



Interview with the President of Autea, Ana Muñoz ▶ Wants to continue the 2021 projects 2021

«The most influential body in the world of autism has rewarded us for the quality of service»

ANA MUÑOZ President of the Autism Spectrum Disorder Association (Autea)

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At the general assembly held at the Association of Autism Spectrum Disorders of Andorra (Autea), member Ana Muñoz became the new chair of the board of the body taking the replacement of Inés Martí, who becomes second vice-president. The main direction of the new board is to continue the projects launched during the pandemic stage, despite the obstacles that this context posed for the development of the association's initiatives.

–What is the main purpose of the new board of directors?

–We have formed a board of continuity because we are the same members that we were before. We simply rotated the representatives of the association. We want to accomplish everything we set out to do before and during the pandemic.

–Are there any ongoing projects that are more important than the others?

–All projects are important. None of them are smaller than the other because they are entirely dedicated to the day-to-day improvement of the associates, so I could not name just one.

–What is Autea's perspective on the current autism landscape?

–We want to put Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in the spotlight of society to normalize coexistence with this group. We believe that integration is needed and we want to make people aware so that people with ASD know that they have many abilities that are sometimes overlooked by the majority.

–Do you think that the support of the government is enough for the needs of the association?

–We do not receive direct aid from the Ministry of Social Affairs, although it would be very good, because many professionals are involved in our processes. The public administration is responsible for approving the projects we present to them, but there is no regular way of helping them, as we are fed by partners and private donations. Sometimes the Executive finances 75% of the program we propose, but this is not always the case.

–From associations that represent groups with functional diversity, such as Amare or Trana-Em, they state that the social stigma towards those affected is still very strong in our society. Do you agree with this statement?



▶ The president of the board of Autea, Ana Muñoz.



«This is a heterogeneous approach that needs understanding to move forward as a modern society»

«Adults with ASD are the big ones forgotten, but with good infrastructure and support, they can move forward»

–I agree. For this reason, one of our struggles revolves around the dissemination of information about ASD. It is a heterogeneous affect that must be understood in order to integrate it into society and move forward as a modern society.

–Social acceptance must also go through the educational process, then?

–If we bring all our knowledge to the new generations from a very young age, then in the adult stage we will have more tools to empathize and understand.

–Also represent people with Asperger's Syndrome.

–Affirmative. In fact, it is a type of ASD that is characterized by a high intellectual capacity with difficulties in establishing social interactions with people around.

–What is the roadmap to follow for people with high levels of dependency?

–I think that these cases need a professional to accompany them throughout their career. As long as they can adapt to the growth and evolution of their age, there is no problem. If you do a good job of accompaniment, there will be a point where this person will become self-sufficient.

–What is the current status of the Youth in Inclusion (JEI) comprehensive care program?

–Precisely, we have just received an award from the most influential body in the world of autism, the NAS (National Autistic Society). This is a recognition that certifies the quality of service we provide to young people in this program. In fact, they came from England specifically to interview users' relatives and evaluate our actions. It should be noted that no center in Spain and France has this recognition and we are very proud of it.

–Often all attention is focused on

children and young people. What happens when these people reach adulthood?

–Adults with ASD are the most forgotten and for this reason Autea is strongly committed to the treatment of this group. They often suffer from depression due to misunderstandings and have incompatibility issues with society. It is true that adult cases are more complex, but with a good infrastructure that supports the group and professional support they can move forward successfully.

–Another concern is gender-based violence in people with functional diversity. What is the incidence in the country?

–We know of some cases that have occurred here, but we do not have the exact figure. Unfortunately it is a situation that affects us all; however, there is no further incidence among people with ASD. However, if new cases arise, we will be completely involved. ≡

HUMANITARIAN AID

Fernandez acknowledges that the first convoy entered Ukraine

He apologizes for lying and says he did it to preserve jobs

It is revealed that they decided to go to Lviv at the request of the Ukrainian Red Cross

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The director general of the Andorran Red Cross, Jordi Fernández, revealed last Thursday that the first convoy of humanitarian aid entered Ukraine, contrary to what he had assured days ago. For this reason, he apologized for lying and explained that he did so to preserve the jobs of firefighters who had entered Ukrainian territory, even if they did so in a personal capacity, without a uniform and without any official body vehicle, but without the explicit permission of their superiors, as they were instructed not to officially enter into a war territory.

«I apologize for not telling the whole truth, I was wrong about whether we had crossed the border, because we did, and we did it with all the necessary permits. Once all the truth has come out, my statements will only clarify the facts, but we can no longer harm anyone. I have always wanted to protect these people, and to say so now can no longer harm or benefit them», said Fernandez.

At the same time, he explained that they decided to cross the border between Poland and Ukraine, contrary to what was initially planned, because the Ukrainian Red



► Members of the first humanitarian convoy at a stop during the trip.

Cross asked them to do so, «almost begging», he said, because they needed a certain material that led the Andorran delegation (medication and baby items), which logistical difficulties did not allow to reach the other side of the border, in particular in a warehouse of the Ukrainian Red Cross in the city of Lviv, quiet in those days but that in the last hours it has been bombed by

the Russian army. «At no point we felt at risk», said the Red Cross director. Fernández also explained that he asked for permission from the president of the Andorran Red Cross, Josep Pol, and that he had granted it. Before reaching the border, they decided to spend the night in a hotel in Krakow, about 200 kilometers from Ukraine, and it was there that the convoy received

this request from the Ukrainian Red Cross. At that time, members of the convoy decided that of the 18 members, only eight would enter Ukrainian territory: two from the Red Cross, two Ukrainians and four unarmed firefighters in their personal capacity. At that time, the Polish and Ukrainian Red Cross were in charge of processing the corresponding permits.



Jordi Fernández
DIRECTOR OF THE RED CROSS

«Once all the truth has come out, I will only clarify the facts, but we can no longer harm anyone; I will not resign»

«There have been many volunteers, donations and a great logistical effort to bring humanitarian aid to an area of war, and now it seems that the most important thing is this, but it is not, because the important thing is that the help is coming, and so last Thursday a second convoy came out with which everyone has turned their backs; we cannot cover up the humanitarian work that is being done, «he said. At the same time, Fernández stated that he did not intend to resign or make the position available to the board of directors of the body. ≡

Caritas sends 33 pallets with basic supplies

Eva Sansa's transport company will take care of the trip

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The trailer with the 33 pallets with material and supplies for Caritas refugees was ready to leave last Thursday for Poland. This was stated by the Bishop of Sant Julià de Lòria, Pepe Chisvert, who pointed out that the transfer of material will not involve

any cost for the charity, as the company Transport Areny, managed by the Consul General of the Massana, Eva Sansa, together with Juli Pérez, will be in charge of the trip. As they say, they both decided to make the trip altruistically to help the victims of the armed conflict in the Eastern European country «taking advantage of part of our vacation». Therefore, from the transport company they give the trailer and it will be Sansa and Pérez who will drive, taking turns, to be able to reach the

Polish population on Monday where the person in charge of Caritas in Poland is waiting for them to start distributing the material. Chisvert emphasized the safety of the convoy, which guarantees the delivery of all supplies and the transparency of the project. He also stated that the charity has opened the organization's charity account so that «whoever wants and can» make a donation, which will eventually be sent to Ukraine, and so far has accumulated about 30,000 euros. ≡



► The loading process of the trailer bound for Poland.

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