



## GENERAL COUNCIL

# The PS proclaims himself as a defender of Catalan language in front of the Government and the majority

He believes that it is necessary to require the B2 level for qualified professionals who are already practicing and not just for newcomers

EL PERIÒDIC  
ANDORRA LA VELLA  
@PeriodicAND

In a marathon session of the General Council that began early in the morning and ended into the evening, the Social Democratic Party (PS) stood up as a defender of Catalan before the majority groups and the Government. Thus, in two of the amendment reservations presented by the social democrats to the draft law regulating qualified health professions and in the modification of the law on qualified professions and professional colleges and associations, the PS defended that the requirement of the B2 level of Catalan for newly arrived professionals be extended to those already working in the country.

The majority and the Government defended the Catalan law approved in 1999 as a framework to enforce the use of the official language, since, as revealed by the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, among the representatives of professional associations there was no consensus to apply the retroactivity of the measure for those already practicing. The president of the Independent Parliamentary Group (GPI), Ferran Costa, elaborated more reasons and pointed out legal aspects. «We cannot change the rules of the game and modify the rights of those who already have permission to exercise», he assured. According to Costa, «we must not impose or conquer, but seduce and convince», since the health of the language «is in the hands of those who speak it». In addition, he added, «obtaining the degree is a small step, but it is not a guarantee of anything».

The deputy president of the Social Democratic Parliamentary Group, Judith Salazar, stated that «good intentions are of no use; the degree is the minimum required



ACCIÓ

► General Councilor Ferran Costa intervened from the speakers' stand, last Thursday during the chamber's plenary session.



**FERRAN COSTA**  
GPI PRESIDENT

«We must not impose or conquer, but seduce and convince; the health of the language is in the hands of those who speak it»

**JUDITH SALAZAR**  
DEPUTY PRESIDENT GPS

«His position is schizophrenic compared to the campaign; good intentions are useless»

sion, it was the social democratic councilor general, Susanna Vela, who defended the opposition's position. «They only make great speeches, but they do not protect the language in legislative action», she denounced. Vela explained that the option of recovery increased, and the possibility of hospitalization decreased if the doctor attended to the patient in his language, according to a study carried out in Canada in the French-speaking population of Quebec. From there, the Government and the majority reproached Vela that in two years the 2,400 members practicing in the country (in 17 colleges) could not take the exam and asked the minister if she would fire those who did not overcome him «They are constantly being trained and have sufficient learning capacity», she replied. Finally, the PS tried unsuccessfully, once again via amendment reservation, to limit the distance to 100 kilometers around Andorra to be considered a border and to consider the possibility of extending residence rights. ≡

## the anecdote

### THE COUNSELOR WITH COVID

Terceravia's general counsel, Joan Carles Camp, went up to the speaker's stand without a mask. The general trustee, Roser Suñé, asked him to wear it, as he has tested positive for covid, a fact that was known to both parties. Despite Camp's request to follow the sessi-



on electronically, Syndicate asked him to attend, given the ostentatious displays of surprise from the head of government, Xavier Espot.

because it guarantees that those who refuse to speak it are because they don't want to and not because they don't know about it". In addition, «their position in this aspect is schizophrenic if we compare it with the campaign they are currently running and which the whole population can see». This is how things are, «the Government fails to fulfill its obligation to enforce the law», she denounced. As the session of the General Council progressed, the situation of Catalan came up again in the debate on health professionals. On this occa-

# López asks that wages rise above rents

Pensions below 2,400 euros will also increase by 7%.

EL PERIÒDIC  
ANDORRA LA VELLA

Once again, housing was present in the session of the General Council, as well as the Government's

measures to mitigate the loss of purchasing power of citizens. In this sense, the president of the PS, Pere López, asked that wages rise above rents. Specifically, 25% of the salary revaluation index, since, according to him, rents have risen a lot in recent years.

Thus, he denounced that, in most

cases, the Government's measures will represent a 5% increase in both rent and salary, contrary to the position of the Executive, which considers that 60% of employees will see as the salary increases more than the rent from January 1st, 2023.

