



Politics ▶ State Pact for the association agreement

# Path towards State unity through agreement with the European

The political formations finish the first meeting for the State pact with good synergies on all sides

The representative of the minority in the European Union should be outside

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Last Thursday, the first meeting took place for the preparation of the State pact on the association agreement with the European Union. A deal between all the political forces whether or not they are in the Executive and inside or outside the General Council. This is a proposal that has been promoted by Democrats led by the head of government, Xavier Espot, in order to reach a general consensus among all the political forces to reach a good pace of negotiation and create a favorable environment to be able to draft the best agreement possible with the European Union. A pact of these magnitudes requires great efforts because, as Espot mentioned, «it will not be easy to find the common denominator» between the different parties, due to the existence of various sensitivities in the Andorran political landscape, according to the head of government. This first meeting was an initial step to design a participation model for all political actors and focused on finding the methodology of how to cooperate in this aspect rather than on the desired result in the final agreement. In the words of the head of government, the gears are being «activated to make effective» a state pact that all political forces can and want to assume.

One of the highlights of this state pact is the representation of the minority in the same negotiation sessions with Brussels. In this debate, a proposal mentioned in the last legislature by Josep Pintat, leader of TerceraVia, regarding the appointment of a representative figure who will be present du-



▶ First meeting of all the political forces for the State Pact for the European Union, in the administrative building of the Government.

ring the negotiations and who can bring the vision of the Andorran political minority to the dialogue table, has resurfaced. Espot stated that «we requested it from the European Commission, but it is complicated», due to the fact that if it was someone who was present at the General Council, the European entity would have to include members in its negotiating team of the European Parliament and other European institutions to establish equivalence with the Andorran team. In this scenario, Espot highlighted the likelihood of drawing up «a hybrid proposal», which would consist of the figure of this minority representative being chosen by the parliamentary groups and the representative not being part of the General Council. The Head of Government believes that this

proposal would be feasible to accept by all the indicated parties, in addition to stipulating that, although the negotiations are piloted by the Government and the Andorran delegation is made up of the Executive and the Crown Princes (due to the constitutional need for them to be part of the negotiation of some relevant international agreements), it is necessary to add to the political and parliamentary minority in this process. Espot testified that the figure will depend on the decision of the opposition and that they have «full freedom» to choose the representative they want. The democratic leader ventured to try to guess what kind of figure the other political parties would choose, mentioning that it could become «certainly one of their own advisers».

On the other hand, Espot was optimistic about the sensations that this first encounter has left. Despite having recognized that the different sensitivities of the various forces complicate the achievement of a State pact of these characteristics, Espot declared that, from his point of view, «it seemed to me that there was a good predisposition of the political parties», in addition to mentioning that, at the moment, he is confident that all the political formations will join the state agreement.

Another aspect discussed during this first meeting was the date on which the agreement with the European Union is intended to be drawn up. Although the head of government mentioned that there is a «window of opportunity» in the remaining months of this 2023,

where Spain will occupy the presidency of the EU, being a neighboring country that has reiterated its support for the Principality by reach the association agreement, and have the figure of the vice president embodied by Maros Sefkovic, who grants a series of advantages in the negotiations, the Head of Government declared that this «is not an immutable issue nor absolutely non-negotiable». Espot mentioned that «there is a shared concern about whether it will be possible to conclude the negotiations at the end of 2023» and «if the negotiation has to continue, we are ready», while also stipulating that if the extension of the talks with the EU promises a good negotiating result, the Democrats will want to finalize the agreement before the European elections. ≡

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# gh the Union

the negotiations with the General Council

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**Xavier Espot**  
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT



«It will not be easy to find the common denominator, there are different sensitivities, but we will make an effort»

«The delegation is made up of the Government and the co-princes, but we add that the minority can appoint a representative»

«There is a shared concern about whether it will be possible to conclude the negotiations during this 2023»

## Positive reactions to the meeting by opposition groups

Most of the parliamentary groups and extra-parliamentary parties were grateful to the Government.

