



SOCIETY

Astrié wants a multifunctional space for events in the capital

The increase in the cost of the Fair invites the Consul Major to make several «approaches»

This year's edition will be the last with the current agreement, with an expenditure of 420,000 euros

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This year's Fair will be a special edition for an iconic event of the country which, in the words of the Consul Major of Andorra la Vella, David Astrié, «if you don't find someone at the Fair, it's because they've disappeared», as he mentioned last Tuesday in the press conference accompanied by the minor consul of the capital, Miquel Canturri. This year's Fair will be the last to be held under the current agreement, which has been in force since 2018, a period in which the increases in the cost of assembling the packaging that have been growing and it is expected that, with the call for a new agreement, a significant increase in prices will occur. That is why the consul has mentioned that this scenario invites «rethinking» on different aspects such as, for example, the place where the Fair is held. Astrié expressed the urgent need for the constructi-

The consul major is concerned about the inflation of costs that can reach up to 700,000 euros

on of a multifunctional space that can host different events such as the Fair, Cirque du Soleil or tennis sports competitions, among many others.

The Consul Major made amends for the great upheaval that the Fair represents for the capital and the country, which contributes a high volume of economic activity and fulfills a prominent role on a social scale for the population. Even so, the consul declared that costs are rising and that a rethink should be made regarding the event and the place where it takes place. Astrié explained that, apart from the investment of 420,000 euros that it costs to organize the Fair, the closure of the municipal car park where it takes place also means a loss of revenue, of approximately 130,000 euros, which causes the increase in costs facts of the event. The re-



► The general consul, David Astrié, and the junior consul, Miquel Canturri, at the press conference at the Andorra la Vella Congress Centre.

presentative of the capital stipulated that part of this expenditure has not been or is not intended to be passed on to the price charged by the Municipality to exhibitors, adding that it is relatively cheap to be able to set up a stand at the Fair.

In these circumstances, the Consul Major declared that «we have to reconsider whether this is sustainable from a point of view of common sense. The Fair will cost us more than 600,000 or 700,000 euros, which is very good because it is a great shock for the parish and the country», but «maybe we have to rethink things». It is for these reasons that Astrié exclaimed that «we have to rethink the place, where should this Fair be held? And we're not just talking about this event, but also Cirque du Soleil, tennis tournaments, indoor trials... a seri-



DAVID ASTRIÉ
GENERAL CONSUL OF ANDORRA LA VELLA

«We have to reconsider if this is sustainable. The Fair will cost us more than 600,000 or 700,000 euros»

«Where should this Fair, Cirque du Soleil or other events take place? They need a multifunctional space»

es of events that need a multifunctional space».

Likewise, with respect to this year's edition, the junior consul, Miquel Canturri, announced that the Fair is returning to the regulatory model of before the pandemic, «we are returning to the Fair that was before». The junior consul explained that the event will be held between October 27th and 28th with a total of 187 exhibitors, among which will be the Periòdic d'Andorra at stand number eight. The stands will occupy a total of 10,000 square meters, discounting the tents of the 37 associations that will be present at the event. Finally, the Fair will also have more than 25 participants in the new section of agricultural producers and artisans, both from the country and from France. ≡

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HOUSING

The opposition groups, opposed to the unfreezing of rents

The Citizen's Reasoner's report is also critical, although Marsol claims that it is in line with the project

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The bill for measures to stimulate and stabilize the housing rental market presented last Monday by the Government continues to drag on. Now, the report of the Citizen's Reasoner corresponding to 2022 enters the political and social equation, in which Marc Vila states that of the 351 demands received, 123 were related to this problem. A claim that passes for «maintaining the freezing of rent prices and building more properties for the public housing stock» and which is therefore far from the aforementioned bill, where the unfreezing of rents is the maximum to be followed. Despite this, the Minister of the Presidency, Economy, Work and Housing, Conxita Marsol, sur-

Concòrdia makes other proposals, such as reintroducing empty flats to the market or gradually increasing the ITP

prisingly stated that «it goes in line with the conclusions of the report».

This was indicated by the representative in the session of the General Council held on Tuesday afternoon, in which housing was once again the epicenter of all interventions despite not being a topic of the day. The most categorical criticisms undoubtedly came from the parliamentary group of Concòrdia, mentioning Núria Segués that «we are, once again, facing the challenging housing crisis», emphasizing that the data of the report processed by Vila «do nothing more than denote a growing concern that increases year after year and show the deficiencies in this matter on the part of the Government».

According to the member of the group headed by Cerni Escalé, «it is harmful to enter the law into the parliamentary process so urgently», since this will lead to the fact that there is «less debate, less dialogue



►► The General Councillor of the Concòrdia parliamentary group, Núria Segués, during Tuesday's session at the General Council. Consell General.

and less immediate consensus». In addition, during his speech, Segués took the opportunity to outline some of Concòrdia's proposals to remedy the housing issue, such as reintroducing empty flats to the market, gradually increasing the ITP, establishing a quota system or consolidate a public housing stock with a percentage of the annual budget.

In a similar vein, the general councillor of the social democratic parliamentary group, Susanna Vela, spoke: «We must work to avoid the suffering of families, but we must bear in mind that we must return to the law of supply and demand in a market that Democrats have not managed to relax, it will lead us to strain other sectors such as work». A statement that later provoke other statements by Vela, in which she assured that «as long as there is no pu-

blic housing, we will continue to have the same problem», adding that «the years have passed and we do not have a tool that projects solutions. The only thing the Government has done is hide things».

The last intervention came from the councillor general of the Andorra Endavant parliamentary group, Noemí Amador, who moved away from the line of her fellow chamber members to focus more on the figure of the Citizen's Reasoner: «We think that it is necessary to go further and promote a legislative change in the near future in the appointment of this figure, becoming elected by the Andorran people».

MARSOL, FIRM CONVICTION IN THE PROJECT// «The report puts on the table the shortcomings and frustrations of the public, and from the Govern-

ment we are aware that it is a priority to solve». Conxita Marsol began her presentation with these words, emphasizing that the presented project «will give more security to tenants» by being extensions of up to four years for the oldest contracts. Until now, extensions have been approved year after year, with this new measure affecting around 60% of rental contracts.

However, the minister was very clear about the fact that this problem «is not a situation with an easy solution, since there are other issues to remedy such as the slowness of justice». In addition, she emphasized that this must not happen to build more buildings: «We understand that with the housing that exists in the country we can already find a formula to remedy it», emphasizing that in the budget project that



Conxita Marsol
MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY,
ECONOMY, WORK AND HOUSING

«The thawing will give more security to tenants, by being extensions of up to four years»

Núria Segués
GENERAL ADVISER OF THE
CONCÒRDIA PARLIAMENTARY
GROUP

«The Citizen's Reasoner's report shows the Government's housing deficiencies»

Susanna Vela
GENERAL COUNCILOR OF
THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC
PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

«The years have passed, and we don't have a tool that projects solutions. The only thing the Government has done is hide things»

will soon enter parliamentary procedure already contemplates a large investment item dedicated to housing, as well as the project that will be presented next January. As Marsol highlighted, «we are open to hearing proposals that bring solutions and especially related to empty flats and tourist apartments».

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