



Interview

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EL PERIÒDIC
ANDORRA LA VELLA

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The Country Manager of Philip Morris in Andorra, Bernabé Solsona, points out that research, scientific advances and technology open up a new scenario for the sector, with products that are a better alternative to the habit of smoking.

–Where is the tobacco industry headed?

–The majority of sectors are moving, today, to dedicate efforts to reduce the impact that our products generate on society, on the environment, on people's health and on the world in general. The tobacco sector cannot be an exception. At Philip Morris we are betting on research, science and technological innovation. To date, we have invested more than 11,000 million dollars with this goal. We have developed different technologies that remove combustion from the equation and with it the smoke that is released, the main cause of diseases linked to the habit of smoking. Our smoke-free devices, such as IQOS, our tobacco heating device, significantly reduce the harmful substances present in cigarettes.

–For Andorra, a country where the tobacco industry is very present, what can this transformation bring?

–Science and technology allow us to give better alternatives to those smokers who want to continue smoking. In the case of Andorra, we are talking about getting the approximately 16,000 adult smokers we estimate there to switch to these better alternatives. We are convinced that this transformation is good for smokers, and of course for the entire value chain linked to the tobacco sector. The future goes through combustion-free alternatives, or what is the same, those that do not generate smoke. There is still a long way to go, but we are already starting to see the results of this transformation. In recent years we have doubled our team, opened our sales points and more and more smokers who do not want to quit smoking choose our IQOS tobacco heating device.

–So, will we change the way we consume tobacco?

–We go from burning it to heating it. If we eliminate combustion, we eliminate smoke and consequently significantly reduce exposure to harmful substances. The progressive change towards these alternatives is taking place and we already have examples from southern European countries such as Portugal, Italy or Greece where we have a significant presence in the sector market exceeding 10% of the national share.

–What is the biggest challenge you are facing to reach the consumer in this paradigm shift?

–The great misinformation and confusion surrounding the alternatives and the differences with the traditional cigarette. Many smokers do not



Bernabé Solsona

Philip Morris Country Manager in Andorra

«We are convinced that the transformation of the tobacco industry is good for smokers and of course for the entire value chain linked to the sector»

know that the main cause of diseases linked to smoking is the smoke that is generated during combustion and not nicotine, which although it is an addictive substance is not the main problem. Of course, there are many smokers who are unaware of the growing scientific evidence supporting alternatives. Ultimately, all this ignorance makes it difficult for adult smokers to make informed decisions and switch to science-based alternatives.

–What must happen to accelerate the change?

–I think it is important that the main actors get involved, highlighting the role of the medical-scientific community in promoting a constructive debate based on scientific evidence, avoiding ideological issues. The figure of the regulator is also key, which must take into account the lower risk profile of these products in order to move towards a different regulation compared to that of cigarettes. ≡

Participation in the Andorra la Vella Fair

►► Philip Morris was present at the 44th edition of the Andorra la Vella Fair with an IQOS themed stand where it continues to inform adult smokers who decide to continue smoking that there is a better alternative supported by science. Following the theme of the contest, an action aimed at preserving the natural environment has also been carried out. Specifically, a financial allocation for a revegetation project with native seeds collected in the Planells de Mereig of Canillo that will be carried out in Grandvalira during 2024. For each person who has visited the space and completed a survey, IQOS will allocate 5 euros to a program that will protect soils against erosion, rebuild the ecosystem and restore biodiversity.



