



CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING AND RIGHTS

Social Affairs has dealt with 309 cases of children at risk during 2022

The department foresees an upward trend due to the chain of crises in recent years

The CREI currently hosts four teenagers in the residential center and four more in the day service



SFGA/JAVILADOT

►► The exterior of the Residential Intensive Education Center (CREI).

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The Department of Children, Adolescence and Youth has dealt with 309 cases of children at risk since the beginning of the year. Of these, around seventy are new, 21 correspond to children cared for by the State and 30 to foster children. The rest are follow-up cases that were opened in previous years, but continue to require some kind of family intervention. As explained by the director of the department, Jordi Olivé, on the occasion of Children's Day that was celebrated yesterday, the Government's objective is to «work both with the children and their families to be able to address the situation». In very few cases protective measures are necessary and most are

resolved with the child living in his home and close to his environment. The profile of those affected is very varied and complex, although all of them present difficulties or serious shortcomings in the family sphere collected in the indicators of the Qualified Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents.

In recent years, the number of cases has increased due to the application of an immediate action protocol (especially for cases of sexual abuse and mistreatment) and the prevention actions that have been taken from the Ministry of Social Affairs. In this regard, Olivé considered that the population is becoming more aware (the 175 hotline is operational 24 hours a day) and praised the work of the professionals who have learned to detect conflict situations earlier and, therefore, «there

are more cases, yes, but of less risk». The forecast is that in the future the trend will remain upward, taking into account the chain of crises we are experiencing. «Studies show that when there are global economic crises, there are more tensions in family units that can affect minors», warned the director, despite affirming that «at the moment» there is no evidence of an increase in cases in the Principality. Despite this, and for the year 2023, it is intended to strengthen the areas that provide primary care to mild and moderate cases for better referral and to decongest the area that deals with the most serious cases.

With regard to the creation of the Residential Center for Intensive Education (CREI), Olivé pointed out that it is a resource «highly in demand» by families and profes-

sionals. Normally, the CREIs are focused on behavioral problems, but in the case of Andorra, addictions have also been included to avoid referral abroad. «It is a highly complex resource, but one that we believe should be available in the country. This is also the only CREI that has a residential part – like all the ones everywhere – and a day center, which should allow us to avoid the admission of problematic behavior, but not very serious», explained Olivé. In addition, it also serves as an intermediate step so that the change between the internment – always decided by a court order – and the return home is not so abrupt and to reduce the number of transfers to Spain. Other times, however, such as in cases of personality or eating disorders and disabilities «there will be no alternative»: «We must keep



Jordi Olivé

CHILDHOOD, ADOLESCENCE AND YOUTH DIRECTOR

«[The CREI] is a highly demanded and highly complex resource, which we believe should be available in the country»

the therapeutic centers for the most specific problems», pointed out the Director of Children. Currently, there are four teenagers (ages 12 to 18) in the residential center and four more in the day service. As for the professionals who work there, there are social educators, support assistants, teachers, a psychologist, a psychiatrist and an external nurse and security, kitchen and cleaning services.

FUTURE CHALLENGES // Olivé made these statements from Strasbourg, where he moved this week to present the National Plan for Childhood and Adolescence to the Council of Europe. It is a pioneering project on the continent that includes the objectives and policies to be improved over the next four years and which has been agreed upon by all the professionals involved (Government, municipalities, mayors and prosecutors, associations, professional associations, the reasoner of the citizen...), civil society (Education unions and parents' associations) and all children and adolescents through a participatory process in schools. From here, four commitments, 12 strategies and 48 actions have been developed in order to ensure their rights and facilitate their personal development through access to health, education, culture, sport, employment and other areas. ≡

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WINTER CAMPAIGN

The companies have 100% of the fees and accommodation covered

Ponce calls for the creation of an office for seasonal workers and to stop using the word 'temporary'

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The main companies in the country already have practically 100% of their worker quotas covered, with their corresponding accommodation, for the winter season. This is what the representative of Argentinians in Andorra, Marcelo Ponce, explained yesterday in a live video on his social networks and with updated data provided by the Immigration Service. Specifically, Daguisa Hotels has completed its offer of work and accommodation in all its hotels and restaurants, Hotansa (responsible for the majority of catering services in the resorts) has exceeded 95% in the offer of work and 98% in accommodation and Grandvalira (with the exception of EMAP and Secnoa, due to lack of information), has 100% of the supply of workers reached and 98% of accommodation. So, by now, 91.6% of the total quotas that were opened for the season, corresponding to around 4,900 jobs, have already been used up.

«The paranoia of the last few weeks has created a huge mess, but those of us who have been working in Andorra for years know that things have gradually changed and will continue to do so,» said Ponce, who also asked to stop using the word temporary, because it gives «a very bad vibe» and say, simply, seasonal workers. The spokesman, who insisted that he is no one to provide this kind of information nor does he have any obligation to do so, but believes that «an accurate and real picture of the situation» must be given, he acknowledged feeling a «great joy» for those who have secured a contract and a «great sorrow» for those who have been left out. «I will never tell you whether or not you should come to Andorra, that is a personal decision. No one has the moral authority to tell you, but I understand that we come from Argentina, where we gave everything and worked very hard, and we have to do the same here, with good behavior and good vibes. Those who don't have a job, let them continue with their plans B and C. We can make a difference,»



►► Archive image of a ski resort.

he said. In this sense, he recalled the complicated economic and social situation that the South American country is going through and congratulated all those who have dared to take the step «in search of a future, a better life, of stability [...] and of the Andorran dream».

In addition, he considered that the fact that the Government has reduced from six to three the number of seasons to have the authorization «is not a coincidence», but is due to «the work done over many years», which has also allowed to «advance and renew things that were dormant in the Andorran systems». He also thanked the existing public facilities, such as the free Catalan

Argentinians in Andorra appreciates the administrative facilities, such as the free Catalan courses

courses: «If we come to Andorra, we must do it well», he said, with the flags of Argentina and the Principality in the background.

On a bureaucratic level, Ponce, who this week met with the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, also had words of recognition for the Executive: «Espot has attended to us whenever we have asked, which does not happen in everywhere, and he has also fulfilled many of our requests, some others not». However, just starting the video called for the creation of an office for seasonal workers to avoid situations like the ones experienced this year, because «we are just an association of Argentinians trying to lend a hand».



Marcelo Ponce

ARGENTINANS IN ANDORRA

«The paranoia of the last few days has created a huge mess, but things have gradually changed»

«I will never tell you whether or not you should come [...] I understand that we come from Argentina, where we gave everything»

And he added: «We need an organization that professionally, and with all the knowledge of the law, takes care of immigrants and takes care of their relationship with the company that hires them, their papers, etc.» Be that as it may, and in case there is still someone willing to try - because «maybe there are changes or new quotas are opened» - he recommended to his compatriots that they never send their CVs on paper and try to do all the procedures digitally. «Paper CVs are automatically discarded by all large companies», he assured.

However, Ponce admitted that «immigrating carries some risks» and that the bad temper of the last few days is due to «the lack of information». In this way, he excused a hypothetical bad planning or management on the part of the Administration by appealing that «when you emigrate, the country that receives you is not guilty». «Andorra is not coming to get us, we are the ones who are coming because we need to leave Argentina». ≡

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