

Government publishes a summary of the Association Agreement with the EU

Next Tuesday, March 12th, a public event is planned to explain the Agreement to the public



The Secretary of State for Relations with the European Union, Landry Riba, and the Vice-President of the European Commission, Maros Sefcovic.

EL PERIÒDIC
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

Last Friday afternoon, the Government made public an extended summary of Andorra's Association Agreement with the European Union. The Agreement will allow the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the Internal Market. The Principality will have to assimilate a large part of the European regulations, which will be implemented gradually, in order to be able to distribute the legis-

lative and administrative efforts over time.

Next Tuesday, March 12th at 8:00 p.m., a public event is planned at the Andorra la Vella Convention Center to explain the content of the Agreement to all citizens.

As explained in the same document, in 2015 Andorra began this process of rapprochement with Europe with the aim of facing the challenges of the future and guaranteeing the quality of life of its citizens in the medium and long term.

The Agreement will allow the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the Internal Market

The Association Agreement must allow access to the European Internal Market, a space in which around 450 million people live, a key element to diversify the Principality's economy and increase resilience and sus-

tainability, and, at the same time, to also favor our prosperity.

The Agreement involves equating Andorran regulations with European ones, except in some areas, such as taxation or foreign policy. In no case is accession to the European Union foreseen; in other words, Andorra does not become a member state of the EU.

In this document, the changes are detailed by color according to whether they are positive (green), positive or negative depending on who analyzes

them and with significant economic costs (orange) and negative (red).

The points marked as the most negative are that the Agreement entails the obligation to remove the deposit of 50,000 euros that is currently required of new foreign residents of the EU who settle in Andorra to carry out an activity on their own account; the obligation to remove the deposit and initial investment requirement of 600,000 euros that is asked of passive residents, and the limitation of criminal record checks.

The Agreement removes the deposit of 50,000 euros that is required of self-employed workers

This last point means that border workers who are EU nationals and who do not work in sensitive sectors will not go through a verification system. It should also be noted that the Association Agreement represents a financial cost for the State. In addition, the Government must incorporate around 25 more workers on the sidelines of the newly created structures, although in the text this point is considered to be interpre-

table for the purposes of being positive or negative. During the first years the cost will be significant and the necessary structures will have to be created. Once these structures are created, there will be a fixed annual cost.

Marked as interpretable points we find points such as that the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) is the competent body to interpret the Agreement in the last instance or that the Agreement requires the transfer of legislative sovereignty to the EU, in based on article 65 of the Andorran Constitution. Andorra, in general, will have to contribute financially to agencies such as the European Environment Agency, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, European financial regulators, etc.

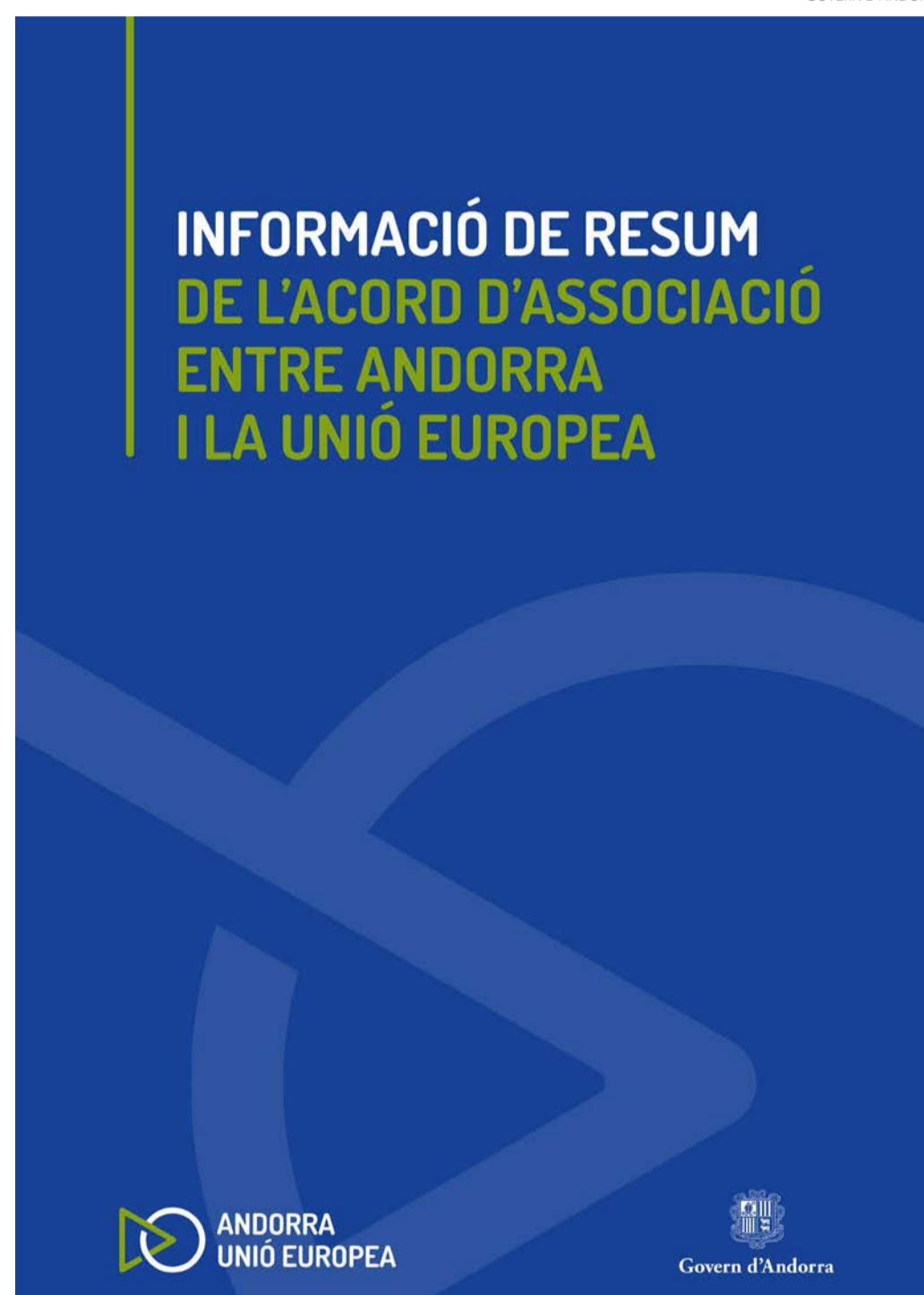
In terms of products and services, Andorran pharmacies will not be able to import medicines originating from outside the EU, and tobacco product manufacturers will not be able to market cigarettes with flavors such as menthol tobacco.

With regard to public operators, the text contemplates that the Principality's telecommunications market must be liberalized seven years after the entry into force of the Agreement. This means that Andorra Telecom will have to split into a service company

and an infrastructure management company, so that if a new operator arrives, it will have to rent and contribute to

the maintenance of the infrastructure network, in addition to offer a service equivalent to the current one. ●

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