



WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES

Hoteliers are indifferent to the Olympic nomination

The sector claims that «it would be beneficial» for the country's image, but irrelevant to the «income»

Occupancy, although declining over the past week, is reminiscent of pre-pandemic figures

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Representatives of the hotel sector are indifferent to the fact that the final project of the Spanish Olympic Committee (COE) does not have Andorra for the candidacy of the 2030 Winter Olympics. This was stated by the director of the Hotel Union Andorra (UHA), Jordi Pujol, emphasizing that «during the time when the Olympics are being held we have a good forecast of employment, as it is high season».

Although Pujol does not attach importance to the economic impact that a joint candidacy with Andorra could have, «I think it would be very good for the international image of the Principality because it would serve to place us on the map and give more prestige to our sports and tourism facilities». In this sense, the director of Authentic Hotels of Andorra (AHA), Meritxell Cassi, pointed out that «it is a pity that Andorra

Last-minute decisions give hope that Andorra can submit the joint application

is not included in the candidacy of the Games», but «if we become the dormitory city of all the people who will have to come for the event, we will not complain». Following the same line, Cassi added that «we will try to attract as many people as possible; we have to look at the positive side of it.»

In turn, Pujol stated that, in line with the opinion of the AHA representative, «if Andorra were finally part of the candidacy, it would become an added value and improve visibility». However, in the face of last-minute changes in decisions, the director of the UHA pointed out that «the fact of joining together with Catalonia is not yet ruled out; if this is confirmed, we will start making



► Archive image of tourists in the Principality.

estimates of employment levels and promotions, but we receive new news every day and we need to keep waiting. « In any case, Pujol concluded that «anything that brings people to sleep will be welcome and if the candidacy serves us to finish filling the beds will have our support, however we do not believe that it will be an essential milestone to save or to boost the hotel sector to the maximum».

DATA DOWN // Last week's average employment is down eight points to 54% considering the previous week it was 62%. At the moment of the season, these figures are «close to the data recorded before the pandemic,» Pujol said. This



JORDI PUJOL
DIRECTOR OF THE HOTEL UNION

«The fact of joining together with Catalonia is not ruled out because we receive new news every day»

MERITXELL CASSI
DIRECTOR OF REAL HOTELS

«If we become the sleeping city of the people who will have to come for the event, we won't complain»

is the lowest figure for the first three months of the year, given that the winter season is coming to an end.

The hotel industry received these figures with «relative calm», as tourism is still pending the evolution of the coronavirus, although cases are still declining, and restrictive measures continue to be lifted by the government. From now on, the UHA's forecast revolves around figures similar to those recorded in recent weeks. However, it is expected that in the run-up to the Easter holidays, there will be an increase in visitors and overnight stays, although the arrival of good weather may cause tourists to stare at the beach instead of the mountain. ≡

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SENIORS

More flats with services to delay the sponsors' access to the residence

Social Affairs has not yet specified where they would be built and how many people could be accommodated in the initiative

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The Ministry of Social Affairs, Youth and Equality is committed to increasing the number of flats with services for the elderly to delay, as far as possible, the entry of people into social and health centers and extend their personal autonomy. This was stated yesterday by the holder of the portfolio, Judith Pallarés, during her appearance at the General Council. She explained that this is a demand that has been raised by associations and families and that takes into account the needs of people and their evolution throughout life.

Despite the will of the Executive, this is a project that is in a very embryonic state, as it is part of the National Social and Health Plan for the Elderly, which is just being worked on with the actors. «Surveys carried out as part of the plan show that more and more elderly people want to spend more time at home,» said Judith Pallarés.

For now, there is only one property in Ordino with this function, where three godparents live

It is for this reason that Pallarés has not been able to detail what the maximum aspiration of the Government is; that is, how many people could take part in the initiative and where this type of housing could be set up, adapted to the services and needs of the elderly. For now, there is only one property in Ordino with this function, where three godparents live, but Pallarés asserted that there is interest from the municipalities about how the service could be received in the parishes and, in this sense, she advanced that several private companies «have visited us interested in the initiative and with projects to rehabilitate old buildings or apart-hotels». She added that one of the options would be to find a «mixed»



► The Minister of Social Affairs, Judith Pallarés, during her appearance before the General Council.

management model, which would be successful in the surrounding countries.

Another potential that is extracted from the plan is the desire to implement a day center in all parishes, a service that currently only offers the municipalities of Canillo and Sant Julià de Lòria, in addition to what it manages the Red Cross in Andorra la Vella. This is a demand of the Federation of the Elderly and is being studied by the government and the municipalities.

On the other hand, the Minister also mentioned the intention to develop the Home Care Service (SAD), making it a model of 24 hours of care with the collaboration of all those involved, such as the service, the family, private and telecare,

The ministry wants the SAD to provide 24-hour care with the collaboration of all involved

among others. «We are looking for a networked service model through which the person can be cared for throughout the day,» she said.

WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS // In reference to the elaboration of the National Socio-sanitary Plan for the Elderly (2022-2024), the head of the socio-sanitary area of the ministry, Montserrat Gil, explained during the appearance that to fend for and limit the needs several surveys have been carried out among the population over the age of 70, which represents 15.3% of the country's population, through which the weaknesses, shortcomings, strengths and opportunities of the current system have been detected, as well as such as improvement bets. In

this sense, it is necessary to emphasize the need to promote preventive programs, the access to the new technologies, which suppose an impasse for the old people, an increase of the resources and services that for now are practically collapsed by the lists waiting and, above all, alleviating loneliness.

Gil also listed the resources and services in Andorra. Thus, she commented that the assisted living residences in the country have up to 348 places, of which 225 are arranged, 87 places are offered in day centers, 61 arranged. In relation to the SAD, it is currently used by 327 users, and 550 sponsors enjoy the Andorran Red Cross telecare service. The parish houses are attended by an average of about 1,500 users a month, there are 23 sheltered housing units that serve 49 sponsors, of which only three are those assigned to the service of the Government and the rest are divided between Clara Rabassa and Calones. Finally, the head of the social and health department of the ministry pointed out that 241 support products have been distributed among the older population.

TENSION OVER TARIFFS // On the other hand, the president of the Social Democratic Parliamentary Group, Pere López, took advantage of the appearance of the head of the Social Affairs portfolio to question the increase in the tariffs of social and health centers, stating that the Executive has not taken into account the average needs of families. That is why he considers the increase to be completely disproportionate and beyond the reach of a large part of the population.

In turn, Pallarés defended herself by pointing out that the ministry will not leave anyone in the lurch, recalling that the Social Affairs item is «incrementable, has no limit», a fact that allows us to support everyone who requires it and meets the requirements. She also said that the Executive's intention is to balance the model and the payment system in order to adapt it to a principle of co-responsibility according to the degree of dependence of the person, according to the ANA. ≡

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