



Actions on urban planning, mobility and rent ▶ Unequal balance between parliamentary groups

## The Government will grant building licenses in the country for one year

The Executive wants to implement a moratorium on new authorizations for tourist use homes

The «rethought» detour from La Massana will cost around 18 million euros instead of 60

EL PERIÒDIC  
ANDORRA LA VELLA  
@PeriodicAND

The Government wants to bombshell to the problem of access to housing. Once the way of freezing rental contracts was exhausted, and having verified that the scarce new supply «is usually at prices that are far from what a working family can pay», the Government entered yesterday afternoon to parliamentary procedure by way of extreme urgency two legislative proposals that fully affect the market: the control in the granting of building licenses and a moratorium on the new authorizations of homes for tourist use. This was shared by the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, during his intervention in the Political Orientation Debate held yesterday, where he pointed out that «Andorra arrived a little later in this situation, which many other countries have already gone through before us».

First of all, the Executive aims to approve some «ordering guidelines», giving the municipalities a year to

**According** to the urban land consolidated under the parish plans, Andorra could touch 950,000 inhabitants

prepare «maximum capacity studies for each parish», adapting the conclusions to existing and planned resources and infrastructure. In this sense, while the corporations make this order a reality, the building licenses «will be conditional on obtaining a favorable report from the competent ministries in Urban Planning and Environment». In other words, it will be the Government's responsibility to authorize them or not, single-family homes and buildings for rental properties being excluded from these requirements. And it is that, from the Executive, they want to develop a reasonable growth that can be covered, since if you take into account all the urban land consolidated under the parish urban planning plans, Andorra could touch the 950,000 inhabitants, which only 10% to 20% of their basic needs could be covered, taking into account aspects such as hospital capacity, electricity or the road network.

At the same time, also in the matter of housing, the Government wants to implement a two-year mo-



▶ The Head of Government, Xavier Espot, during his appearance yesterday at the Political Orientation Debate.

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**Xavier Espot**  
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

«[The latest approved law] has not prevented this transfer from rental flats to tourist flats from continuing»

roratorium on new authorizations for housing for tourist use «that do not meet the criteria of sustainability and quality». In this period, according to Espot, the Government will have to deploy «a study on the country's tourism capacity», which «will establish the new criteria according to which new tourist flats can be authorized». Regarding this element, Espot pointed out that despite the text approved in the last legislature on the quality of these properties, this text «has not prevented the continuation of this transfer from rental flats to tourist flats», and for this reason 'must take a step further.

In terms of mobility, the head of government referred to the challenges that Andorra has to face precisely because of the increase in the number of residents and visitors. Regarding this fact, and despite remembering that the pandemic forced to «postpone some important works to decongest the country's mobility», Espot announced that the Executive has «rethought» the detour from La Massana, which consider «priority».

### Espot is committed to adapting the Principality to demands on sexual and reproductive rights

▶ In the same way that identity is something dynamic, that evolves, our institutional architecture also evolves». With these words, the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, referred yesterday to the Political Orientation Debate, to the need to adapt the Principality to the progress required in terms of women's sexual and reproductive rights, that is to say, to reach to decriminalize abortion in the country. Espot bets on continuing to work «calmly and discreetly» to achieve this goal, which will have to have «broad consensus». In this sense, the head of government linked the «differentiated identity» of Andorra, which starts precisely from the fact of having «differentiated institutions». «Andorra is the daughter of a certain institutional architecture», he pointed out. However, and

quoting the Austrian writer Stefan Zweig in passing, Espot warned of a growing nationalist reaction around the world since the financial crisis of 2007, based on the premise that those from home come first, and its possible invasion of the Principality. So, he was forceful: «If anyone thinks that Andorra would do well in a scenario like this [that of the Europe of nation-states], they are wrong». In fact, the head of government pointed out that, turning its back on Europe and the European Union, «Andorra lived on the edge, secluded between mountains and could barely provide for the subsistence of 5,000 or 6,000 people», stating that the duty, both of the Executive as of all the general councilors is «to govern and think about the 80,000 today, not the 5,000 a century ago».

Thus, although it was initially calculated that this infrastructure would cost 60 million euros, a new project has been made that dispenses with the Serra del Honor tunnel, reducing the investment to just over 18 million and allowing work to begin this legislature.

These were the big announcements in a speech where Espot made an exhibition of the work done in the last year, highlighting other elements such as the energy sector, economic diversification, justice reform, cultural and linguistic policy, investments in the sport sector, the relevance of public health, the promotion of equality, the restructuring of the pension system, the management of public finances, the future tax reform and the partnership agreement. A series of areas and actions dealt with from a «centered, reformist, balanced and prudent positioning», which according to Espot, make up the DNA of the democratic and liberal ideas that have guided his mandate, while seeking harmony «that so characterizes the Andorrans». ≡

# The PS charges Espot and focuses on housing and health

He also ensures that the minimum wage will not reach 60% of the average

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ANDORRA LA VELLA

In the context of the current political debate of the General Council, the opposition's response to the speech of the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, criticizes the actions of the Government, particularly affecting housing, health and the labor conditions of the workers. In this sense, the president of the Social Democratic Party (PS), Pere López, assured that «property speculation has overtaken the universal right to decent and affordable housing for Andorrans and residents». As an example, López pointed to the Borda Nova project as an initiative that «inexplicably has been expanding for three years».

