



AVAILABILITY OF WORKERS

The pilot test of summer temporary workers covers the shortcomings of the hotels

The UHA initiates contacts with the Government to maintain the formula and establish new measures

Passenger transport continues to be under tension due to the widespread lack of bus drivers

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The pilot test launched this summer to give continuity to the temporary workers of the winter season is bearing fruit. This was assured by the president of the Hotel Union of Andorra (UHA), Jordi París, who certified that «the vast majority of establishments no longer have a shortage of workers», and stating that «a large part of the hotels have been able to benefit from this temporary staff extension». According to París, this situation of stability in the labor market of the hotel sector has been achieved due to the fact that «some people who had finished their contract in different establishments, either because they remain closed in the summer or because they have not been required again, they were able to be placed in other places where they had a need», certifying that this summer campaign «we had a better availability of workers than in other summers».

It should be borne in mind that, after a first contingent of 700 permits of this type expandable up to 30%, all 910 available were used up, so it was increased by 400 more, with an absolute margin of 520. But again, the permits were filled, so the Executive approved a new quota of 300 permits expandable to 390 last month.

All in all, the president of the UHA assured that the organization has started contacts with the Government to find a way to continue this work permit format in the summer, as well as solutions for the next winter season. «We now have to meet in September to finish the requirement for the winter season», declared París, adding that «the administration is aware that this pilot test has gone well, and we are confident that we will continue to work along these lines, so that next year will be the same or better.» Thus, he celebrated the willingness of the Government to listen



►► A worker prepares a hotel room.

to the sector, highlighting that «we have managed to make the administration sensitive to these situations».

OFFERS ON THE RISE // However, it should be borne in mind that in Andorra there are still many companies that require staff. According to the latest data published by the Department of Statistics, the Employment Service had, at the end of June, 1,371 jobs offered, that is, 24.1% more than a year ago. Of these, 466 corresponded to the Services, restoration, protection, and sales group; followed by the Unqualified Workers section, where 364 offers were registered.

One of the sectors that remains tense is that of passenger transport, since, as the president of the Public Passenger Transport Association of Andorra (ATVA) and manager of Coopalsa, Gabriel Dallerès, explained, «we have difficulties fin-

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ding drivers». «I see this directly in the companies I am in charge of, and through the conversations we have with the other ATVA associates», he emphasized. In this sense, Dallerès remarked that one of the main handicaps they currently encounter is «the difficulty in validating the license in the case of drivers from countries that do not have a homologation agreement with Andorra», added to the fact that «our immediate environment also lacked drivers». However, Dallerès assessed that this context can help «the profession to progress and wages to improve», due to the fact that «the reality we are living in recent times is that the different

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PRESIDENT OF THE UHA
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IVAN GARCÍA
OWNER OF ANDBEER
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actors are competing for the available drivers».

Likewise, the delivery sector and logistics also have shortcomings. According to the owner and executive director of Andbeer, Ivan García, «right now, we only have two people in the factory», stressing that «despite the fact that we offer a competitive salary and schedule, there is no way to find people». And it is that, as happens in the case of bus drivers, the concreteness of the place limits the options. «At the factory we do a little bit of everything: beer production, product distribution, commercial actions... It's quite specific work, which is why it's hard for us to find staff in Andorra who are qualified to carry out these tasks», concluded García. ≡

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SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Wooden buildings represent 15% of the total constructions

Engineers are betting on the proliferation of photovoltaic energy and the optimization of aerothermic systems

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Constructions made with wood represent approximately 15% of the total of buildings and homes in the Principality. This was indicated by the architect Pau Iglesias after remarking that the hegemony of the building continues to be concrete in 80% of the total, while a minority of 5% belongs to constructions carried out with iron. Following this same line, Iglesias pointed out that, although there is still a long way to go, «the volume of initiatives in relation to this type of sustainable real estate is starting to increase slightly». In the same way, he stated that wood is a material that allows for quick and more environmentally friendly construction, while «it should be a more affordable material for buyers».

Inflation has slowed
down the trend towards cheaper photovoltaic panel systems

Equally, Iglesias asserted that more and more developers are building buildings aimed at energy self-sufficiency «because it is the only way out if we look to the future with perspective and, above all, taking into account the global context of energy tariffs». However, he indicated that the Energy Transition and Climate Change Act (Litecc) «is very demanding, although it is not fully regulated» and that, at the same time, the starting cost of sustainable construction «it will always be higher; the question is to establish in what period of time this initial investment is to be compensated».

Although the architect defends the proliferation of this way of creating new homes, he also expressed his disagreement when it comes to reducing the construction fee. «The problem of the lack of flats is not solved, in any case, by reducing the offer», he pointed out after adding that another of the problems revolves around «the access that many people from outside currently have to the investment, not always aimed at the creation of homes, but at other, more economic interests». In addi-



► A snapshot of the construction of a model house made of wood by a Catalan company.



VICENÇ JORGE

DEAN OF THE COLLEGE PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER

«The adaptation of real estate with quality insulating materials reduces the consumption of homes»

PAU IGLESIAS

ARCHITECT

«Energy self-sufficiency is the only way out of construction if we look to the future»

on, he took a position in favor of «the limitation of foreign investment through taxes that are dedicated directly to the creation of flats and to curb excesses».

On the other hand, the dean of the Official College of Engineers of Andorra (COEA), Vicenç Jorge, focused more on building installations and sustainable energy practice. In this sense, he defended the proliferation of photovoltaic energy production systems in construction «to link local production to the roof of the real estate itself with the promotion of renewable energy». Not just the creation, but «the adaptation of the buildings with insulating materials that promote the reduction of the consumption of the heating and cooling systems».

Following the thread of domestic energy consumption, Jorge emphasized that the majority of devices throughout the Principality are diesel boilers. So, he pointed out that «ae-

rothermic systems, also known as heat pumps, are an alternative that consumes less energy than traditional boilers». In this way, the engineers affirm that they want to promote this type of installations more and more, since «the market demands them because the price of conventional energy is skyrocketing and, in the case of Andorra, if we depend less on foreign supplies, more resilient we will be in the future to episodes of rising prices.»

Finally, he asserted that the final goal is the achievement of the application of batteries in order to store the energy produced by each property, although «it has an excessively high cost and the market is not yet ready to make it cheaper this expense». He also added that, until now, photovoltaic panels «followed a trend of becoming cheaper with better technology and lower costs», although inflation «has slowed down this progress.»

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