



SOCIAL SECURITY

Unions oppose retirement reform

USDA criticizes parliamentary majority for making proposal «behind society»

Ubach points out that «the government gives facilities to foreign capital, but harms employees»

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The Union of Trade Unions of Andorra (USdA) is opposed to the proposals to reform the pension system of the Principality that it made public in the Andorran Social Security Fund (CASS). In this regard, the Secretary General of the USDA, Gabriel Ubach, admitted that «we do not agree with the proposals, but we believe that the issue of retirement has to do with the pre-existing system, which does not fit to the reality of the country». In fact, Ubach criticized that «the political majority has made decisions behind the back of society by ignoring the position of the unions, but the maximum social consensus must be sought to take measures that affect a large part of the population.»

The USDA representative believes that «a new solution should be sought to ensure the sustainability of the pension system.» Similarly, he considers that salaries do not

The demands of the Sipaag go in the opposite direction to the modifications endorsed by the CASS

match rental prices because «a person cannot pay a rent of 800 euros if he earns only 650 euros.» Following the same line, he noted that from the political and business sphere «we want to give an image of global wealth of the country when, in fact, the working class is losing purchasing power» and added that «now, the pensioners has to pay for the damage caused by politicians' decisions.»

According to the USDA, there are other ways to clean up public accounts so that they do not fall directly on the worker. In this regard, Ubach criticized the government for «making it easier for foreign companies to come to the Principality in order to save a large percentage of taxation in their country of origin and only harm the wor-



SERGI PÉREZ

► Archive image of a person leaving the CASS headquarters.

ker». He added that «we do not understand that the representatives of the workers of the Board of Directors of the CASS evaluate these harmful measures.» He then emphasized the country's electoral behavior, stating that «abstentionists support the measures taken by this government; either you do politics, or they do it to you».

Meanwhile, Marta Pujol, secretary of the General Administration Staff (Sipaag), believes that the proposed reform «goes in the opposite direction to some of the union's demands.» In this sense, the text that Sipaag delivered to the political parties two weeks ago, calls for the retirement age to be maintained at 65, so «at this point we come into conflict.» Following the line of the private pension plan proposed



GABRIEL UBACH
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE USDA

«We do not understand how the representatives of the CASS workers endorse these harmful measures»

MARTA PUJOL
SECRETARY OF THE SIPAAG

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by the CASS, Pujol pointed out that «it is true that we contemplate that workers and companies intervene in the process, but I do not think that pension plans should be outsourced, but that the workers' companies themselves manage it».

Finally, Pujol concluded that «it cannot be understood that the worker extends the retirement age and increases contributions when it is not known whether decent pensions can be guaranteed for the last stage of people's lives». In addition, agreeing with the representative of the Trade Union, Pujol pointed out that «consultation work must be done prior to making such decisions; if the law needs to be amended so that the workers' representatives have an impact in this area, they will find support». ≡

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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Forty of the 152 Ukrainian refugees in Andorra are minors

The government increases the return of fuel taxes to carriers and taxi drivers by six cents per liter

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The government has so far registered 152 refugees from the war in Ukraine, about 40 of whom are minors who need to go to school. However, this is not a problem, as in the words of the spokesman for the Minister Eric Jover, «our legislation provides that the right [to go to school] goes beyond the legal status of the child and his family and therefore all of them have direct access to the three education systems that are taught in the country. In addition, Social Affairs is «already contacting» all newcomers to adapt to their needs and provide them with appropriate opportunities. The Executive will also set an «acceptable» contingent in the coming days, although Jover recalled that «we must understand that we are the country we are and if we want to make a quality reception, it must be proportionate.» In this regard, the Minister reported that the refugee cap will be reviewed every two years and, if it is necessary to receive more, another decree will be issued, depending on the evolution of the campaign: «If there is a halt to the war, many of these people will want to return to their country. We need to understand the difference between



► Ukrainian protesters on the day of the peaceful rally against the invasion of Russia in front of the government.

en a one-off situation and a one-time conflict” Jover said.

As for humanitarian aid from the Principality, the Red Cross has closed the next convoy that will leave tomorrow for the border with Poland, and will consist of a trailer and a minibus with 31 seats, with 10 volunteers loaded of basic ne-

cessities.

On the other hand, but also with a direct involvement in the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Council of Ministers decided yesterday to increase by six cents per liter the refunds of indirect fuel taxes to professional groups, such as carriers and taxi drivers. Thus, if

until now the return was 10, 12 or 14 cents depending on the type of vehicle and its degree of pollution, from the new regulation, and “temporarily and until there is no economic recovery”, Will be 16, 18 or 20 cents. «What we are looking for with this measure is, on the one hand, to help sectors that are hig-



ERIC JOVER

MINISTER SPOKESMAN

«We have to understand that we are the country we are and if we want to make a quality reception, it must be proportionate»

hly consuming hydrocarbons and are particularly affected, and on the other hand, that there is an indirect impact on the general public.» , said Jover, adding that «at the moment, we do not consider it with the general population because the prices we offer are still more competitive than in neighboring countries, the tax capacity we have to make discounts is much lower than that of these neighbors and we bet on the use of public transport. Therefore, the green tax will remain intact and this partial return will mean, according to the calculations of the same Executive, a loss of more than half a million euros for the State.

Finally, Minister Spokesman recalled that «soon» FEDA will raise electricity tariffs, bearing in mind that, although prices will continue to be «adjusted», the company must be «sustainable». ≡

Gallardo dismisses director of statistics

The Council of Ministers approved yesterday the dismissal of the director of statistics, Joan Soler, after the Ministry of Civil Service received a formal complaint from the workers about the «relationship management system by the director». Although there is no definitive report yet, the «preliminary findings» of the investigation show that there are «difficulties» and to «protect the work environment» it has been decided to stop Soler. Until there is an official replacement, Secretary of State Marc Galabert will take over the day-to-day functions of the department.

100% subsidy for electronic certificates

The government has approved the regulation of public prices for the different types of electronic certification services that are still subsidized for another year, so they have no cost to the user. Thus, it has been agreed to fully subsidize electronic certification services in order to boost the use of electronic trust services, deepen their implementation and drive the digital transition. Certificates can be individual, corporate or representative and cost between 29 and 200 euros.

Improvements to the French school in Sant Julià

The government has given the green light to bid for work to improve accessibility to the French school in Sant Julià de Lòria. Once the works are completed, all schools in the country will be adapted to accessibility regulations. The works that are being tendered include the installation of an elevator, the reform of accesses, the installation of support handrails and the adaptation of the toilets, following the criteria of universal accessibility for people with reduced mobility. The national competition will be held with an open procedure and ordinary contracting.

Supply and replacement of barriers

The Executive has approved the tender, contracting and supply of metal safety barriers such as biona and mixed metal or wood barriers for different points on the road network in Andorra. The tender for the work of replacing and complementing the vehicle restraint systems on the CG-1, in the area after the Municipal Stadium, has also been approved; on the CG-2, in the Sant Joan de Caselles area; on the CG-2, at the Funicamp roundabout and on the CG-5, at the exit of the Erts roundabout. Both tenders will be made through a national competition.

Call for sports aid

The public call for the granting of aid to sports organizations for the year 2022 was approved yesterday by the Council of Ministers. Applications must be submitted via the digital sports aid platform and must include the following documentation: 2022 budget, digitally signed by the president of the sports entity, and sports report, signed also digitally by the president. The call is urgent in order to be able to award the grants as quickly as possible for the entities to function properly.

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