



COOPERATION AGREEMENT

The Generalitat reaffirms its will to strengthen the connectivity of the Pyrenees

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The Generalitat de Catalunya reaffirms its will to strengthen the connectivity of the communication infrastructures of the Pyrenees. This was stated by the president of public works, Josep Sánchez Llibre, yesterday during the signing of the Cooperation Agreement with the Andorran Business Confederation (CEA). An agreement that aims to reaffirm and enhance business cooperation between Andorra and Catalonia, to encourage collaboration between companies from both countries and to promote cross-border initiatives that revitalize the territory's economy. In this sense, the president of the CEA, Gerard Cadena, emphasized the need to find mechanisms to unite the Principality with the border territories of France and Spain, because «it is a pole of attraction and activity for the re-

The CEA signs an agreement with the Ministry of public works to promote initiatives that revitalize the territory's economy

gions and departments of the south and north of the Pyrenees», at the same time valuing that there must be mutual benefit from the collaboration between Andorran and Catalan companies. For his part, Sánchez Llibre assured that «the most important thing is that the government of the Generalitat is on the side of the CEA and, therefore, I think that the collaboration will be very positive».

Going into detail, one of the issues that the organizations have put on the table is to increase the efficiency and frequency of flights at Andorra-la Seu d'Urgell Airport, also improving the relationship with the different international airlines of Madrid, Lisbon, London or Paris. «This is an issue that concerns the Government of Andorra, employers and the CEA», pointed out Sánchez Llibre. However, he made it known that from the Ministry of public works «we will contribute to seek maxi-



► The president of public works, Josep Sánchez Llibre, and the president of the CEA, Gerard Cadena.

GERARD CADENA
CEA PRESIDENT

«[Andorra] is a pole of attraction and activity for the southern and northern regions of the Pyrenees»

JOSEP SÁNCHEZ LLIBRE
PRESIDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

«We will contribute to seek maximum complicity with the Generalitat, which has jurisdiction over the airport»

imum complicity with the Generalitat, which has jurisdiction over the airport».

At the same time, it is planned to work on the railway project that would link the capital of Catalonia with the Pyrenees and the Gallic country, although «the feasibility of it has yet to be seen», remarked Cadena, who explained that a preliminary project has already been reviewed that would start its route in Alp, pass through La Seu d'Urgell and arrive in Andorra. Although it would be a possibility, «you have to study and work a lot more», he insisted. At the same time, talks have started with France to try to improve the train from Ospitalet to Toulouse, specifically the part between

the Ospitalet and Foix, and integrate a connection between Occitania and Andorra. In this line, Sánchez Llibre announced that the president of the Council of Administration of Railways of the Generalitat de Catalunya, Ricard Font, «is aware» of the concerns regarding this issue. To finance the railway, however, it would be key to formalize an association agreement between Andorra and the European Union. If this event finally occurs, the president of public works expressed that «everything will be facilitated» and, in this aspect, «the Generalitat would be an active agent to make it possible; we see no difficulty, on the contrary, there is great complicity on the part of all the administrations». Likewise, Cadena observed that as many of these infrastructures depend on the Generalitat, «the fact that we reach an agreement with Europe can also mean that, if two countries like Spain and France are involved, we can have European funding».

To finance the railway, Cadena and Sánchez Llibre argue that the association agreement with the EU is key

WAGE INCREASE // On the other hand, the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, last week met the Economic and Social Council so that the employer and the unions agree on an agreement on the increase in wages in accordance with the IPC, a very complicated decision due to the difference in positions they have adopted. In this sense, Cadena informed the media yesterday that «the tendency is for inflation to moderate» in the coming months, all the while justifying that, at the moment, the economic parameters are not strict. Thus, and on the increase in wages, he remarked that we must wait until the end of the year to see what the final inflation is and, from there, «see what proposal we want to make». Nevertheless, the president of the CEA indicated that «we know that the positions with the unions are opposite, but we will not fail to present our position and reach an agreement». ≡

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PROFESSIONAL COLLEGES

Dentists do not apply third-party payer, even though the law is already in place

They allege that there is a «lack» of clarity in the guidelines coming from the CASS and computer problems

JOSEP GARCIA

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The College of Dentists and Stomatologists of Andorra (COEA) does not apply the third-party payer system to patients over 65 years old due to the «lack of clarity of its operation by the CASS and the computer problems associated with the parapublic». This was stated by COEA board member Pere Casany, who denounced a situation of «disorganization» in the health branch of the CASS that manages relations with all the professional health associations. In this way, the dentist made it clear that a moratorium on the third-party payer directive was agreed with the Ministry of Health, despite the fact that it came into force on October 1st.

«90% of the work is ours, it costs them [the CASS] nothing to apply this measure, but the day of its implementation arrived without any notice or instructions on the procedure», complained Casany. At the same time, he explained that the members of the COEA had a meeting with the CASS technicians and «even they did not know exactly how they were going to apply the third-party payer in the IT field». Going into the details of the measures to be adopted, the dentists - the majority of whom voted against the agreement with the parapublic during the last meeting - believe that the funding proposed by the new agreement is a «nonsense». In this sense, Casany justified the college's position by claiming that «if small treatments worth no more than 60 euros are financed and, on the other hand, dental interventions that exceed 1,500 euros have been to move forward, there is no qualitative change». Continuing in the same vein, the dentist affirmed that these measures are already being carried out today and that, in fact, there is already an effective system coming from Social Affairs to contribute to the services and care of those people who do not interventions may be allowed.

At the same time, Casany criticized the «avalanche of administrative documents» that are required in consultations and the «disorganization» in the sense that the patient



► A dentist attends to a patient in a consultation.



PERE CASANY
MEMBER OF THE COEA BOARD

«It doesn't cost them anything to apply this measure, but the implementation came without warning or explanation»

«Many consultations have had to be reduced due to an outdated agreement»

only advances 25% of the cost of the service, while the remaining part arrives, usually, after a month. As an example, he indicated that «I cannot do an extraction for 38 euros with three people present in the operating room if it takes more than five minutes because it is not financially profitable».

Regarding the rates, Casany reiterated that for 20 years the Government has been right about the need for a change in remuneration. «We have already seen more than five ministers promising us a revision of the agreement, but the same nomenclature of the 80s still continues». In addition, he recalled the resentment of dentists during the coronavirus pandemic, who let the health crisis pass to resume negotiations to update the rates with the Executive once the situation improved. However, «many consultations and the number of visits have had to be reduced due to an outdated agreement that provides for the payment of some materials that are no longer used».

On the other hand, Casany hig-

Dentists complain about the outdated rates and the use of an «obsolete» nomenclature

The sector admits that the contract with the parapublic is a claim that causes more influx of patients.

hlighted a «controversy» regarding the coverage of the services that the parapublic finances annually, such as oral cleanings. «We do not have any time criteria to check if the patients have already carried out the cleaning covered by social security when they ask us for it», criticized the dentist, adding that «later we find that the CASS does not give us the money back without us knowing if the patient has already used the coverage».

Finally, the COEA hopes to reach an agreement as soon as possible with the Minister of Health, Albert Font, regarding the clarification of the application of the third-party payer and the update of the service fees. Today, there are three months left to re-sign the renewal agreement, therefore, «we hope that the Executive will do his part because we know that the CASS is a very important claim for patients and causes us to have more visits, but if we don't get the numbers in green, we won't be able to continue», said Casany. ≡

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