

HIGH-LEVEL FORUM

Stop Violence calls for women's rights not to be violated

The group demands that abortion be legalized and that critical voices be stopped from being

In a previous report, they lament that Catholic doctrine prevents Andorra from making social

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Stop Violence calls, once again, Andorra to make progress on women's rights. Through a report parallel to that of the Government, presented yesterday at the High Level Forum of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) held in New York, the group takes stock of the achievement of the Development Goals Sustainable Development (SDGs) 4, 5 and 17 by the Principality. This is a document that was published a few days ago on the website of the international feminist group Women's Major Group. Thus, its president, Vanessa M. Cortés, participated in the debate and asked Minister Maria Ubach about her lawsuit.

In this report, Stop Violence argues in relation to SDG 5, for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, that feminicides are not counted in Andorra. In this sense, they consider it «unlikely that, despite a high degree of gender-based violence, there are no feminicides», while criticizing the lack of transparency regarding deaths due to causes such as mental illness, poisoning and injuries or directly unknown. At the same time, they point out that the crime of gender violence is not classified in the Penal Code and that there is a flagrant lack of provision of equality departments in the different estates, which contributes to care without the prospect of gender and «outdated» methods.

On this point, the group also refers to the right to abortion, which they demand be legalized so that «women's sexual and reproductive rights» are respected. Thus, they highlight the work carried out by the network la Meri and doubted the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Care Service for Women (SIAD), emphasizing that «we know nothing about this service: the protocols



► A moment from Vanessa M. Cortés's speech in New York.

of performance are not public and the data provided are general and unspecific».

With regard to SDG 17, of the Alliance for Objectives, Stop Violence regrets that «the Government of Andorra does not hesitate to exercise state violence against the civilian population that dares to exercise freedom of expression», citing the case of Cortés herself as well as that of the president of the Andorran Institute of Human Rights, Elisa Muxella. In short, they point out that «there is no effective mechanism that safeguards the rights of citizens and to be independent».

They criticize the opacity of the SIAD and that the resources provided by professionals «are general and not very specific»

Finally, in relation to SDG 4, for Quality Education, the organization emphasizes that the campaign against bullying in schools has «obvious shortcomings and is full of stereotypes», while criticizing that the state does not guarantee an education based on a culture of peace, due to the fact that Andorra is in an «exceptional situation of government», as the doctrine of the Catholic Church is present in all matters of state and makes it impossible for most social advances».

Ultimately, they say that there is no good system of protection for single-parent families, given that the



► Ubach, during the presentation.

Ubach reaffirms the country's commitment to the 2030 Agenda

► The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maria Ubach, presented yesterday in New York the results of the National Voluntary Report (INV) of Andorra before the High Level Political Forum of the Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) of the Nations United. «The Principality has made progress on the environment, the fight against climate change and gender equality, as well as ensuring the diversification of its economy,» said Ubach. The Minister also reaffirmed the will of Andorra and the Government to make the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda a reality.

aid that is usually offered «is based on charity and makes the citizen feel that they are being favored», and it leads to circumstances where some women must go through «intervention programs based on infantilism and paternalism» in order to regain custody of children withdrawn for reasons that the organization questions. In short, Stop Violence states that «the Principality is in Europe, but it is far from guaranteeing the human rights prevailing on the continent».

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RENTAL ISSUES

The Housing Office handles 334 inquiries during the first half year

Tenants make twice as many requests as landlords and usually ask for an extension of the contract

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The Housing Office closed the first half of 2022 with a total of 334 queries dealt with in different ways: in person, by telephone or e-mail. The service - located on the ground floor of the Government building on Prat de la Creu street - aims to provide information, guidance and resolve the doubts of the public on aspects related to housing. Breaking down the data, of the total of 334 consultations carried out between January 1st and June 30th, 2022; 188 have been by telephone, 91 in person and 55 by e-mail.

With regard to the most frequent queries, it is noted that 28.74% relate to information on the extension of the contract and the procedure for recovering the home for personal or family use, in accordance with the law of measures of protection and flexibility of the leasing market. 16.76% of the inquiries are linked to information on the requirements and documentation to be submitted for the various aids by the Government in the field of housing; such as rent housing assistance or the Youth Emancipation Promotion Program.

There are also inquiries related to requests for information on public housing (7.48%), damage and repairs to housing (7.10%), con-



▶▶ Archive image of homes for rent.

sumption and their distribution (6.50%), and the requirements to apply for the Real Estate Transfer Tax Exemption (5.06%).

At the same time, there were a number of inquiries, representing a total of 28.36% of the total, in-

cluding the return of bonds or information on updating the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

As for the type of applicants, the majority, 154, are from real estate tenants, 70 from landlords and 110 from others.

With the aim of resolving all kinds of doubts, the office centralizes and unifies care in this matter through a specialized professional of the Ministry of Territory and Housing, Xavier Marchante, who has extensive training in hou-

The figures

- 334** inquiries answered by telephone, in person and by e-mail.
- 28,74%** of inquiries are for the extension of the contract or to recover the apartment.
- 16,76%** of inquiries are about requirements for government aid.
- 154** are the tenants who have made inquiries, 70 the owners and 110 others.

sing to address face-to-face consultations. In this sense, Marchante himself explained in statements to RTVA that several cases have been detected in which attempts have been made to defraud tenants by doubling the price of the current rent and notifying a termination of the lease by offering twice as much. On the other hand, he also acknowledged that more and more homeowners are coming to the office to find out what to do in case of non-payment, as this is a situation that has been on the rise in recent times. ≡

The PS again blames the Government for its «inaction»

It is said that the Executive «is mocking» when it announces non-compliance measures

EL PERIÒDIC
ANDORRA LA VELLA

The Social Democratic Party (PS) again blamed the government yesterday, accusing it of «inability» or «lack of will» to solve the housing problem. The president of the formation, Pere López, and the general counselor Gerard Alís appeared three days after the ministers of Territory and Housing, Víctor Fillo, and the one of Finance, Eric Jover, announced that they are negotiating with the CASS so that part of the retirement reserve fund enters the Housing Fund through financial contributions as one more part-

ner. A proposal that is not new. In fact, the Social Democrats themselves did a similar one in 2019 when they proposed a public-private fund that included empty flats and allocated them for affordable rent, which was rightly rejected by the government. «We don't know if it's a matter of incapacity or just a lack of will, but it looks more like the latter, since they're just announcing that they're going to do a lot of things and when it comes to the truth, there's nothing,» said Alís. In a similar vein, López, with a whole collection of newspaper archives in his hands, read headlines from the last three years that «produce a creepy feeling, because it is not known if we are talking about 2019 or 2022. The news is the same». He added: «Our feeling is outrageous,

it can't be that there is so much incompetence, let alone when we already warned that action had to be taken.»

Ultimately, the Social Democrats believe that the legislature will end and the problem will not only continue but will be exacerbated by the «inaction» of the majority. «During all this time it has been impossible to sit down and talk to this government and make a joint housing policy. It is clear that they have failed and I suppose that now they are in a hurry to do what they have not been able to do before», lamented López, who also called the citizens' «hair-raising» way of acting of the Executive. «With so many events and announcements, it may give the impression that something is being done about it, but



▶▶ Alís and López during appearance at the PS headquarters.

the reality is that in the meantime prices continue to rise,» said Alís.

Regarding the demand of the head of government, Xavier Espot, to the municipalities to «do more» to find a solution, López admitted that «it is everyone's responsibi-

lity», but while it is true that «the municipalities have a lot of land». «It is the government that sets housing policies and it has been the government itself that has not wanted to put money into the state budget» to deal with it. ≡

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