

CONGRESSIONAL ASSESSMENT

Cabanes wants Gallardo to hold the presidency until the election

The Liberal candidate defends the figure of the minister and says that it is a priority for Pallarés and himself

The will of the list leader is to gain affiliates, and especially, to regain those who left



►► Josep Maria Cabanes and Maribel Lafoz, at a time of their appearance on Wednesday.



Josep M. Cabanes
HEAD OF LIBERAL LIST

«The strategy is currently focused on the figure of Jordi Gallardo. Now is not the time to do it»

Maribel Lafoz
GENERAL SECRETARY OF LIBERALS

«By common sense and logic, the executive committee made our position available to the person who was elected»

EL PERIÒDIC
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The newly elected leader of the Liberal Party of Andorra for the next elections, Josep Maria Cabanes, wants Jordi Gallardo to retain his position as party president «at least until the general elections». He stated this last Wednesday in a press conference convened to take stock of the extraordinary liberal congress of last Sunday, where he appeared together with the general secretary of the formation, Maribel Lafoz. «Liberals in Andorra have played a very important role in the last three years», said Cabanes, who said the party was on the «front line of politics, both nationally and in the parish». She stressed that the blue formation has been crucial to ensure the governance

of the country at a time when it was «indispensable, mandatory and responsible», thanks to the agreement with Democrats, and that the architect of this agreement and maintenance of the same has been Gallardo. In addition, as Minister of the Presidency, Economy and Enterprise, the head of the Liberal list praised his contribution, highlighting him as the main facilitator of necessary and entrenched elements over many years such as the free zone, the airport, the heliport, the simplification of procedures, public transport and the opening of foreign investment. «These are points that the Liberals of Andorra were clear about and that corresponded to their position, and it has lived up to their needs», said Cabanes. Therefore, he stated that «for all the reasons I have mentioned, I have considered

asking Jordi Gallardo to continue in the presidency», and ruled that «strategically, we cannot do it without him now».

In any case, Cabanes acknowledged that the minister has not yet responded to this offer, although «the clock is ticking and the minister's response is strategic». Therefore, given that the summer holidays are approaching and that when he returns, «there will be immediate elections», the head of the Liberal list believes that the margin for response for Gallardo is no more than 15 days. The figure of the president will have to be decided at a future special congress, which has no set date, but is expected to be in June.

Thus, in the face of the possibility that the Minister of the Presidency may say no, and asked by the press about the option of placing Ju-

dith Pallarés, also the Minister of the current Government, Cabanes stated that «I do not see why she cannot be president», although valuing that «what I think is a priority, more that Pallarés takes the presidency is that Gallardo keeps it». He also explained that he was not involved in the fact that «my will is not to hold 50 positions», and insisted that «the strategy is currently focused on the figure of Jordi Gallardo».

WILLINGNESS TO GROW // Beyond the resolution of the party's governing body and its members, and still with time to debate the line of candidacy for the next elections, Cabanes made it clear that his first goal at the helm of the training is to win affiliates, and in fact, he said that «many people have expressed their willingness to return to the party». How-

ver, he reaffirmed, quoting the motto of *virtus unita fortior*, that «scattered we do nothing», and that the most important thing is «to have a united Andorra» and to be able to reach agreements with all political colors to be able to do so a reality, defending the «progressive and open» nature of his party.

For his part, Lafoz emphasized the challenge for the party in holding primary elections, something new for both the party and the country, taking into account from its regulation to the way it was conducted the presentation of the different candidates. The mechanism for action in the event of a tie was also planned, which was not in vain. In any case, the Secretary-General stated that «by common sense and logic, given that we were part of the executive committee, we made our position available to the person who was elected», so we must also resolve once the presidency is elected. ■

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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The government does not approve of the increase of lower rents

The advanced CPI for May climbs to 6.5%, with food and transport as the most inflationary groups

EL PERIÒDIC
ANDORRA LA VELLA
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After this Tuesday the National Housing Commission proposed, in one of the twenty measures it has sent to the Government to include in the 2023 Housing Measures Act, to increase the lower rents above the CPI, but without exceeding 30% of the total income of the cohabitation unit, the Government reacted last Wednesday to this possibility. In this regard, the Minister of Finance and Spokesman, Eric Jover, explained that they had not received these measures and that, therefore, they still had to be studied carefully, but said that «it is not a proposal that we see with good eyes», as «we are in a context where we have to control rental prices». However, he added, «we do not like to intervene», but «we must protect the weakest part, which is the tenant».

