



## PARISH JURISDICTION

# The APTA would limit municipal competences to the type of building

He believes that a global revision of the land law is needed, «adapted to the particularity» of the country

He warns that the changes to Ordino's town planning plan have caused «the opposite effect that was sought»

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The Association of Andorran Landowners (APTA) considers that communal competences in matters of housing should be limited to the typology of buildings. «I'm not ashamed, it's true, I've changed my mind regarding communal powers, what's happening is that the conditions have changed», acknowledged its president, Josep Duró. «When I was consul [of Ordino], the population was around 50,000 people - he recalled -; that is to say, that the municipalities made decisions and you went down the road calmly and nothing happened.» Now, «things have changed, the citizen is asking for more, the economy and the financial situation is different. I am not saying that they should not have competences, but only on the typology of buildings», he reiterated.

According to Duró, in Escaldes-Engordany «they are now 20 floors buildings, very well, but I find it very difficult for them to do the same in Ordino or Canillo, they must preserve their particularity». But, beyond that, «policies on population density, infrastructure, water or energy must be assessed in a general way, they are not communal competences». Since the Constitution was drawn up, he added, «the competence concept has evolved because a lot of time has passed, with changing social and economic aspects». Regarding the construction, «how lucky we were during the pandemic, because if it had stopped Andorra would not have been able to get up from an economic point of view. Every time there has been a problem in France or Spain, Andorra has always escape from better», he said.

On whether it is necessary to change the Constitution for municipal powers, «it is very complicated» to reform a Magna Carta. However, «reforms can be made that do not require a constitutional change. There are certain mechanisms that other countries have made, and we are no more stupid than them. We have to look at what they do next door and think how we can apply it here. We have an identity and specificity, but the experience of other countries can help us».

Another aspect that the entity puts



► La Querola of Ordino, seen from the village.



**JOSEP DURÓ**  
PRESIDENT OF THE APTA

«Policies on population density, infrastructure, water or energy must be assessed in a general way»

on the table is the modification of the land law. According to Duró, «it must be adapted to the particularity of Andorra and a global review must be carried out. It is not normal for a person living in Andorra, Andorran or resident, to want to build a chalet and not be able to. It is not normal that certain people in the country who work and want to build a building for their family cannot do so. They go to the bank and they don't give them credit», he lamented. On the other hand, «there are people who come from outside and build a large urbanization with many houses, the banks open the tap for them, they will do the construction, take the money and leave, and that is not possible either». For this reason, the APTA suggests two solutions:

controlling the population density, with the intervention of the Government and the municipalities, «and those who come from outside, who are welcome, who have duties to fulfill in the project they want to do, where it is specified when they do it and when they leave», since now «they create residential areas, people live there, they have paid, they have left and then the one who had to solve the problems was the Government and the municipality ones. And that cannot be possible, the other countries have taken measures», he pointed out.

**OPPOSITE EFFECT** // On the other hand, the Municipality of Ordino approved this July a change in the town plan-

ning plan of the parish in just 10 days. «22 years ago I did the same thing when I was consul and someone came in and in a month threw everything back», recalled the president of the Association of Andorran Landowners. «Having said that, I am in favor of this initiative of the current council, but this does not prevent the projects from being entered and authorized and, moreover, it must be taken into account that the measure has not achieved the objective, since the prices. Sometimes political decisions have the opposite effect to what the rulers seek. It's about the country model and you have to get all the pieces to make a puzzle. It is not normal for each municipality to make its own policy», he said. ≡

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ECONOMY

# Summer bike rental continues an upward trend

Representatives of the sector indicate that this dynamic is consolidating due to the lack of supplies

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The rental of mountain bikes continues an upward trend in the tourism sector given the general situation of difficulty generated by the lack of supply from manufacturers. This was stated by Pic Negre's marketing manager, Àlex Godayol, after stating that «this year it is very difficult for us to get purchase units from the main brands» because international inflation and the increase in the cost of raw materials for manufacturers to raise product prices.

Returning to the line of rent, the company emphasized that the descent modality is a consolidated product that means one of the main reasons for invoicing. In this sense, Godayol related the success of this product to «the work done by companies like Vallnord and its Bike Park to strengthen an infrastructure aimed at attracting the maximum possible number of visitors» in La Massana. In addition, he also emphasized the synergies created by the existence of mountain guides for those tourists who want to tour the Principality on two wheels.

In relation to sales, aside from the lack of supplies that directly affects the sector, Pic Negre pointed out that this summer, despite the uncertainty caused by international economic and humanitarian conflicts, the company is experiencing a period with sales similar to the figures before the pandemic. In this way, Godayol asserted that «green shoots are seen in consumption and we hope that it will be a dynamic that will be maintained and even get better». Going into the details of inflation, the companies in the sector are making «efforts» to try to pass on the price increase to customers as little as possible, such as «offering discounts of up to 50% in some cases».

Regarding the type of customer, Pic Negre states that there are profiles of people who are dedicated exclusively to trekking or moun-



VALLNORD-PAL AFINSAL

► An image of a cyclist at a Cross Country event.

## Manufacturers raise unit prices due to inflation and the cost of raw materials

tain biking, but ultimately «they all come looking for the mountain». However, the company emphasizes that the majority of these are «mountain tourists» rather than «sportsmen», which «is partly due to the lack of infrastructure and country services that facilitate the technicalization of this public». In turn, Godayol added that 75% of customers are tourists and the remaining 25% are residents.

Referring to the level of human resources, in the case of Pic Negre, the company has not suffered any setbacks when looking for workers because «of the 26 stores we have at the slopes in winter, four remain open, located both

in the Vallnord sector (La Massana and Anyós) and in Grandvalira (Soldeu)», which means that the size of the workforce needed to cover demand is smaller. However, the figure most needed in the summer is that of mechanics. This is why many companies «carry out the training of permanent staff in these skills in order to cover the vacancies that may arise at the change of season».

On the other hand, the sector is optimistic about the proliferation of activity with electric vehicles. In this sense, Godayol pointed out that «we are noticing a slight increase in interest», which could become a more widespread con-



## Àlex Godayol

PIC NEGRE MARKETING MANAGER

«We see green shoots in consumption and we hope that it will be a dynamic that will be maintained and even get better»

«[The lower influx of athletes] is due to the lack of infrastructure and country services that facilitate the technicalization of the public»

sumption «if we had as a country and with the help of the public sector, more infrastructure, routes and services that would guarantee visitors even more complete experiences». Despite this, he asserted that, in order to be able to compare Andorra to other areas such as the Alps «where it is completely integrated and has a good path towards the future, it is necessary to create a transversal product that attracts both family tourism and a more technical and professional profile».

Finally, Pic Negre mentioned the deseasonalization of the tourism sector, noting that «the efforts of companies creating new products and agreements with premium brands attract a public that previously preferred to go elsewhere». However, the summer season continues to be far from the visits and turnover of the winter season in relation to the world of skiing and activities in the snow. ▬

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(+376) 353 424 / (+376) 379 769

(+376) 747 747

laportella@andorra.ad

Casa Nova Olivet 10 · Ordino

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