



## Politics ► General Council

# Escalé and Concòrdia want to apply sanctions for language policy

Minister Bonell defends a more pedagogical than punitive methodology in the face of the 308 infractions

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During the session of the General Council last Wednesday, the Parliamentary Group of Concòrdia, represented by councilor Cerni Escalé, asked the Executive about the number of violations detected by the Government of 14 articles of the Law on the regulation of use of the official language, Catalan, during the last four years and which of these have been subject to sanctions. The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Mònica Bonell, responded to the leading group of the opposition that 308 violations had been detected in total, but that the Executive did not impose any kind of sanction under the premise that the Democratic Government is applying this regulation with a non-punitive character, more focused on pedagogy. Likewise, the minister alleged that the percentage of use of Catalan in numerous areas has increased, despite admitting that the implementation of Catalan in customer service situations is still being improved. Taking these facts into account, from the ministry and the Government, several agreements have been reached with the companies that have committed the violations in order to solve them in a less conflictual way without involving sanctions.

The parliamentary minority showed their disagreement with this non-punitive policy, showing their surprise at the fact that none of the 807 sanctions have been imposed. In addition, Escalé asked if the option of amplifying the detection mechanisms for these violations had been considered, beyond legislative measures claiming that the processes take too long. An example



► Cerni Escalé during the session of the General Council, last Wednesday.

**During the last legislature, 308 offenses were committed, but none were sanctioned**

used by the leader of the opposition was the sending of photographs by citizens of advertising posters that do not comply with the regulations.

The minister replied that the violations have come to be notified to the ministry through the campaigns that have been carried out through the language service, also alleging positive results such as the fact that no actor warned about the violations has shown opposi-

tion to complying with the regulations. In addition, Bonell reaffirmed the position of the Executive as they are in a phase of the process of explaining to citizens as a whole how to apply the regulations, and of the preparation of a new bill in the area language that will contemplate the co-responsibility of all the institutions, emphasizing the municipalities which, with this new legislative text, will also have the responsibility

to know and promote the linguistic regulations.

The PS, through Susanna Vela, also showed its skepticism before the lack of sanctions against the three hundred incidents. Even so, Minister Bonell alleged that the mentality of not coercing is part of a political will that has been transmitted through the different Executives, including that of the PS, when Vela was minister. ≡

DEMOCRATES



► Guillem Casal.

## Casal announces the future creation of a National Water Agency

The minister communicated that La Massana is an isolated case of the country's deposits

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Faced with the issue proposed by the councilor of Concòrdia, Jordi Casadevall, on the management of water resources in the face of the affair that happened in La Massana, whe-

re restrictions on the use of these water resources have been applied, the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Environment, Guillem Casal, announced that a new water law is being drafted that will include the creation of a National Water Agency to help make the management of water resources more efficient. This body will also be conceived in anticipation that, with the scenario of the fight against climate change, the amount of water may decrease, and more measures will be needed

to prevent these effects. The minister also showed the need for new regulations, since the most recent one in water matters dates from 1985 and needs to be adapted to current circumstances. Regarding the water restrictions in La Massana, Casal mentioned that this is an isolated case, since the situation is good in the rest of the national territory. Thus, the minister made a call for calm claiming that the case of La Massana is an isolated case. In addition, Casal highlighted the fact that it has been possible to

reduce water consumption by 158 liters per person, one of the best records of the decade, according to the minister. However, he stipulated that work must continue to reach a water consumption per person below 150 liters.

Casal also communicated that the ministry has been collaborating with the Research + Innovation Area (AR+I) to prepare two studies regarding the evaluation of the drought through meteorological data and the flow of the rivers, the water resources and national deposits. These investigations are given in order to anticipate future scenarios in addition to continuing to sensitize the population to the possibility of effects that may decrease the ability to obtain water such as climate change. ≡



# Esport announces reinforcements for public transport in winter.

The head of government explained the success of free buses.

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During the session of the General Council last Wednesday, the social democratic counselor Pere Baró asked the head of government, Xavier Esport who has under his responsibility the Secretary of State for the Energy Transition, Transport and Mobility of David Forné, about what measures are planned to be applied to avoid various malfunctions in public transport.

Esport explained that, last year, two phenomena occurred which, despite being positive, had consequences regarding the operation of the buses. On the one hand, the application of free public transport was a success, with a 70% increase in its users, exceeding government expectations, in addition to adding 40% of this increase with the premature arrival of temporary workers. This combination caused several complexities in the ordinary operation of public transport, but Esport claimed that it was able to learn from that past situation, which was eventually resolved. For this reason, the Executive will extend the timetables and frequency of the buses, especially on the L3 and L4 lines, which are particularly sensitive for their connections with high parishes, significantly affecting temporary workers. Likewise, the Government also plans to develop various adaptive modifications starting in November with the arrival of the high season.

Among other measures that have been applied by the Executive,



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►► The head of government, Xavier Esport, last Wednesday with other councilors.

**Esport explained that the timetables and frequencies of public transport lines such as L3 and L4 will increase**

Esport also highlighted the fact of collaborating with the concessionaires of the ski domains to define the mobility needs of temporary workers so that the lines that are under the most pressure during peak hours are reinforced.

In front of Pere Baró's question about the influx of traffic in the last weekend, which has coincided with the Hispanic long weekend. Esport explained that these are specific logical problems with a high volume of tourists arriving in the Principality on holiday dates in Spain, in this case. Thus, the head of government ruled out structural defects in mobility. ≡



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►► The general counselor of Concòrdia, Maria Àngels Aché.

## Aché calls for caution with private universities

Concòrdia shows its concern for access to the education centers in the country

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The General Counselor of the Concòrdia parliamentary group, Maria Àngels Aché, asked the Minister of Institutional Relations, Education and Universities, Ladislau Baró, about the number of private universities that are in the process of being established in the country and whether there are more interested in being able to access the Principality. The minister replied that, at present, there are six private higher education centers in the process of being authorized, and another has shown interest

in being able to practice in the country. The minister expressed her concern about the number of private universities in the country, as she mentioned that there was some concern that these centers would meet optimal quality, given the supposed ease of establishment perceived by the Concòrdia group, due to the number of universities that want to come to the country. For this reason, Aché stipulated the need for a higher education plan in order to be more careful and avoid the massive arrival of educational centers that do not meet sufficient conditions.

In response to the minister's concerns, the minister was in favor of the development of the strategy proposed by Aché. However, Baró also mentioned that private universities must send reports and pass evaluations by AQUA (Higher Education Quality Agency). ≡

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