

el Periòdic News

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Social Affairs look after fewer users, but with greater needs

A decrease of 398 users looked after and 255 fewer files is highlighted

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In 2023, the number of people look after by the Social Affairs department has decreased by 16% compared to 2022, specifically, 398 fewer users. Regarding continuous care files, the percentage has decreased by 23%, while in one-off care files it has increased by 22%. The average between the two is 15% less than the previous year, which leaves 255 fewer files.

The director of the Department of Social Affairs, Joan Carles Villaverde, stated last Tuesday in the framework of the presentation of data for 2023 that «there is less demand than in other years, but those who ask for it need more help», adding that «no matter how many families have work, the level of income is not high». With reference to the distribution of problems, 2,774 problems have been diagnosed in the 1,075 files, leaving an average of 2.58 for each file. In 2023, the economic problem is the one that stands out the most, specifically the economic income lower than the LECS, with 27%, 42%

less compared to 2022; secondly, personal-family problems with 24%, 39% less than in 2022, and, thirdly, health problems with 23%, 68% less than in 2022. On the other hand, it highlights that the family model is changing in recent years. In Andorra, 61% of households are single-person households, they consist of only one person.

THE FIGURES

2,100

The number of families benefiting from subsidies for rental housing.

27%

The economic problem is the one that has a greater percentage in the files.

-15%

The average decrease between continuous care and one-off care files.



The Secretary of State for Social Affairs, Ester Cervós; the Minister of Social Affairs and Civil Service, Trini Marín, and the Villaverde, during the 2023 balance sheet press conference.

22.4% of households are single parent, in which only one father/mother is responsible for the children. Thus, more than 80% of the families resident in Andorra do not correspond to the nuclear family model, the one made up of father, mother and children. Therefore, 84% of the total number of beneficiari-

es of these one-off grants are families of this type mentioned. In 2023, the average amount per household was 3,258 euros, which represents an increase of 3.7% compared to 2022. In relation to the elderly, it was weighted that the number of people receiving a solidarity pension grew by 7.5% last ye-

ANA/ M.F.



Director of the Department of Social Affairs, Joan Carles

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Trini Marín

MINISTER OF SOCIAL
AFFAIRS AND CIVIL SERVICE

«One of the pillars of Social Affairs is to ensure that the elderly have a dignified life and can stay at home»

Joan Carles Villaverde

DIRECTOR OF THE SOCIAL
AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

«There is less demand than other years, but the families that ask for it need more help»

ar. Thus, the benefits granted went from 1,159 to 1,245 last year and the average amount was 525.12 euros. With regard to the home care service (SAD), the increase in users last year was 48% reaching 62, which is why they were happy, since it is a service that «consolidating and achieving the objectives» of offering support that allows the elderly to remain at home as long as possible.

The Minister of Social Affairs and Civil Service, Trini Marín, emphasized that «one of the pillars of Social Affairs is precisely to ensure that the elderly have a dignified life and that more each day can stay at home», adding that for to achieve this, apart from the SAD, is the concertation of places. Regarding the residences for the elderly, Marín highlighted the need to build social and health residences such as the one planned in Encamp and with which there is already a pre-agreement to have concerted places. In addition, she recalled that work is being done so that «every parish has a day center». Asked about the waiting lists for a residence, Marín explained that there are 11 people waiting for a place at a 24-hour socio-health center; 11 more who are in a day center and want a residential place; four people who are in a respite place; another

9 who are in a 24-hour socio-health center, but in private residences and who receive help from the Government, and another 24 who are also in a private one and want an arranged place, but who do not receive any help.

THE NUMBER OF USERS APPLYING FOR RENTAL HOUSING SUBSIDIES INCREASES BY 21% //

On the other hand, a total of 2,100 families benefited from rental housing subsidies in 2023, which represents a 21% increase (1,816) compared to last year (2,190). This is what the Department of Social Affairs and Civil Service has explained in the context of the presentation of data for 2023. Compared to 2020, the increase has been 73%, going from 1,266 to 2,190 users.

According to Marín, this increase is due to the change in the requirements to qualify for this aid, since users have gone from needing five years of residence in the country to just three. «Flexibility has increased the numbers», mentioned the minister.

