

INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF SUPPLIES

FEDA paid an extra cost of 12 million during the first quarter

Long-term contracts with neighboring countries manage to cushion the rise in electricity

The company claims that focusing its efforts exclusively on electricity is a «mistake»



►► The Director General of FEDA, Albert Moles, and the Minister for the Environment, Silvia Calvo.

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FEDA acknowledges that during the first three months of 2022 the company has had an additional cost of approximately 12 million euros for the acquisition of electricity from neighboring countries. This was stated by the director general of electricity, Albert Moles, after stressing that the visibility of the situation in relation to the rise and fall of tariffs, from now on, is not at all «clear». Following the same line, the Minister of the Environment, Agriculture

and Sustainability, Silvia Calvo, added that this increase is due to the problem of French nuclear power plants and the impact on European countries resulting from the war in Ukraine.

During Moles' appearance before the legislative committee of the General Council, the director of the company explained the trajectory that electricity has followed in relation to investment policies and the increase in tariffs over the last two years. In this regard, FEDA stressed that the long-term supply contracts, which it signed in 2019 with Spain and France in order to

guarantee electricity at a closed price for the next 10 years, «we have amortized the rise in price and they are competitively priced and much more affordable than in neighbo-

ring countries», which are precisely the main suppliers. He also stressed that, in relative terms, the increase in electricity will increase the bill by eight euros per month, while in



SILVIA CALVÓ
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
«Subsidiary investments go beyond profitability and, above all, seek to do a service to the public»

ALBERT MOLES
GENERAL MANAGER OF FEDA
«Hydrogen is a fuel that is still a little green and takes 10 or 15 years to run 100%»

countries such as Spain it will be 100 euros per month.

As for the future vision of the electricity company, Moles warned that focusing the investment and research efforts exclusively on electricity is a «mistake». In fact, the director of the company spoke about the need for the country to diversify energy sources in order to find «new ways more accessible to all and slow down the growth of electricity demand.» In this regard, he highlighted the proliferation of biomass and biogas for the future to complement electricity. He also noted the growing interest in hydrogen as a source of energy, but noted that «it is still uncertain and has 10 or 15 years left to be 100% operational».

On the other hand, during the course of the appearance, the president of the Social Democratic Party (PS), Pere López, pointed out that «the million-dollar investments of the subsidiary companies of FEDA have not had an adequate return on the amount of resources allocated». In turn, Calvo replied that these managements of the heat networks distributed in different parts of the country «go beyond the return on investment because they seek to do a service to the public by reducing the demand for electric heating and, thus, cause a decrease in prices.

Finally, Calvo emphasized that the economic impact of the part exposed to market prices is very important due to the great volatility that prices are suffering and «it is not clear whether we will continue the same dynamic of assuming additional costs until the end of the year». But it all depends on the context of the war and the situation of the suppliers. He also highlighted the problem of the proliferation of electric cars in terms of «the shortage of charging points, which must be used for emergencies and tourists». ≡

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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The government has authorized the residence of 225 Ukrainian people

The Red Cross begins a new expedition to Poland with 14 tons of basic supplies

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The government has authorized the residence of 225 people from Ukraine out of a total of 240 who have applied for it and are pending resolution. These 240 people are part of 98 households, which have already been interviewed to meet their needs and provide the best service. There are also 62 schoolchildren, 38 of whom have chosen the Andorran education system, 20 French and 4 Spanish. In terms of aid, the Executive has also provided 64 pre-paid cards to spend on supermarkets, 79 on public transport and 54 on Andorra Telecom. It should be noted that most of these families are temporarily in the homes of relatives or friends, but there are also those who have been exceptionally given private tourist accommodation. A situation that could be complicated in the coming weeks, as with the arrival of good weather and the summer season these landlords will want to rent them out. In this sense, the Minister of Education and Higher Education, Ester Vilarrubla, who before yesterday exercised the functions of Minister Spokesman to replace Eric Jover, said that «case by case» is being studied, but that «at the moment, we can't give a global answer.»

Regarding a hypothetical increase in the number of people welcomed, Vilarrubla recalled that the limit has been set at 250, although «when the time comes it will be seen if it can be expanded». «In any case, it will be analyzed from a human perspective as the war progresses,» he added.