The advanced CPI for May was announced just last Wednesday. Thus, the estimated year-on-year change is 6.5%, according to the calculation of the leading indicator. If confirmed, it would increase by five tenths of a percentage point compared to the CPI estimated in April (6.0%). This increase in inflation would be due to the rise in prices of two groups: food, due to an acceleration in food prices in general, and transport, as a result of an increase in the



► A sign announcing the rental of flats in a property.

According to Jover, «we don't like to intervene, but we have to protect the weakest part, which is the tenant right now»

price of fuel.

Eric Jover, for his part, clarified this increase and recalled that Andorra is below the European average,

that core inflation stands at 2.5% and that the main cause is energy, but that in other sectors it is more moderate. «We hope that in the case of energy it will be normalized», he predicted. However, he acknowledged that by the end of the year, when the final CPI is known, the government will have to decide how it will be implemented, although «it remains to be seen what the evolution will be, but it will be an element for reflection». On the implication that the CPI has, for example, in some

companies in sectors that suffer especially from the increase in wages - also in the case of increases outside the CPI of the minimum wage - as they depend heavily on human resources, the Executive announced last Wednesday that it would soon provide a solution to the cleaning and school transport companies, so that the bills for the services they provide to the administration include these increases and can compensate for this with the increase in workers' salaries. ≡

They renew the import of waste from La Cerdanya

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ANDORRA LA VELLA

The Government approved last Wednesday, at the meeting of the Council of Ministers, the renewal, for one year, of the authorization to import municipal waste from La Cerdanya for energy recovery at the Andorran Waste Treatment Center (Ctrasa). With the collaboration agreement between the Executive and the Generalitat de Catalunya on waste, the import of a maximum of 10,000 tons per year of pre-treated municipal waste is validated. The import of waste is part of the agreement between the Principality and Spain on the shipment of waste. This principle applies to the principle of geographical proximity and priority of recovery in all matters relating to the shipment of waste, in particular when the destination of the waste is the disposal and use of the most appropriate methods and technologies to ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment. As part of the agreement, Andorra exports almost 70% of the waste generated in the Principality. ≡

Espot is involved in the solution for landfills

The problem of finding a solution to the lack of landfills for the construction sector is exacerbated and that is why the Executive has decided to involve the same head of government, Xavier Espot, who will participate in the meetings between the parties involved with the aim of helping with a possible solution. However, Jover stressed that this is a matter for the municipalities, but that the government is «concerned» about this issue, as this could lead to higher costs for the construction sector. However, «it is not up to us to contribute the land».

Data exchange between CASS and SAAS

The Council of Ministers last Wednesday amended the decree establishing the procedure for the reception and stay of Ukrainian refugees due to the war in their country. In order to provide better health care to these people, a data exchange will take place between the Andorran Social Security Fund (CASS) and the Andorran Health Care Service (SAAS). A total of 284 Ukrainian refugees are currently registered in the country, although some are expected to return to their country as the conflict subsides.

Regulatory changes bring cases down

Spokesman Eric Jover said last Wednesday that regulatory changes, with fewer tests, have led to a decline in covid-19 positives. So far, only 173 cases have been detected in the last week, with 231 fewer positive cases and 404 discharges. At the moment, there are only five patients in the hospital, three more than a week ago, and in the ICU. Deaths remain at 153 and there are currently no classrooms under surveillance in schools. In this context, the Government approved last Wednesday a new extension of the measures to deal with the pandemic.

Class I and J licenses of the casino

A few months after the casino opened (scheduled for the fall), the government approved the Class I and J Licensing Regulations for the casino operator and the bingo operator last Wednesday. The approval of this text responds to the need to regulate the operation of the I and J licenses also for the operator of category 1, the casino. This regulation has already been developed, albeit only for the category 2 operator, the bingo. Therefore, the regulations applicable to both operators, casino and bingo, are set out in a single rule.

New call for study grants

At the suggestion of the Minister of Education and Higher Education, Ester Vilarrubla, the Executive approved last Wednesday the opening of the call for study grants for the 2022-2023 school year. Thus, the call includes students in maternal education, primary and secondary education, high school and vocational training. Teaching aids include scholarships for equipment, canteens, school transportation and extra-curricular skiing. The deadline for applications is June 8th and July 6th.

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