In turn, the Minister of Territory and Housing, Víctor Filloy,



PS

► Pere López, the day before yesterday at the General Council.

revealed that the average price of rental contracts in Andorra is 671 euros, at a rate of 12 years per contract. In addition, 67% of the population lives in a rental system.

After a cut and thrush over who had a more interventionist view of the State, the Government or the PS, the president of the Democratic Group, Carles Enseñat, revealed that pensions below 2,400 euros would also increase 7%, a measure that is foreseen in the general budgets, which are still in the parliamentary process, pending approval. ≡

ARI AND UNICEF

# Almost 2,700 teenagers visit the Mental Health Service in 2021

7% of secondary school students suffered cyberbullying during the past year

Mora recognizes that the Principality has the lowest birth rate in all Europe



▶▶ - Joan Micó and Albert Mora during the press conference, last Thursday.

EL PERIÒDIC  
SANT JULIÀ DE LÒRIA  
@PeriodicAND

Visits by adolescents aged between 11 and 17 to the external consultations of the SAAS Mental Health Service during the year 2021 reached 2,688, which represents an increase of more than 1,000 visits compared to 2020. This is a data that emerges from the tenth Children's Observatory presented last Thursday by Unicef Andorra and Andorra Research + Innovation (ARI). In this sense, the coordinator of the Sociology area of the ARI, Joan Micó, pointed out that the boys, 1,443 of the chaos, «have more attention deficit, hyperactivity and autism», while the girls, the 1,245 remaining cases, they have «more stress and depression». On the other hand, the consultations of children aged 0 to 10 years at the



**ALBERT MORA**  
UNICEF DIRECTOR

«We know that consumption [of alcohol and drugs] among teenagers may be increasing»

same SAAS service reached 1,412 in 2021, 69 more than the previous year.

Another data related to the mental health of adolescents are suicide attempts. Thus, a total of nine young people were treated in 2021, all of them female, a figure that increased considerably because in the two previous years only four cases were treated.

The director of Unicef, Albert Mora, reiterated his commitment to continue requesting data to reflect, mainly, those related to alco-

hol and drug consumption, figures that have not been updated since 2009. Related to this, Mora pointed out that «we know that consumption among teenagers may be increasing, and we want data on this». «Obviously we have already transferred it to the Commission for the Participation of Civic Entities (Copec), and they told us that they were aware and that they would start working on it», he added.

**BULLYING AND VIOLENCE** // Regarding possible cases of school bullying

during the 2021-22 school year, 16.3% of secondary school students were victims, of which 19.4% were girls and 12.8% were boys. Also, 25.4% had the self-perception of having suffered harassment at least once in their life, 3.8% in the last year, and 1.4% at the time of conducting the survey. It also highlights that during the course, 7% of secondary school students suffered cyberbullying.

The report also shows an increase in the number of victims, under the age of 0 to 17, of violence in the family, an issue that Mora called «worrying». So, the figure in 2021 was 29 cases, 10 more than the previous year's study.

**Risk of poverty** / Regarding the risk of poverty among the population, which is calculated from «families with incomes below 60% of the median» of the country's total earnings, it is obtained that in

## the figures

9 suicide attempts were treated during 2021, all of them by girls.

16.3% of secondary school students were victims of school bullying.

13% of the country's inhabitants were at risk of poverty in 2020.

503 births throughout 2021, 290 less compared to 793 in 2011.

2020 a 13% of the total population was at risk of poverty. On the other hand, it highlights the risk in single-parent families, which despite decreasing from 31.6% in 2019 to 28.5% in 2020, «are mainly headed by women», Micó pointed out.

Regarding the perception of the personal financial situation in households with minors, the study carried out this year shows that 7.3% of families have a bad or very bad financial situation, 44% regular, and 48.3% consider it good or very good. In addition, regarding the perception of the evolution of the personal economic situation since the beginning of the pandemic, 29.7% say that it has gotten worse, 54.6% find it the same, and 15.3% say that has improved

**BIRTH RATE** // Finally, the birth rate in the Principality continues to decline and, according to Mora, «it's a real problem». In 2021, 503 babies were born in the country, a decrease of 290 compared to 793 in 2011, «the lowest rate in all of Europe». In addition, in 2020, the population between 0 and 17 years represented only 15.7% of the inhabitants of Andorra. ≡

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