renewal of the Catalan Law, which will be published shortly. This modification will include a clearer and stronger penalty regime. Escalé highlighted the concern about the low use of Catalan as a vehicular language in Andorran businesses, stating that «most of these do not comply with the established linguistic requirements». In this sense, Minister Bonell explained that the Government's legal cabinet has reviewed all the files relating to these breaches and that «intervention in the commercial sector has been prioritized due to the seriousness of the detected cases». According to Bonell, the sanctioning process will begin with the sending of informative letters to the offending companies, many of which have already accepted the proposed measures. Regarding the sanctions, Bo-



Cerni Escalé

PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY
GROUP OF CONCÒRDIA

«Most of these [shops] do not comply with the language requirements established by law»

nell confirmed that «16 violations have been resolved and that there are 17 more pending investigation». However, the minister admitted that since the law came into force, 45 complaints related to linguistic non-compliance have been received, but none of them have resulted in a sanction. In addition, she pointed out that «companies have a deadline to respond to the Government's communications», and that it will be the Department of Commerce and Tourism that will be responsible for detecting and resolving non-compliance. This infuriated Councilor Escalé, who stated that «the Government decides to break the law» and that, in case the sanctions are not processed from January, his group is considering bringing the Government to justice. In the event that the violations are not processed from January, the president of the political formation warned that «his group is considering taking the matter to justice.» In this regard, the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, rejected the possibility of Concòrdia taking legal action, recalling that «its training had not defended these measures in the past» and that the Government follows the judgment of the legal cabinet. For her part, the General Counselor of Andorra Endavant, Carine Montaner, recalled that applying these sanctions strictly could have repercussions in other sectors, such as health, stating that «this could affect the availability of doctors in the SA-AS». ●

GENERAL COUNCIL

Government simplifies the regularization of foreign properties

Marsol highlights the collaboration with FEDA and the municipalities, while the flats are being regularized

PARIS MAMEGHANI
ANDORRA LA VELLA

In the session of the General Council held last Thursday, several important issues regarding housing policy were discussed. The president of Andorra Endavant, Carine Montaner, questioned the Government about the status of the new tax on empty flats, asking if they already have the data of the owners of these properties, as well as of the owners of flats of foreign residents. Regarding this, the Minister of the Presidency, Economy, Work and Housing, Conxita Marsol, explained that, at the moment, they only have information on some owners, especially those who do not have a me-

ter or register zero consumption.

Apart from that, the minister clarified that not all these properties can be considered empty: «By next year we will have the names of the owners and we will be able to apply the corresponding amounts». An issue in which Montané believes that «a lot would be gained» if an adequate fiscal inspection were carried out, a fact in which Marsol agreed, who indicated, however, that this task does not depend entirely on the Government, since they do not have complete information on the fiscal situation of these owners in their countries of origin. Even so, she confirmed that a study on the Spanish tax regime has already been commissioned from an ex-

pert from Barcelona, which underlines the current ease of regularizing properties thanks to a ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union.

As an example of this, Marsol mentioned that for a flat of 300,000 euros only 724 euros would be needed in taxes, and even in case of an inspection, the fine would not exceed 900 euros. The minister considers, in this sense, that regularizing these flats should not be a problem, and stressed the need to make them emerge for the benefit of everyone: «They are people who, perhaps, due to different circumstances, it is good for them to have the flats in this situation», adding that «we are trying to surface these flats because this will benefit everyone».

The owner of Housing also admitted that, for now, there are «very few» owners of empty properties who have voluntarily registered them in the register that should allow them to pay the tax that is levied on them. The situation, she assures, will change from



CONXITA MARSOL

ECONOMY MINISTER

«By next year we will know the names of the owners and we will be able to apply the taxes to them. It is necessary to surface all apartment»



Marsol confirms that in 2025 the tax could begin to be applied to identified owners.

next year. «We are already starting to have the data in collaboration with mutual insurance companies, FEDA and the municipalities of those properties without a meter or with zero consumption», announced the head of economic affairs. For this reason, she advanced that from 2025 «Finance will be able to have information and include more holders in the register» and, therefore, «will be able to start applying it». Despite this, the budget wanted to be «prudent and an amount similar to that collected in recent years has been allocated», she maintained. ●

CARINE MONTANER

ADVISOR AND PRESIDENT OF AE

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