Regarding total spending, Marín and Villaverde reported that the figure in 2023 is 5,008,012 euros, 36.5% more than in 2022, when it was 3,670,322 euros, and 141% more than in 2020, when the figure was 2,079,927 euros. ●

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DEBATE OF LA TAULA D'EL PERIÒDIC

New serious errors of Espot about the association agreement

LA TAULA D'EL PERIÒDIC
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

The appearance on Thursday, May 30th of Xavier Espot, in front of only the media that they selected, and where El Periòdic d'Andorra, a media that has objectively informed the people of our country for 27 years, and one of the more neutral with the subject of the EU, HE WAS NOT INVITED, evidenced new serious errors by the head of government in relation to the association agreement.

The list is long and from La Taula d'el Periòdic we will focus on three as an illustration of the level of loss of contact with reality and with the true needs of citizens.

1- First of all, we emphasize that the head of government guaranteed that if the result is a NO to the association agreement, he will not resign. Those present consider that the head of government expressed a resounding no to his resignation. But at the same time, the head of government stated that if the sovereign people voted NO to the association agreement, Xavier Espot «will find it very difficult to ask the EU to maintain certain prerogatives that are not typical of a third state». It seems clear to us that if a head of government gets tired in the exercise of his function as the highest representative of the Executive and it becomes difficult for him to defend the interests of Andorra as a third country in front of the EU, then his obligation is to resign and go to elections so that new people enter with energy and vocation to defend the interests

of Andorra, whether it is a third state or not.

2- Secondly, the head of government declared that they «have» decided that the option that gets half of the votes will win the referendum. We remember that the guidelines of the Venice Commission clearly establish that in order to call a binding referendum, it is necessary to have a constitution or a qualified law that sets the conditions under which the referendum must take place, as interpreted result, the effects of voting and a long et cetera that we have discussed in previous articles. Otherwise the referendum does not qualify as democratic. We note that the head of government is still determined to call a binding referendum without having a qualified law to regulate it. So that Xavier Espot is ready to call a referendum that will violate the guidelines of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe. A referendum of their own choosing for those who want the YES. A referendum incompatible with what a democratic country should do. A referendum that discredits the Principality of Andorra. A referendum that places Andorra at the level of countries that we will not qualify, but which are in no way democratic. A referendum that Brussels will not be able to accept as democratic, because it is incompatible with the guidelines of the Venice Commission.

3- Thirdly, the head of government continues to send

his message of fear. They have finally made him see that he cannot keep saying that in the event of a NO Brussels would take reprisals against Andorra. It is clear that Brussels cannot let itself be told this nonsense and we no longer have to listen to it. But Xavier Espot can't stay away and questioned what would happen to several issues, among which we only highlight two for reasons of space:

a) What would happen with the customs agreement. The answer is easy, Monaco has suspended negotiations and nothing has happened with its customs union with France and the resulting implications for the single market.

b) What would happen with a specificity that the Government is negotiating - such as the «entry-exit» visa Regulation - which regulates passport procedures at the border. The answer is clear: nothing would happen. You only need to read the document of the European Commission of March 8th, 2024 entitled Recommendation of the Council's Decision to open negotiations to establish an agreement between the EU and Andorra on border management, what the Head of Government colloquially calls «entry -success». This official text establishes a mandate to reach an agreement with Andorra for the «entry exit» regulation and, in relation to the negotiations between Andorra and the EU on the association agreement, it clearly says in the Spanish version of the text: «...the issues that could fall

within the scope of application of this Recommendation do not fall within the scope of negotiations on an association agreement». Therefore, the official Brussels text itself clearly establishes that they are not two separate things and, in fact, this negotiation mandate is not based on a scenario that the association agreement receives a YES or that it receives a NO. They are separate things.

From the La Taula d'el Periòdic as we have explained in the previous articles and in this one, for the time being, we can conclude that (1) Andorra currently does not have the legal framework to hold a binding democratic referendum that respects the guidelines of the Commission of Venice and the head of government continues with the firm will to breach international regulations on democratic referendums; (2) Our IGI is not approvable as VAT, which means that Andorran goods will not enjoy real free circulation within the single market and will be subject to customs control in order to pay an approved VAT;; (3) Immigration quotas have a temporary expiration and are subject to uncertainty; (4) The head of government is showing fatigue and in case the result of the referendum is NO, then Xavier Espot will not resign and his reaction will be that it will be difficult for him to defend the interests of Andorra as a third state before the EU; it is not true that in case of NO, the visa «entry-exit» agreement with the EU on passport processing at the border is in jeopardy; it is not true that in case of NO the current customs agreement is in jeopardy. ●