On the other side of the coin, and with regard to economic sanctions



► Minister Ester Vilarrubla acts as Minister Spokeswoman after the Council of Ministers.

against Russia and Belarus, the Minister stated that the presence of assets in the Principality of people on the international blacklist related to Vladimir Putin.

Meanwhile, the Red Cross announced a new humanitarian mission to Lublin to distribute basic supplies and food to Ukrainian refugees in the Polish city. The convoy is scheduled to begin its journey on Saturday, April 23rd, in the

morning and arrive at its destination on Sunday afternoon. A total of 14 tons of material will be transported in 32 pallets.

The fourth solidarity expedition of the Red Cross will have a heavy truck, a support vehicle and seven people, as, as they pointed out, during the last mission was missing an interpreter and an additional driver to do the trip without making any stops. Five drivers will

travel to Lublin, three for the trailer and two for the support vehicle, an interpreter and an NGO delegate.

The Red Cross also stated that in view of the large amount of material they are receiving from the public, work is beginning on the organization of a fifth and final humanitarian convoy. Finally, as in the last expedition, it is not planned to move new refugees to the Principality. ≡

The number of SOA registrants is 402

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The overall number of applicants to the Andorra Employment Service (SOA) looking for work at the end of March was 402 people, a decrease of 2.4% compared to the previous month (412 people) and a decrease of 69% compared to March 2021 (1,296 people). According to the latest data, the total number of jobs offered at the end of March is 1,474. A figure that represents a decrease compared to the previous month of 16.7%, when 1,770 jobs were offered, and an increase of +203.3% compared to March 2021

Economic requirements for family reunification increase by 20%

(486 jobs offered). In terms of involuntary unemployment benefits, 27 people received the benefit in March, the same as the previous month.

On the other hand, the Government approved the amendment to the regulations governing the Immigration Service in order to update the financial requirements for immigration permits due to family reunification, which shortens the periods and increases the amounts 20%. ≡

The College of Opticians will soon be a reality

The Government is giving approval to the bill to create the Official Association of Optometrists of Andorra, which aims to ensure that the action of the members ensures that the professional practice complies with the regulations, ethics and good practice, and that the rights and interests of the target people are respected. In the same way, it orders and regulates the representation and defense of the profession and the professional interests of the members. The text is divided into six articles, four transitional provisions and one final provision.

Update of the topography of Andorra

The Council of Ministers approved the tender for the updating of the topographic base of Andorra. The project is part of the periodic work of updating the basic cartography, in this case, of the Topographic Base of Andorra at a scale of 1: 5000 (BTA5M), which covers the entire extension of the Principality and which consists of 74 sheets. The first 1: 5000 scale mapping was done in 1995 and was updated in 2003 and 2012. Given that 10 years have passed since the last changes, an update is considered necessary.

New rates for school transportation

School transport prices for the next school year will be lower than this year because, in addition to the usual 80% subsidy assumed by the School Transport Service, the additional subsidy of 3.32% from the school year will also be applied the Green Fund for the Energy Transition Promotion Act. The service is aimed at students in kindergarten, primary education, secondary education and students in post-compulsory high school and vocational training whose place of residence is outside the public transport lines.

Grant for youth and sponsors

The Executive approved the grant from the National Youth Forum (FNJA) for the year 2022 for a total amount of 52,254.52 euros. This subsidy is expressly regulated by Law 39/2014, of December 11th, of the National Youth Forum and in the policy of the Government's Youth Area, which takes into account the key role played by the youth organizations in the country and, in particular, the FNJA. In addition, the Government will also award a grant of 17,000 euros to the Federation of the Elderly of the Principality of Andorra (Fggpa).

Culture gives 180.00€ for 75 projects

The Ministry of Culture reaffirms its commitment to the sector by maintaining the total budget of 180,000 euros, to which must be added the reserved item of 100,000 euros for support for cinema and the extra 25,000 euros that have been tendered in support of foreign promotion. All this draws one of the highest economic items of recent years with the desire to continue to promote the cultural fabric of the country. A total of 98 applications were received, of which 75 were accepted (76.5% of the total submitted), if the aid for literary creation is taken into account.

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