



DISAGREEMENTS WITH GALLARDO AND CABANES

Liberal rupture

Pallarés and the four general councilors leave the formation and announce a new project for the future

They say that the stability of the tripartite government is guaranteed until the end of this legislature

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Judith Pallarés and the four Liberal general councilors, Ferran Costa, Marc Magallón, Eva López and Sílvia Ferrer, announced yesterday that they will resign from the party in the next few hours. It all goes back to the internal conflicts of recent weeks that arose as a result of the elections, in which Pallarés lost by a single vote of difference to Josep Maria Cabanes, and which the president of the formation, Jordi Gallardo, has used to add fuel to the fire. In fact, the trigger has been, precisely, the statements of Gallardo in different media stating that he feels betrayed by Pallarés and showing his support for a turn towards the conservatism of Cabanes and that has caused the politics of Massana has broken his silence: "I haven't said anything since the elections were held and until today three weeks and many things have passed. I thought we had to agree on positions, but beyond the press interviews, there has been no rapprochement on the part of the executive. Nobody called me", lamented Pallarés, stating that Gallardo's demonstrations seem to invite us more to leave the game than to have a team to join all the parties.

In this way, Pallarés wanted to offer her version of events and «end this series that has lasted too long». «I have always said that I did not want to run on any of the lists, but the day to call the elections has come and there is no candidate. Gallardo had told us that he would inform us when he made a decision, but he did not do so, and this shows that we do not trust him», said the former Liberal member. She added: «having open primaries makes me change my mind, and that's why I'm hosting. Loyalty must be reciprocal [in reference to the alleged betrayal of Gallardo] and respect does not mean obedience or



► Judith Pallarés, in the center, with the four general councilors, in a press conference.

silence means submission.

That's how things are, and «understanding the word liberal as a broad spectrum», Pallarés and the four general councilors decide to leave the formation. A decision that they transfer to the head of government, Xavier Espot, as well as to the presidents of the parliamentary groups Democrat and Committed Citizens, Carles Enseñat and Carles Naudi, respectively, with the commitment to maintain the current stability of the tripartite government.

NEW PROJECT FOR THE FUTURE // Howe-



JUDIT PALLARÉS
EXAFFILIATED TO LIBERALS

«In the progressive center there is room for open-minded training that works to defend people»

ver, all of them are clear that they will continue to support a project of «liberal ideology, which generates enthusiasm and leaves behind this toxic management», although nothing has been defined yet. What they were able to say is that «we have a WhatsApp group with a lot of people who have given us their support» and that «in the progressive center of Andorra there is room for an open-minded formation that works to defend people, the economy and climate justice».

For his part, Costa, as spokesman for the four councilors, said



FERRAN COSTA
P. LIBERAL PARL. GROUP

«We will tend to progressivism and not return to values we have struggled to move away»

that the joint decision was not «simple or hasty» and accused Gallardo and Cabanes of «degrading» their electoral program, which is far from of what the citizens sent us". In this sense, he pointed out that «we will continue to work for very clear liberal postulates that will tend to progressivism, and we will not return to values from which we have fought hard to move away.» «If he [Gallardo] feels betrayed, I am very disappointed that after 15 years my teammate says the opposite of what we have defended,» said Pallarés. He also acknowledged that, despite being members of the Executive, their relationship beyond the Council of Ministers is non-existent, but «we are adults, we have a commitment to the head of government and we must maintain it. If he thinks differently, I'll tell you, we only talk through the media».

Finally, Costa recalled that, in addition to being a general counsel, he is also a delegate to the parliamentary OSCE and one of his roles is to act as an election observer following very strict procedures and "I have been to the United States, Hungary and Uzbekistan that I have seen in the Liberal House in the primary process I have not seen it in any of these countries.

However, it remains to be seen whether they will be able to maintain the name of Liberal Parliamentary Group or whether they will have to move to the Joint Group, with non-attached General Councilor Carine Montaner. ≡

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«Andorra is the first country of origin of our students from outside of Spain»

JAUME PUY LLORENS Rector of the University of Lleida

IRINA RYBALCHENKO

LLEIDA

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The University of Lleida (UdL) combines a university tradition with a young and dynamic structure. The Iberus project has awarded UdL the «Campus of International Excellence» title, which also extends to the Universities of Zaragoza, La Rioja and Navarre.

UdL is characterized by an innovative training offer focused on achieving the objectives of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

The International Relations unit manages academic exchange programs at the University of Lleida, such as Erasmus+ and the UdL Mobility Programme, among others. It encourages the mobility of students, teaching and administrative staff towards other higher education institutions, and it also promotes the reception and integration at the University of Lleida of students and staff coming from universities abroad.

We spoke with **Jaume Puy Llorens**, Rector of the University of Lleida, about international programs, the most sought-after faculties, student employment and the university's most famous alumnus.

–What is the budget of the University of Lleida for 2022 for the development of education and science?

–UdL's 2022 budget is just over €97 million, mostly funded by the Catalan government (66%), followed by academic fees (23%). Most of the budget goes to the salaries of teachers, researchers and administrative and support staff.

