



MOBILITY

The Piriney train would connect Andorra and Barcelona in two and a half hours

The cost would exceed 680 million euros and there would be a freight station in Sant Julià

Noy points out that «the Principality has opted for aviation, the transport that generates the most emissions»

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The rail journey between La Seu d'Urgell, La Cerdanya and Andorra with the existing track of the Vic-Montcada line to Barcelona could be done in 02.34 hours, as the expert and engineer and president of the Fundació Mobilitat Sostenible i Segura Pau Noy explained yesterday, in a presentation to explain his study that analyzes the feasibility of the railway project with his vision given by the extensive experience he has gained at Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona, among other companies. However, the expert assured that the same route with stops would have a duration of 03.35 hours.

The route foresees, specifically, a line through the Vall del Segre, «which is the easiest route and, therefore, the most economical and viable», assured Noy. In the first phase, the connection between Alp and La Seu would be built, and in two second phases it would go up to Sant Julià, where,

The average demand is 7,451 travelers per day and around three million per year, according to the calculations

finally, it would join Andorra la Vella and underground with Escaldes-Engordany. The service would have a cadence at every peak hour and bi-hourly in valley time, with a slot that would include from 05.30 hours to 20.00 hours. In other words, a total of 15 trains per day would pass in each direction, which could be expanded up to 37. In addition, the engineer's calculations predict that the average demand would be 7,451 travelers per day and almost three million per year.

For his part, Noy considers the need to «have a more sustainable mobility and less dependent, on the one hand, on oil and, on the other hand, on climate change». For these reasons, he defends that the railway «reduces climate emissions to zero» when there is electricity, which is in 97% of cases, it reduces energy consumption



►► Simulation of a train with a vinyl sheet from AndRail.

by 90% compared to the road, it also reduces accidents and guarantees access universal transport without traffic jams and with a competitive travel time. Noy also added that «on routes of 1,000 kilometers, 90% of a tourist's emissions originate in the journey» and, therefore, opting for the train «has a general impact on the mobility system».

As for the Principality, the president of the Fundació Mobilitat Sostenible i Segura remarked that «at the moment, it has only opted for aviation, which is the transport that generates the most emissions», a fact that surprises him with the current fight against climate change. At the same time, he observed that «there has been talk of building a tram to connect Sant Julià de Lòria-Andorra la Vella», and in this sense he asserted that «it



PAU NOY
SUSTAINABLE AND SAFE MOBILITY FOUNDATION

«On routes of 1,000 kilometers, 90% of a tourist's emissions originate during the journey»

«It is necessary to have more sustainable mobility and less dependent on oil and climate change»

is an urban project, not a connection with Barcelona and the world». Thus, he explained that the railway can be a better and more economical alternative.

Currently, the Generalitat has tendered a feasibility study that should be completed at the beginning of 2023. In this sense, the engineer wished that «I would like it to be a reality in the future». If its execution were possible, Noy's estimates that it could reach a total investment of 688 million euros, adding the cost of trains and a freight station in Sant Julià de Lòria. However, the expert observed that «it should be distributed between Catalonia and Andorra involving Spain», and the European fund provided for in the agreements with the latter could help to finance it, turning the project into a transnational one. ≡

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EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

The Government will qualify health workers without B2 in Catalan if necessary

Riba believes that the language requirement will not hinder the association agreement because it is a «fundamental right»

EL PERIÒDIC
ANDORRA LA VELLA
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The Government assures that it will specially qualify healthcare professionals from European Union (EU) countries without requiring the B2 level of Catalan in order to avoid a «void in the hospital system in case of need», according to affirm the Secretary of State for European Affairs, Landry Riba. Also, within the framework of the talks on the association agreement, the Executive points out that the accreditation of a minimum level of Catalan language speaking will not mean an obstacle when it comes to advancing negotiations with the EU. In this regard, Riba indicated that «all member countries establish the right to use the official language and Andorra should do the same without any additional problems».

Although Riba emphasized that the B2 requirement could add to the difficulty of access for professionals, he also recalled that «it must be regulated that a citizen can be served through his mother tongue, which in many of the cases is Catalan, apart from being the official of the country». In fact, the Government already contemplated this requirement since the 2008 amendment to the Law on the exercise of Titled Professions and Professional Colleges and Associations, therefore, «we must maintain the agreement between both texts».

In the same way that was announced during the presentation of the draft law, the Executive intends, through the emergency route, to bring the text to the General Council in order to ratify it as soon as possible. As indicated by Riba, «we do not believe that there are many obstacles because it is a text that enjoys a broad consensus on the part of all the actors involved, both professionals and politicians». Following this same direction, the representatives of the Government who met with the colleges and professional associations had to unify the ten legislative projects resulting from the meetings and exchanges with the



► The Secretary of State for European Affairs, Landry Riba, during the presentation of the Titled Professions Bill.

professionals into a single one in order to lighten the parliamentary procedures for its recognition. «The need to homogenize the different branches meant a complicated drafting work», emphasized Riba.

Regarding the content of the Bill, the text consists of eighty articles that are divided into two sides. On the one hand, there are the transversal provisions, which apply to all professional activities entitled to health, and the sectoral provisions, which focus exclusively on the development of 10 specific professions, among which are

The Official College of Speech-Language Pathologists will require the C2 level to carry out its professional activity

dieticians, therapists, podiatrists and psychologists, among others. Throughout the articles, the rights and duties, the requirements and the incompatibilities of professional activities and the modalities of working are defined in detail in a total of three chapters.

On the other hand, the regulations also include a regulation pertaining to the exercise of the profession and professional colleges and associations. In the event that the text is approved and ratified by the parliamentary seat, this will mean that within 12 months the specific regulations that depend



Landry Riba

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS STATE SECRETARY

«These obligations were already contemplated in the 2008 law amendment, therefore, we must be consistent»

«The need to homogenize the different proposals of the schools was a complicated job»

on the law will be deployed and some of those currently in force will be modified in order to «work with the renewed vision of the legislative text», indicated Riba. In relation to updating the statutes of the professional associations involved, they will have a period of two years to do so.

Finally, the Secretary of State mentioned some specifics in relation to the requirement of a higher level of Catalan language in order to exercise the profession in certain sectors. In this sense, he emphasized that, in the case of the Official College of Speech Pathologists of Andorra (COLA), the requirement of the C2 level of Catalan was agreed to be able to carry out their work in the country. «Simply, we agreed that a person in charge of carrying out the re-education of third parties through speech must have an exceptional mastery of the language beyond the basic, although this is already part of the guidelines for speech therapists», pointed out Riba. ≡

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