



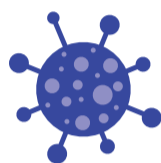
## HEALTH UPDATE

# Health investigates why there were people without masks in Mountain Music

The government plans to lift the covid certificate in the coming weeks

The trend of contagion continues to decline with 155 new cases over the weekend

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The Ministry of Health is investigating the images of a crowd of young people without masks at the first concert of the Andorra Mountain Music electronic music festival that took place last Saturday at the Municipal Stadium of Andorra la Vella. This was stated by the Minister of Health, Joan Martínez Benazet: It is obligatory the use of the mask in crowd events, for this reason we are going to investigate the image to see if there is responsibilities and we will act consequently" he said. The first performance of the festival, which was given by international DJ Martin Garrix, brought together approximately 4,200 people. However, the head of Health stated that «we are not worried about possible infections that may arise as a result of the event, as the omicron variant has run so much that it has burned the forest and has little way to go; but we want the decreed rules to be respected.»

With regard to general prevention measures, the Government estimates that the covid certificate will no longer be mandatory in the coming weeks due to the current situation of the pandemic in which the impact on the health system has been greatly reduced. In addition, Benazet clarified that «if the trend remains the same, it is likely that the use of the mask will begin to be only optional in many areas.» In this sense, he explained that the people who are admitted to the hospital are «unvaccinated patients who were healthy and therefore need to continue to be protected.» Finally, the Minister of Health wanted the celebration of the carnival «to be carried out as normally as possible.»

**A "MINOR ILLNESS"** In relation to health data, 155 new cases were detected over the weekend, bringing the total number of infected to 37,744. Active cases stand at 667 following the declining dynamics of infections in recent weeks and no new deaths were reported, which remain



COMÚ D'ANDORRA LA VELLA / TONY LARA

► Part of the audience attending the first concert of Andorra Mountain Music.



**JOAN MARTÍNEZ BENAZET**  
MINISTER OF HEALTH

«The data indicates that the omicron variant has run so much that it has burned the forest and has little way to go»

at 150. In turn, the head of Health stated that the omicron variant is a «minor illness,» which «does not concern us» with regard to hospital pressure. Similarly, authorities predict that there will be «between 30 and 70 daily infections that are not relevant and that fall within the normal range of pandemic dynamics.»

It should be noted that the Andorran Health Care Service (SAAS) closed the internal medicine and palliative care ward due to a coronavirus outbreak and moved the three infected to the covid area, which caused a slight rise of the hospitalized. There are a total of 13 patients in the hospital, eight of whom are on the floor and the remaining five in the ICU with mechanical ventilation. ≡

## The Comprehensive Mental Health Plan sees the light

►► The Comprehensive Mental Health Plan (Pisma) is ratified today by the Executive in order to implement it as quickly as possible. In fact, the Minister of Health, Joan Martínez Benazet, stated that «this is a historic milestone that has been trying to materialize for decades and will finally see the light of day». One of the relevant facts of this initiative is the «transversality» with which it has been carried out, taking into account the vision of the associations and the representatives of the affected groups. «The plan addresses issues related to the social and family environment of pe-

ople who have functional diversity or need mental health care,» said Benazet. The steps to follow are expected to respond quickly to the needs of the population during the first two years, 2022 and 2023. First of all, action will be taken with the minors of the addictive behavior service, in the Penitentiary Center, with a program of continuous attention and, also, the collection of data around the activity and the waiting time will be promoted through an observatory. At the same time, it aims to act in groups at risk of exclusion and, above all, to encourage research on mental health.

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## INFRASTRUCTURES

# Viaplana plans to make a rail connection between Andorra and La Seu

The mayor believes that before a possible union from Puigcerdà, the current route of the R3 should be improved

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The town council of La Seu d'Urgell is in favor of betting on sustainable alternatives to the current road transport. As its mayor, Francesc Viaplana, told to EL PERIÒDIC, it would be appropriate to study the options around rail transport, and proposed a union between the capital of Urgell and the Principality by train. «I always thought it would be very interesting and I think it is entirely feasible to create a railway system between La Seu d'Urgell and Andorra,» said Viaplana, who stressed that this option «would help us a lot to sponge traffic to Andorra, which we all know collapses on certain holidays and rush hours». These queues, as he pointed out, «of course, also affect us», due to the fact that «when there are delays going up to Andorra they are also there to reach our localities».

It should be noted that, according to the mayor of La Seu, «the volume of traffic on this road justifies a much wider road, going directly to the motorway». However, he stated that «no matter how much we facilitate and increase the capacity of the road on the Catalan side, if later in Andorra there is no willingness to move all this volume of traffic, we will find a bottleneck which will also generate retentions».

For this reason, Viaplana urged to take advantage of the opportunity to «study sustainable transport alternatives», insisting on the possibility of rail. In this way, the mayor emphasized that «in Alt Urgell we have space to make a large car park so that we can leave our cars and finish going up to Andorra in this system». In any case, Viaplana acknowledged that this possibility is «a long-term project», although he emphasized that «it is an interesting initiative».

In the same vein, in relation to the possible rail link from Puigcerdà to Andorra and passing through La Seu d'Urgell, the mayor indicated that this is a «desirable» approach, although it is not so simple, because it is orographically difficult».



►► Archive image of the Puigcerdà train station.

In addition, Viaplana considered that before considering this option, «the current line from Puigcerdà to Barcelona-R3 should be improved, because right now it means a three-hour journey». As the mayor pointed out, «if we have to be more than four hours from La Seu or Andorra to get to Barcelona by train, the truth is that it doesn't work».

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND POCTEFA //** It should be remembered that, during the official visit to the Principality of the President of the Generalitat, Pere Aragonès, and during his meeting with the Head of Go-

**The mayor points out that even if the road is widened on the Catalan side, if it is not possible in the Principality, the queues will continue**

vernment, Xavier Espot, both presidents discussed from the issue of cross-border mobility and possible solutions to current shortcomings. Thus, they agreed to define a technical committee to evaluate the plans in road and railway matters by the two administrations, summoning the Minister of Territory and Housing, Victor Filloy, and the Vice President and Minister of Digital and Territorial Policies, Jordi Puigneró to meet them and to address the issue. Espot also highlighted the European funding options in this area, specifically through the Poctefa program.



**Francesc Viaplana**  
MAYOR OF URGELL



«In Alt Urgell we have space to be able to make a large car park to leave the car and finish going up to Andorra by train»

«If we have to be more than four hours from La Seu or Andorra to get to Barcelona by train, it doesn't work»

At the same time, on the proposal promoted by the Ministry of the Presidency, Economy and Enterprise, which provides for a cable link between Andorra-La Seu d'Urgell Airport and Sant Julià de Lòria, Viaplana acknowledged that it was a of the issues addressed in the meeting he held last January with the head of government, but pointed out that «I believe that there is no serious study done or the will right now to carry out this project.» «I think there are other transportation systems that can be done and that would also be recommended,» said the mayor. ≡

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