–Which faculties are the most popular among students?

–We have specializations divided into four main areas: health sciences; engineering and informatics; humanities and social sciences; agro-food, forestry and veterinary medicine. In all these areas, we train specialists at the international level.

The University of Lleida is prominent in Catalonia and is an international reference point in agri-food and forestry research.

The Faculties of Education and Health, Medicine and Nursing, and the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine and INEFC (Affiliated Center) receive many more applications than they can offer.

–Do you have foreign students?

–We need to distinguish between those who participate in mobility programs and those who study with us regularly. In terms of mobility, aside from the downturn that the pandemic caused, we typically host about 450 students each year, with most students from Italy and Mexico (17% each), followed by China and Brazil (12% each). At the same time, more than 360 UdL students leave Spain for study programs, with Italy and Mexico being the main



destinations.

The Faculty of Education, Psychology and Social Work heads mobility with the University of Andorra. UdL accepted six Andorran students this year and sent five of its own to Andorra.

In terms of regular enrollment, this year we have accepted 156 students from Andorra in regulated study programs (145 undergraduates, seven masters and four doctoral students).

Andorra is the first country of origin of our regular students from outside Spain.

–Are there any joint research projects with Andorra? In what areas?

–There is academic cooperation between UdL and the University of Andorra in the field of teaching, joint supervision of dissertations, etc. Cultural aspects such as the theater in Andorra or the fallas (fire festival) in the context of the entire Pyrenees that the researchers of UdL have studied. We haven't had joint research projects, but this is an area to explore as there are many areas of common interest on both sides.

–Do you have distance learning programs?

–We are a full-time university. While we have successfully established distance learning during the pandemic, we have returned to in-person learning when conditions allow.

–What innovations does the university apply in the field of education?

–We have an intensive in-house innovative learning program dedicated to teachers, which includes dozens of specialization courses that are offered each year. We encourage innovation in education through grants and institutional awards, both general and, in some cases, sectoral.

The quality of teaching at UdL is prominent every year both internationally (in THE Impact Rankings 2022 we are in 46th place out of 1180 universities in terms of education quality) and nationally (in the U-ranking we are in third place) among 72 Spanish universities.

–What percentage of graduate students find a job after graduation? Do you have contracts with companies or a support system for graduates looking for a job?

–Students at the University of Lleida undertake a traineeship in

companies or institutions of all levels. We have over a thousand contracts that allow us to offer over 2,700 places per year, where UdL students complete over 2,300 traineeships. We have over 10,000 job postings registered on our Job Teaser website. As a result, 92% of our graduates find a job within a year of graduation.

–Is research being conducted at your university? In what areas?

–Research is one of the pillars of our university and we are very competitive internationally in some areas of expertise. For many years we have been ranked first in international rankings in the field of food and agriculture. Our two professors, Dr. Olga Martín (food technology) and Dr. Luisa F. Cabeza (energy engineering) are among the most cited researchers in the world in their respective fields.

UdL's environmental and forestry research related to climate change has also been published in the world's top scientific journals, including Science.

It is difficult to summarize, without leaving significant contributions, the effect of the more than 800 scientific publications that

our research staff makes each year and which, in percentage terms, appear more often in specialized journals than the average for other Spanish universities.

–What are the benefits of the Erasmus program? Which countries do you have an agreement with?

–The Erasmus program has been a success for the European Union and UdL has been involved in it from the very beginning, enabling thousands of our students to discover their professional and personal horizons over the years. The presence of mobile students in UdL also has a strong economic impact on the city. We have Erasmus exchange agreements with universities from almost the entire EU, as well as third countries associated with the program. Our Erasmus students' favorite destinations are, in that order, Italy, Germany, France and Poland.

–Are there student financial support programs? If a student does not have enough money, can they attain higher education in Spain?

–The state has a general concept in the field of scholarships for studies, managed by the government of Catalonia, through which, depending on the socio-economic situation, the student can receive help for studies and study materials, and move from their place of residence to the university and/or offset the cost living away from home.

UdL has its programs that complement these needs in the form of scholarships, travel grants, special grants for study in difficult socioeconomic situations, and grants for students with special educational needs, among others.

UdL is a public university and the government of Catalonia approves the fees for official and master's degrees each year.

–Can you name a few of the most famous students who graduated from the university?

–UdL is a young university, and I would rather talk about graduates in prestigious or responsible positions than about celebrities.

Probably the best-known today is Dr. Bea Mothe, who works at the IRSICAixa Research Center, and holds a Ph.D. in Medicine. One could also mention Dr. Enrique Playán, an agricultural engineer who for several years headed the Spanish State Research Agency.

Our graduates are agricultural engineer Dr. Maria Navarro, a professor at the University of Georgia (USA), and Dr. Àngela Cánovas, an expert in animal genetics at the University of Guelph (Canada). Both have received outstanding awards in their academic and scientific careers. And finally, Professor Núria Perpinyà, educated at the Faculty of Arts, and today is a well-known writer of essays and novels. ≡