



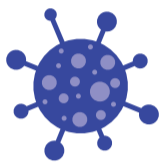
GLOBAL PANDEMIC: POSITIVE CASES EXCEED 3,000

# Health detects a thousand positives over the past weekend

The ministry reduces the covid leave to seven days and automates the granting with the result

The government has set up a platform to record contacts and notify them via SMS

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The Ministry of Health has detected 1,032 new positives over the last weekend, coinciding with the change of

year. This was announced last Monday by the Secretary of State for Health, Helena Mas, in her appearance to make the epidemiological update, when she detailed that the infected corresponded to: 357 on Friday, 334 on Saturday and 341 on Sunday. With these infections, the total number of infected people in the Principality stood at 24,502, bringing the number of active cases to 3,144 - 582 more than last Friday. Of these active cases, 26 were admitted to the Hospital Nostra Senyora de Meritxell, ie five more than in the last update: 12 were on the ground floor and 14 were in the ICU, 12 of which were under mechanical ventilation. There were also 470 new registrations, which stood at 21,218 on Monday.

This increase in positivity, according to Mas, corresponded to the expansion of the new variant, pointing out that «we are at a high point of incidence due to the impact of omicron on our healthcare system, despite the fact that cases are less serious. As an example, the comparison of the data with those of just a week ago -December 27-, in Andorra 2,170 positives had been detected, positive cases had grown by 1,370, and discharges had grown by 799. change, the number of hospitalized was less than five people. In any case, the government moved in the face of strong pressure from primary care and the Covid Office, making a change in coronavirus outbreaks.

The new protocol provides that once a person is confirmed posi-



SFGA / JAVILADOT

► The Secretary of State for Health, Helena Mas, at a time of her appearance on Monday.

## The Executive extends the use of STCTs and RJLs in the nightlife sector until June 30th this year

ve through a diagnostic test, they will be automatically discharged and notified via an SMS message. However, an email address has been created in the event that the employee wishes to continue the-

ir work electronically. The government has also implemented a reduction in coronavirus discharge days, from seven days to three more days of passive surveillance. In any case, the care provided by the referring doctor will also be available to those who have severe or persistent symptoms -beyond six days - in order to be treated. A platform has also been set up where sick people can register their contacts so that they can be notified via SMS. «The streamlining of procedures has been driven to adapt to this situation,

» said the Secretary of State, who added that «we have to adjust and I think that this operation benefits everyone». In this regard, Mas also highlighted the ministry's confidence in «the responsibility of our citizens» in facilitating the notification of their contacts.

On the other hand, the Secretary of State said that tomorrow, the Minister of Health, Joan Martínez Benazet, will present the changes in the confinements of the contacts and the circuits that must follow, and that they will adhere to

the new measures promoted in sick leave. In addition, the system for returning to the classroom is expected to be detailed later this week. Precisely in relation to the school population, Mas said that there were 34 classes affected, all of them in passive surveillance. In any case, the impact of the omicron has not, for the time being, been reflected in a change in the current measures regarding social relations or the economic sphere, nor on the safety recommendations to prevent contagion. In the same way, the Government has not planned to cancel the processions of the Kings of the East in the Principality, as according to the Secretary of State «all the protocols designed for the Christmas festivities are operational to keep distances».

Finally, to close the epidemiological update, the Government confirmed in the late afternoon the death of a man by coronavirus which raised the deaths from the disease in the Principality to 141. And around the vaccination campaign, they went share that the total number of vaccines administered in the country was 135,539. In fact, before yesterday, activity resumed in the plaça de braus of Andorra la Vella, which had increased the vaccination tables to eight with a capacity to inoculate 2,000 doses a day and the appointment of people around of 40 years to receive the third dose.

