



HIGH-LEVEL VISIT TO PALM

## Andorra and the Balearic Islands want a direct airline from La Seu

Esport believes that the next legislature will have to make a tourism law inspired by the islands

Both territories share concerns about the fight against climate change and housing

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Andorra and the Balearic Islands want a direct air route that connects Andorra-La Seu d'Urgell Airport with one of the Pythian islands. This was announced yesterday by the head of government, Xavier Esport, accompanied by the Balearic president, Francina Armengol, after the first meeting in history between the two institutions, which is being held these days in Palma de Mallorca. «Our hope is that there will be a regular line, because we are two territories with similarities, and we could complement the seasons. In addition, we are sure that our citizens would be very interested in it,» said Esport. However, the project is still in a «very embryonic phase»: «Today [yesterday] what we have seen is that there is a political will, because this can add value to both territories and, in the case of Andorra, also in the border areas, such as Alt Urgell, Cerdanya and Pallars», con-

**The project is «very embryonic»** and has not yet been contacted by any companies willing to do the route

sidered the head of government, recognizing that an airline is also needed» to make this possible. «We will accompany the interested companies so that it ends up being a reality,» he promised.

This high-level meeting, which was also attended by the Minister of the Environment, Agriculture and Sustainability, Sílvia Calvó, comes after the Minister of Tourism and Telecommunications, Jordi Torres, met with his Balearic counterpart a few weeks ago and «we saw that we could work together in various matters and, above all, in the field of tourism», because both the Principality and the Balearic Islands face a similar model, massive, seasonal and low cost. This, together with the interest of the territories in preserving



► The President of the Balearic Islands, Francina Armengol, and the Head of Government, Xavier Esport, in Palma.

their environment and natural heritage, is a concern in the fight against climate change and in the commitment to quality tourism ahead of quantity.

Thus, both Esport and Armengol believe that «we are at a time when our model needs to be rethought and we want to share ideas and experiences». In this sense, the head of the Executive acknowledged that he had «realized» that Andorra «needs a tourism law». «We have been making the appropriate changes as needed, but we do not have a body of legislation on tourism. It will be a duty for the next legislature,» said Esport, adding that the law will be «inspired «by many of the measures already in place in the islands.

And it is that, just today, the Ba-



**XAVIER ESPOT**  
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

«Our hope is that there will be a regular line, because we are two territories with similarities and we can complement each other»

learic parliament approves a new legal text in which it links its new model of tourism with the access to a decent house for its residents, since according to Armengol the high prices of the rents are directly related to the large number of tourist flats there are. The head of government said he shared the concern, but admitted that it was not «an easy task and we could not rush». In this way, he also left the debate for the next legislature, being aware that «it is very good to think about it, but at some point it will have to be executed». However, Esport celebrated that «when we go away from home we see that there are no miracle solutions» and called for a «task of awareness and pedagogy to the public» until the conflict is resolved. ≡

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ENERGY

# FEDA will install a solar park that will supply 250 homes in Grau Roig

There will be about 2,002 photovoltaic panels, which will generate about 1.4 gigawatts / hour per year

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FEDA will install a solar park around the Grau Roig Transformer and Distribution Station (ETR) that will feed around 250 homes. This was stated yesterday by the company's general manager, Albert Moles, noting that this is another step «towards the energy transition and the national sovereignty of electricity from renewable sources», in order to achieve «the progression of 30% to 50% of its own green electricity generation». Following the schedule, installation work will begin in the coming days and the photovoltaic machinery is expected to begin pilot production testing from September. At the same time, Moles added that this project fits into the possibilities and resources of FEDA to «make a translation into clean energy as soon as possible, even though private initiatives are key to progress».

As for the investment of the bifacial panels, the company estimated the cost at 1.2 million euros for a network of state-of-the-art devices. In this sense, the plates have technical characteristics that allow them to collect the rays that reach indirectly to the photovoltaic cells, either by refraction by snow or by ground. Thus, «we increase the efficiency of the solar park by occupying the same space, which will create more energy than initially planned, while saving the emission of more than 180 tons of CO2 into the atmosphere». according to the director of Engineering, Marc Calvet. Adding the increase in production caused by the intensity of the sun to more than 2,300 meters in the vicinity of the ETR, the station wants to become one of the leading photovoltaic in the country, if the pilot test has a satisfactory result.

In turn, Calvet stressed that, in the area where the park will be located, no previous excavation or construction of concrete has had to be carried out, therefore, «take advantage of the high mountain topography to have special attention to sustainability, landscape integration and respect for the environment». In addition, the fences that will delimit the facilities will be made of wood, in order to avoid metal



► The director of FEDA, Albert Moles, and the director of Engineering, Marc Calvet, next to the photovoltaic panels of the new solar park.

**This is a pioneering project** with bifacial devices to increase production efficiency

structures, and environmental impact studies will be carried out to verify the ecological footprint of the solar park in relation to pre-existing human factors, such as the ETR building or the main road.

However, the operation of this new park would mean a small part compared to the total of the country, of energy consumed nationally, as the overall sum is between 590 and 600 gigawatts / hour the year. According to FEDA data, total

photovoltaic production in Andorra barely reaches 2% of the global figure. Although «with the amount of snow in this area in the winter, we estimate that with the reflecting effect there is about 30% more than the regular procedure, but it is necessary to carry out a process of monitoring», according to Calvet. He added that studies are also being carried out on the inclination of the plates due to the sliding of the snow and the optimization of the space to



**Albert Moles**

GENERAL MANAGER OF FEDA

«The transition needs to be made soon, although private initiatives are crucial to achieving national electricity sovereignty»

**Marc Calvet**

DIRECTOR OF FEDA ENGINEERING

«The project takes advantage of the high mountain orography and pays special attention to landscape integration»

avoid shady areas and to favor the effect of bouncing on the ground.

Latest studies at the Maià peak / On the other hand, the director general of FEDA pointed out that the latest reports and studies are being prepared in order to kick off the Maià wind farm. In this sense, Moles stated that in the beginning of 2023, renewable energy installations are expected to begin, although the preparation can be extended up to three years. Compared to the production of the Grau Roig solar park, the capacity of the Maià will reach up to 45 gigawatts / hour per year, which far exceeds the data for photovoltaic panels. However, the cost of the project ranges from 25 to 28 million euros and «should contribute to the establishment of competitive electricity prices with a temporary stability of between 20 and 30 years, but the most important thing is to know the best time to start the works». ≡

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