



LEISURE AND EVENTS CENTER

# Unnic will open in January

The casino croupier school begins training with around fifty students

The total number of employees will rise to 220 places, while the capacity is 1,000 people



A.PONT

►► A game table from the croupier school.



**MARC MARTOS**

CEO JOCS S.A.

«August has become very profitable for the progress of construction and makes us optimistic»

**XAVIER BARDINA**

DIRECTOR OF THE CRAJ

«The reasons for postponing the opening of the casino are sufficiently justified»

**JOSEP DOS SANTOS**

CASINO GAME DIRECTOR

«We are satisfied to observe how total parity between men and women is produced to fill the positions of croupier»

EL PERIÒDIC  
ANDORRA LA VELLA

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Unnic expects to open in January of next year «unless there is any downgrade». This was pointed out by the CEO of Jocs S.A., Marc Martos, after presenting the first training of the staff who will operate the casino. In this sense, the organization predicts an advance in the opening dates of the leisure facilities, despite the fact that the inauguration, scheduled for this autumn, had to be postponed due to a lack of construction materials for the Prat de la Creu building, together with the negative consequences of the war in Ukraine.

Following the same direction, Martos indicated that, although the month of July was full of complicati-

ons when it came to obtaining building materials, «August has become very profitable for the progress of the building and we have a good rhythm that makes us optimistic». Thus, the group intends to reduce the six-month extension that it requested from the Andorran Game Regulatory Council (CRAJ), which set the limit for materializing the leisure center on March 4th. In this way, the director of the CRAJ, Xavier Bardina, emphasized that «the reasons for postponing the opening of the casino are sufficiently justified».

Referring to the start of training classes at the croupier school to cover the jobs that the leisure center will generate, the casino's gaming director, Josep Dos Santos, asserted that the receipt of registrations is being very positive to this day and that «it fills us with satisfaction to

observe how total parity occurs between men and women who choose to become croupiers and casino staff». In this sense, the professional instruction aims to end on December 31st by carrying out two shifts (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) in order for the students to learn the general techniques of casino games and various improvement actions and manual skills to «ensure a quality experience for the customer», pointed out Dos Santos. At the moment, around fifty people are undertaking the learning course of which 35% have Andorran nationality (although the intention is for the number to rise to 50%) and the rest are residents.

«There are many people from Alt Urgell and, especially from La Seu d'Urgell, who have set their sights on the leisure center», highlighted

Dos Santos, while adding that «the French customer is a very valuable asset important for us». In terms of employees, the casino needs approximately forty trained professionals focused solely on the gaming tables, while for the operation of the entire gaming area, approximately 86 people will be needed. In relation to the entire leisure center, together with the catering and events options, the total number of employees will rise to 220 places, while the maximum capacity, including users and customers, is 1,000 people.

On the other hand, Martos emphasized the importance of Unnic as a «comprehensive leisure center of reference in the country». In fact, he explained that the croupier school room will be used exclusively for the four-month training of the first members of the staff of the game ta-

bles, although «once they move to the Unnic center, they will carry out more training». He also added that the main objective is to open the entire center and put all the activities into operation by the beginning of 2023, although, if this were not possible «we would momentarily paralyze some space dedicated to the activity of the catering».

Finally, Dos Santos positively assessed the response of the students in relation to their technical qualification during the first days of training. In the same way, the fifteen people who attended the first training session last Tuesday were subjected to a test-type exam and a welcome presentation that included the group's organizational chart and thematic and practical blogs which they must reach in four months. ≡

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TRANSPORT

# The Government reinforces the Youth Bus with 18 vehicles at the start of the school year

This service is made available during the peak hours of entry and exit from the educational centers

EL PERIÒDIC  
ANDORRA LA VELLA  
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The Government has reinforced the Youth Bus – formerly the Free Bus – with 18 additional vehicles to adapt transport to the new need for the start of the school year caused by the free pass, which has increased the number of users on the lines. This new service, which will be made available during the peak times of entry and exit from schools, will have a schedule from Monday to Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. To avoid confusion, these vehicles will bear a distinction. However, all those who benefit from the Youth Bus will be able to use the regular lines, and the rest of the users will also be able to use the Youth Bus, as long as it is not saturated, «which is usually the case, because it is always full of students», assured the Secretary of State for the Economy, Eric Bartolomé.

From the Ministries of Economy; Social Affairs; Youth and Equality; and Higher Education, a preliminary study has been carried out to correctly measure the expected demand, analyzing the profile of the users of the Youth Bus: where they study, which parish they come from, what movements of travel they make daily or what effects they will have in the usual lines, among others. In addition, two meetings have been held with the bus companies to develop this work. «The data is validated by the companies, we worked together to see if it was possible and what was the best way to implement it», assessed the Secretary of State.

As for the distribution of the 18 buses on the different lines, this has not been symmetrical «because the journey to the schools, most of which are located in Andorra la Vella, generates more movement»,



The Secretary of State for Economy, Eric Bartolomé.

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«The data is validated by the companies, we worked together to see if it was possible»

indicated Bartolomé. Consequently, the division, although it is distributed across all lines, has been established based on demand analysis. However, a week after the new vehicles are in operation, they will be reviewed to see if they require any adjustments. At the same time, the new service will follow the same route as the rest of the buses, but will have extensions. «Some lines stop at the central station and return to the northern valleys, for example, and obviously these reinforcement buses will go to La Margineda, which is where there is the most need.» For its part, school transport will not change its frequencies and timetables.

**The distribution of vehicles gives priority to lines that go to Andorra la Vella and near the centers.**

In relation to the cost of expanding the bus service, the Secretary of State observed that «the companies will already say how much it will cost them, but by contract, they undertake to respond to the needs of the market, and in this case we understand by market the sector of young people and students who can take the bus from September». It should be remembered that the Government pays the 30 euros that were previously borne by users and «for company purposes, the free charge has no impact», remarked Bartolomé.

For now, an unpredictable factor is user behavior. Although more than 18,000 people currently have the free pass and 2,500 the Youth Bus title, it has not yet been possible to mark a trend in the frequency of use of the service. ≡

## The Batllia rules in favor of the Government for the covid-19 compensation

The appeal presented by Coopalsa has been dismissed and Nadal's appeal is pending

EL PERIÒDIC  
ANDORRA LA VELLA

The Batllia gives the right to the Government before the appeal made by the bus company Coopalsa for the compensations for the losses presented during the pandemic.

Specifically, it validates the calculations and the amount to be collected presented by the Executive, of a total of 470,000 euros, and rejects the company's proposal, which had a discrepancy of more than 10% compared to that of the administration, that is to say, it asked for approximately 60,000 euros more.

For his part, the Secretary of State for the Economy, Eric Bartolomé, remarked that «it is good news, because

the honesty of the department's technicians in the method and calculation came into question». However, Coopalsa can still present an appeal at second instance. At the same time, Autocars Nadal also presented an appeal on its own behalf in relation to the amount paid, which is still awaiting a first instance.

Finally, there is a second demand on the table regarding the compensation for the entry into operation



► Some users are queuing to get on a bus.

of the 30 euro pass, which the two companies also presented. On the one hand, Coopalsa verbally undertook to withdraw the appeal, and,

on the other hand, a meeting is scheduled this morning with Autocars Nadal to see if an agreement can be reached. ≡

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