

## NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EU

# The Executive expects to have the final text agreed in the second half of 2023

Later, the referendum would be prepared, although elections could slow down the process

The liberalization of telecommunications and the rights of European citizenship, red lines

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With the French presidency of the European Union (EU), negotiations for the association agreement are progressing well. «We are grateful for the political impetus they are showing,» Secretary of State for European Affairs Landry Riba said yesterday during a luncheon with the media to explain the state of the negotiations. In this context, and with the approval of the EU itself and the member states, the «shared» forecast points to the second half of 2023, with the Spanish presidency, as the date to have an agreed text. From there, the preparation for the referendum would begin, a commitment of the current government. During this period, there will be a presidency of the Czech Republic and Sweden, as well as general elections in Andorra, which could slow down the process because during the election period negotiations should be stopped.

Negotiations on the annexes on the free movement of people have begun this May, and those relating to telecommunications will be added at the beginning of the summer, two of the main obstacles to reaching an agreement. However, negotiations are expected to move forward substantially in the second half of this year, as some annexes require only technical intervention and only some other political arbitration.

With regard to the free movement of people, Andorra proposes the one from Liechtenstein, a solution adopted 27 years ago and which has been renewed with the approval of the EU. This is where concepts such as quota, calculation, residence, citizenship and regrouping will be analyzed. Thus,



SFGA/JAVILADOT

► The Secretary of State for European Affairs, Landry Riba.

**Andorra is committed to the Liechtenstein model in the free movement of people to control the growth**

the model incorporates the residence permit from a fee that is calculated based on indices. In this way, «the population grows predictably through good management of public services, so that growth is orderly,» said Riba. With this model, there would be changes in procedures and the quota catalog would be reduced.

Going into more detail, Riba pointed out that the sensitive points that can lead to a blockade scenario are minority. He also explained that they are working on adapting the initial proposal to facilitate the final understanding. Thus, according to Riba, political arbitration may be needed to

adapt European citizenship rights in Andorran immigration procedures and in the directive that includes the liberalization of the telecommunications market, which would clash with Andorra's monopoly Telecom in the country. «Our proposals will be reasoned and reasonable» said Riba.

Of the 25 total annexes, there are still two that the Andorran delegation has not been able to study because it has not received the full flow, as the EU does not yet have an exit negotiating position: financial services and the free movement of capital. «Nothing will be closed in this legislature, but we want all issues to be on the table



**LANDRY RIBA**

SEC. EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

«There are worries but there is no organized opposition; nevertheless, we must make an effort to explain ourselves»

«At the end of the legislature all issues must be on the table, none will remain open, but nothing will be closed»

and we will not leave any questions open,» he said. However, according to Riba, «it would be very good news that by the end of 2022 we would have closed telecommunications and the movement of people, but it takes time for discussion to balance different realities.»

Negotiations will advance in parallel with the actions of communication to the citizens. Thus, a series of conferences will be scheduled in May and public meetings in September, as well as talks at schools and the university. In addition, a new website will be opened (andorraue.ad), which will be operational before the summer, and there will be a greater presence on social media. «There is no organized opposition, fortunately for the project, but there are concerns about a particular sector or methodology, or opposing individual opinions,» Riba said. However, «we have to make a lot of effort to explain ourselves», as «we don't have to sell it as much or not», but «everyone knows it and can make a decision», in reference to the referendum call by the end of 2023 or the beginning of 2024. ≡

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SUSTAINABILITY

# The government plans to increase energy certificates next year

The Energy Office is working with professionals to develop a tool that will speed up the processing of the document

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The government expects a «significant increase» in the volume of applications for the energy real estate certificate from next year. This was stated by the director of the Office of Energy and Climate Change (OECC), Carles Miquel, who remarked that this situation may occur due to the entry into force, from January 1st, 2023, of the obligation to have this document also for rental housing. For this reason, Miquel explained that from the OECC «we are working with groups of professionals such as architects, technical architects, and engineers in order to provide a tool that allows them to facilitate their work and make it more agile, given that there may be an increase in these qualifications.

This forecast is due to the fact that since January 2020, when it became taxable to have this certificate for new construction projects and for sale and purchase transactions, there has been an increase in processing. According to the director of the

**On January 1st, 2023,** the mandatory labeling will also take effect for rental housing



▶▶ A person consults the energy label of an appliance.

OECC, since the certification was created with the Regulation on the certification of energy efficiency in buildings in 2012 and until January 2020 -complying with one of the premises included in the Law for the Promotion of the Energy Transition and Climate Change (Litecc) - barely a hundred had been issued. However, since the beginning of the compulsory course until May of this year, the department has already accumulated more than 3,700 registered qualifications. Specifically, Miquel detailed that 74% are labels, a format that collects the consumption announced by users, and the remaining 26% are certificates obtained through the basis of the calculation. And in terms of the way they were sent, 40% had been sent on paper and 60% digitally - currently it is an exclusively virtual management.

Looking at the distribution by parish of the energy certificates granted, Canillo is the one that accumulates the most, with 22% of the total, followed by Encamp, with 20%, and La Massana, with 18.4%. In Andorra la Vella, 12.5% of the labels were re-

quested, a figure very similar to that of Escaldes-Engordany (11.2%). And with lower figures are Ordino (8.7%) and Sant Julià de Lòria (6.8%). «It is noteworthy that more than 40% correspond to Canillo and Encamp, but

it is not a fact that means anything beyond that is where more transactions have had to take place in this period.» said the director of the OECC.

In terms of housing type, 86% of the certificates issued referred to multi-family buildings or their real estate units, 10.8% were single-family buildings, and 1.8% corresponded to commercial premises. In addition, the labels also showed that 51% of the registered properties used diesel as a source of heat production, 41.8% electricity and 6.3% gas. On the other hand, since the launch of the qualification, a total of 61 technicians have carried out the task, which correspond in 43% to engineers, 31% to technical architects, and 25.8% to architects. It has also been determined that the average area of registered homes is around 120 square meters.

Finally, going into the details of the result of the ratings in terms of energy efficiency of real estate, only 1.6% of the total has reached the highest rating (A), and 13.5% obtained the second best (B). The largest number of certificates are in the C

## The figures

**3.700** energy certifications issued since 2012, and especially since 2020.

**22%** of labels registered in Canillo, while Encamp adds 20%.

**86%** of the documents correspond to multi-family buildings or their units.

**51%** of registered properties use diesel as a source of heat production.



**Carles Miquel**  
DIRECTOR OF THE OECC

«[Switching to renewable energy] is interesting not only for environmental but also economic and social purposes.»

(29.7%) and D (28%) assessments. And following the scale to the detriment, 12.4% achieved an E, 7.1% an F, and 7.8% the G. The same format is used to define the effects of greenhouse gases (GHG), and again the thinnest record corresponds to the best, A, with 3.4%, while the B reaches 12.4%. The most common records are C (22.3%), D (21.2%), and E (21.2%). Finally, 9.8% scored an F and 9.5% a G.

Thus, taking into account these assessments, Miquel acknowledged that «there is a lot of work to be done» in order to improve the energy and emissions quality of the furniture park in the Principality, and stressed that the demands for new buildings - designed with almost zero consumption - and the momentum of the Renova Plan can contribute. In addition, linking it to the current context, the director of the OECC stated that the transition to renewable energy «is interesting not only for an environmental purpose, but also economic and social» in order to «detach of the volatility of the energy market». ≡