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**R**eactions to the meeting on the State Pact with the European Union by the opposition groups did not take long, and throughout last Thursday they all openly showed their positions regarding it. The leader of Concòrdia and general counsel, Cerni Escalé, showed two possibilities for the State pact: «that it be a political agreement in which there is a pact of minimums so that the opposition parties can express our vision in Government», or, on the other hand, «a finalist pact, in which the Andorran position is detailed today», as well as «the agreements made, their possible trajectory or what we are willing to cede as a country». As Escalé explained, his political corporation prefers «this vision of a joint pact», although they could settle for «sharing our concerns with the executive and controlling the action from the General Council», in case it was not possible to reach an agreement on the part of all the political forces of the Principality.

However, the leader of Concòrdia highlighted the possibility of having «an external observer chosen by the parliamentary groups and by extra-parliamentary parties», as long as «the agreement is final and we clearly express the will of the State in the negotiation». In addition, the General Counsel was very grateful to the Government led by Espot, which showed itself during the meeting «with an outstretched hand, transparent with the information and committed to giving us access to the text of the agreement». Even so, Escalé believes that «negotiations must continue, in order to see if we are compatible in terms of the content of the agreement». In the same vein, Susanna Vela, president of the Social Democrat parliamentary group, also spoke and said that «the Government has agreed to collect all the suggestions regarding the text proposal on the State pact with the EU». A series of requirements that her party based on four fundamental pieces: the impact studies, which must talk about «costs and benefits, with accessible and easy-to-understand documentation for citizens»; the need for socio-economic factors, which form an

«active part» of the negotiation process and «not as in the previous legislature»; the fact of dimensioning the structures with human resources and, finally, «the deadline we give ourselves to be able to close the best possible agreement», as well as to manage to carry out a good educational campaign towards the public. On the social democratic party's view of the pact and its progress towards approval, Vela was forceful: «We have said that if the requirements we have asked for are met, we will be part of the pact», adding that «the PS has always been pro-European and has fought for the agreement, as we understand that it is beneficial for citizens and for the country.» The leader of Andorra Endavant, Carine Montaner, did not take long to express the opinion of her political formation either, who declared that «un-

like the Government, which would like to close the agreement this year, we consider that the pact should be more soon as a tool for constructive dialogue and exchanges of points of view between the parties». In addition, the party led by Montaner presented to the meeting an alternative text of 11 pages, entitled «Pact of status of active monitoring of the evolution of the negotiation of the association agreement with the European Union». In this, the party offered to establish a healthy, frank and transparent constructive dialogue, the freedom of proposals of the signatories to the Government as it has the competence to negotiate the agreement, or to encourage the exchange of points of view between the parties in order to optimize the tactics and strategies of negotiations with Brussels, among others.

On the other hand, the non-affiliated councilor and member of Liberals, Víctor Pintos, in statements for RTVA, was satisfied, since «we have decided that we would incorporate all the revisions and points of view that we can provide and transmitting». One of the other formations that decided to speak out is Acció, led by Judith Pallarés. This, following the line of her political colleagues, showed her gratitude to Xavier Espot and his team «for letting her be part of the meeting and represent my party», also showing support for the State pact with the European Union.

In the last place, the leader of TerceraVia, Josep Pintat, declared before the media after having also been part of the meeting. «I want to state with quality that I still exist and that I do not come in representation of any party, but in my own name».



**CERNI ESCALÉ**  
CONCÒRDIA LEADER AND GENERAL COUNSEL

«From Concòrdia we prefer it to be a joint pact, where we can express our vision to the Government»



**SUSANNA VELA**  
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

«The PS has always been pro-European, as we understand that it is beneficial for citizens and for the country»



**CARINE MONTANER**  
LEADER OF ANDORRA ENDAVANT AND GENERAL COUNSEL

«The pact should be more like a tool for constructive dialogue and exchanges of views between the parties»



**VÍCTOR PINTOS**  
NON-AFFILIATED LIBERAL COUNCILOR

«We have decided that we would incorporate all the reviews and points of view that we can contribute and transmit»



**JUDITH PALLARÉS**  
ACCIÓ LEADER

«I am very grateful that the Government has let me be part of this meeting and to be able to represent my party»



**JOSEP PINTAT**  
TERCERAVIA LEADER

«I want to state with quality that I still exist and that I am not coming to represent any party, but in my own name»

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