Following the same line, the president of the PS focused a good part of his response to Espot on the increase in the general precariousness of the country «generated by the inaction of the Executive; the cost of living in Andorra keeps rising and it becomes impossible in many cases to live here». In fact, he added that throughout the legislature, the Government «does not understand what is happening; therefore, there are no expectations of improvement in the future after



► The president of the Social Democratic Party (PS), Pere López.

listening a speech empty of proposals».

At the same time, the representative of the social democrats influenced the field of health, placing special emphasis on the management of services focused on the mental health of the population. In this way, he emphasized that «the aggravation of these psychological and mental affects continue to be ignored and hidden». In addition, he asserted that the increase in pri-

ces of necessary and scarce resources such as, for example, social and health care homes, «only aggravate the situation of the groups that need the most protection».

Referring to the management of the Health portfolio, López pointed out that on several occasions, «despite the fact that they say they want to put people at the center of attention», the Executive has carried out projects «ignoring the reality of the population». In this sense, he exem-



PERE LÓPEZ  
PRESIDENT OF PS

«Real estate speculation has overtaken the universal right to decent and affordable housing»

«There is still 160 euros missing [from the minimum wage] which is very necessary to reach the threshold [of the average wage]»

plified his argument with «the breaches of the promises of the third party payer of the CASS, the lack of resources for mental health care or the incomplete commitments in relation to cancer patients».

On the other hand, the PS was critical of the management of employment policies stating that the minimum wage will not reach 60% of the average wage «as stated in the European Social Charter, and, above all, as the majority was committed during the last electoral campaign». In fact, López recalled that the latest official data for the month of May placed the minimum wage at around 53% of the average, which means that «there is still a much-needed 160 euros missing today to reach this threshold». Likewise, he indicated that low wages, compared to the cost of living, will end up becoming a problem, not only for workers, «but also for the entire productive fabric and business competitiveness». ≡

## Terceravia, against the «abuse» of urgent procedures

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The president of Terceravia, Josep Pintat, took a notable position against the «abuse» of procedures for the extremely urgent procedure that the Executive has carried out throughout the legislature. Firstly, however, he emphasized that the holding of the political orientation debate «should have been carried out in the first moments of the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine». In the same way, he pointed directly to the head of government, Xavier Espot, stating that «despite the fact that we have asked for it on repeated occasions, information and specific analyzes have been hidden from us throughout the political course». Regarding general budgets, he asserted that «items are moved from one place to another without knowing why».

On the other hand, the non-affiliated councilor, Carine Montaner, asked the Andorran people to hold a referendum to decide on the suitability of the referring doctor system, along with an emergency plan for the health system, since «two legislatures that I report the discomfort to the SAAS». At the same time, she asked for the figure of the third universal payer and criticized that Andorra «lost its neutrality» with its position towards the war in Ukraine. ≡

## Most aim to filter foreign investment to curb speculation

Costa wants to strengthen the legal framework of Catalan language and extend its visibility

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The president of the Democratic Parliamentary Group for Andorra, Carles Enseñat, celebrated, together with the other formations of the parliamentary majority, the performance of the Executive throughout the crises of the coronavirus and the subsequent inflation caused by the armed conflict and the global economic context. However, focusing on national politics, Enseñat announced that Democrats will support new legislative

tools to filter foreign investment to the detriment of real estate speculation and to favor the promotion of housing. In this sense, he celebrated the decision of the Executive for the decision to commission a study on the capacity of tourist accommodation and the addition of requirements by Territory and Environment. Likewise, he expressed the will to push forward a proposed resolution for the creation of natural spaces in the richest areas of the Principality's biosphere.

Regarding the intervention of the Independent Parliamentary Group, its representative, Ferran Costa, congratulated the Government on the policies carried out up to now. Afterwards, he addressed all the members

of the bench representing the Executive to promote a proposed resolution to strengthen the legal framework of Catalan and its social use in Andorra. Thus, «we want to take a step forward and take advantage of the privileged position we have as the only country in which Catalan is the official language to extend its visibility to all the international organizations of which we are».

Finally, the councilor of Committed Citizens (CC), Carles Naudi, underlined, among others, the mobility actions promoted by the Government and congratulated FEDA's investments to guarantee the cost of energy to curb the impact of the price of light. ≡



► The general trustee, Roser Suñé, and the general counsel, Carles Enseñat.

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