In parallel, the Council of Ministers approved, at the proposal of the Minister of the Presidency, Economy and Enterprise, Jordi Gallardo, to extend the Temporary Suspensions of the Employment Contract (STCT) and the Reductions of the Working Day (RJL) for nightlife. This measure, which according to the Executive responds to the desire to «minimize the effects of the suspension of activity», will be in force from January 1st to June 30th this year. ≡

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## METEOROLOGY

# Engolasters Station breaks the 1961 record with 18.4°C on 31D

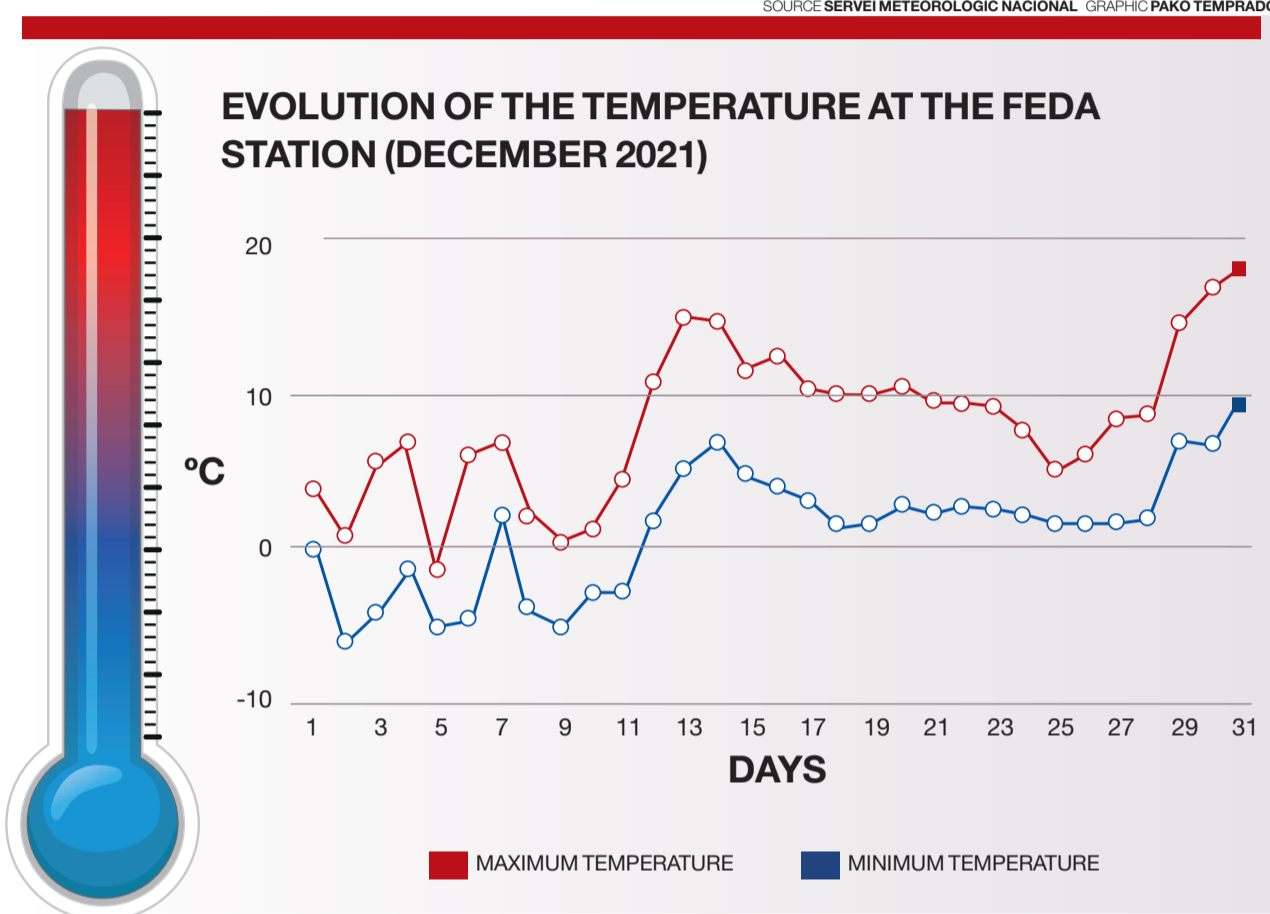
The Meteorological Service says that since 2012 it has not been so hot in December in Andorra

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The meteorological station of Engolasters de Forces Elèctriques d'Andorra (FE-DA) recorded a temperature of 18.4°C on December 31, 2021, a figure that broke the record reached on December 12, 1961, with 19°C. Engolasters has been recording data since 1934, and since then there have been six winter heat waves: the 1961, 1985, 1987, 1994, 2012 and the current 2021. As reported on Monday the National Meteorological Service, since 2012 it was not so hot in December in Andorra. «It's an exception that happens from time to time,» said the service's meteorologist, Guillem Martín.

As is usual in these cases of winter heat, the maximum temperature is reached at higher points, as in this case in Engolasters, located at 1,638 meters above sea level, as the phenomenon of thermal inversion occurs at the bottom of valleys and the heat is not so noticeable. «Temperatures have been shorter in the inhabited areas, as the sun is very low and the mountains prolong the hours of shade, so there is a long time for the hot air to rise and the cold air to stagnate at the bottom of the valley,» explained Martín.

The record-breaking maximum temperature was recorded just at the end of December, a month of contrasts as it ended with two extreme episodes in just 15 days apart. At the beginning of the month there was an exceptional snowfall that left very significant thicknesses in just three days which was a record since 2014, while the second episode has been the winter heat wave. According to the meteorologist of the National Meteorological Service, «this is precisely the climate change, more extreme episodes on both sides, cold and heat, so this De-



►► - A spring on Lake Engolasters on a sunny day, the area where the temperature that broke the record of 60 years ago has been picked up at the end of this year.

cember has been a clear example that climate change exists». In addition, «heavy snowfall is becoming less frequent, before it was more frequent in November, and we also see that winter heat waves have been more common in recent years,» said Martín.

But the heat season is in full swing. From today there will be a marked drop in temperatures in the Principality, accompanied by rainfall, which will be widespread from tonight to tomorrow, with



**Guillem Martín**

METEOROLOGIST OF THE METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE

«The two extreme episodes of the last month of the year are a clear example of the impact of climate change»

the snow level falling from 1,800 meters this afternoon to 800 meters on Wednesday morning. The wind will also intensify across the country.

As for the winter forecast, it will be «normal», according to Guillem Martín. So the temperatures will be normal for the season, although maybe even a little warmer, but that doesn't mean there aren't cold episodes, like what's forecast for the next few days and what's going on in early December. In terms of rainfall, it is expected to be normal in the northern area and, on the other hand, drier in the southern part.

According to Martín, the snowfields will have normal snow for the season, so they will be able to open the seasons. However, «snow is not only used for economic activity, but it is essential as a water resource for drinking water, which comes precisely because of the accumulation of snow during the winter». Therefore, «having a normal winter with snowfall is very important to ensure water reserves and the quality of aquifers». ≡

## ORBIT

## Former Russian Honorary Consul Pere Joan Tomás dies

As a politician he had been a councilor in the Municipality of Escaldes-Engordany

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Russia's former politician and honorary ex-consul, Pere Joan Tomás Soguero, died before yesterday at the age of 77, after being hospitalized for a few days due to covid, although he also had other pathologies. Tomás, who had served as senior director of the Becier group in the business field, had been a member of the Liberal Party of Andorra (PLA) as secretary of international relations and also a councilor in the Municipality of Escaldes-Engordany. In addition to being an

honorary consul of Russia, in the diplomatic field he had also been Andorra's ambassador to Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland, under the government of Albert Pintat. In March last year, he received a medal from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation for his contribution to international cooperation after 11 years in office. Once the death of Thomas was known, the condolences were repeated on social media. Thus, the Municipality of Escaldes-Engordany recalled his work as president of the Esbart Santa Anna and

highlighted his career as a «prominent diplomat and leading figure in the business, social and cultural life of the country and Escaldes-Engordany».

For his part, MoraBanc said that yesterday was a «sad day for the club for the death of Pere Joan Tomás, father of our former director Joaquim Tomás, currently president» of the Andorran Basketball Federation. The funeral in memory of the deceased will take place this Tuesday at eleven in the morning in the church of Sant Pere Màrtir in Escaldes-Engordany. ≡



►► Pere Joan Tomás. ≡

M.B.