EL PERIÒDIC

ANA

SOLIDARITY

Absolute record in the 10th Walk Against Cancer

1,500 people participated and 1,700 shirts were sold

ANNA MENCOS VIÑALS
ANDORRA LA VELLA
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The Walk Against Cancer achieved an absolute record of participation with 1,500 people. The president of the Andorran Association Against Cancer, Josep Saravia, was very satisfied with the attendance figures and stated that the aim of this act of protest was to show that the population is on the side of the patients and that the illness should not be taken lightly: «it is an important enough illness for us to start talking or looking for goals on how to make patients have a little better time». From Assandca they pointed out that the fact that the head of government, Xavier Espot, and the consul major of Andorra la Vella, David Astrié, and of Escaldes Engordany, Rosa Gili, were part of the meeting would serve to «observe that the population is concerned about this issue and that they don't come just to take a walk, but are people who have experienced it in the first or second person, and who in some way help us claim that the disease, nowadays, is not treated as we believe it should be treated», detailed Saravia.

In this sense, Espot stated that «it is a satisfaction to participate for another year in this walk against cancer and to see that so many people have joined», and added that events like these apart from supporting patients, also they serve to



► The participants reaching the end of the Walk Against Cancer 2023.



Josep Saravia
PRESIDENT OF ASSANDCA

«It is a vindictive act to show that the population is on the side of the patients. They will be able to see that people are concerned about the issue»



make contributions to advancing science.

The head of government also stated that despite not knowing the demands of all the people who were on the walk, «they are all legitimate and must be heard», and for this reason he detailed that from the Executive to start working and take forward those aspects that they know they can take forward from now on: «this implies a more comfortable accompaniment and more important financial support».

The walk was marked by a cloudy day with a threat of rain, but even so, entire families, pets, and people of all ages gathered in Plaça del Poble to show their solidarity to the cause. 1,500 people, the highest participation figure in the 10 years the event has been running.

It is estimated that a total of 1,700 shirts have been sold and in the coming weeks the money will be counted, and the check will be delivered to Assandca. The association explains that it will still be necessary to wait a few days to be able to offer a final figure that reflects the solidarity of the Andorran people in the fight against cancer.

Despite not yet having a final figure, the president of the association pointed out that even though with the data they have at the mo-

Entire families, pets, and people of all ages gathered in Plaça del Poble

ment they have not managed to reach the 2,000 T-shirts that had been set as a target to sell this year, they were very happy, and that if they don't get there «it's not a failure», and that what's most important to them is that people take part in the walk every year.

Arriving again at the meeting point, and after walking four kilometers through the streets of the parishes of Andorra la Vella and Escaldes-Engordany, the participants were able to drink a glass of hot broth, and many stayed for the area taking pictures and enjoying the moment.

The organizers of the event, Assandca, Pyrénées Andorra, the Jacqueline Pradère Foundation and City Xerpa rate the walk very positively and are already starting to think about how to make it even better in the coming year. ≡

Josep Saravia claims more financial aid for patients

They only receive a fee of 40 euros for the hotel and 15 euros for the food

A.M.
ANDORRA LA VELLA

The president of the Andorran Association Against Cancer, Josep Saravia, claimed the need to make improvements in the situation for cancer patients and expressed the need for a radiotherapy unit and supervised apartments. «We will have to discuss again with the head of government», pointed out Saravia while detailing that when they spoke to Espot, he explained to them some things that they have been able to veri-

fy are not exactly as they were told. «When we were talking about radiotherapy, he didn't want to talk, then we said we were talking about the protected apartments and he told us that it wasn't necessary because the hotels are already paying», pointed out Saravia while explaining that at present they are in a position to point out that only a hotel fee equivalent to 40 euros is paid: «if someone finds a hotel in Barcelona where they can spend a week for 40 euros per day, they will be very lucky, because we cannot find one at that price», explained Saravia. Patients also have a fee of 15 euros per lunch, a very low and insufficient figure for one person.



► Start of the Walk Against Cancer 2023.

In this sense, Espot agreed with Saravia and explained that at the time it started with these amounts it was a «significant advance», but that taking into account the increase in the cost of living «we are now falling short. We must be more ambitious and we must make a greater econo-

mic effort», he declared. Espot detailed that the challenge they have from the Executive is to develop an oncology plan that is ambitious, and that for this it would be necessary to have more and better data than they have. With regard to the radiotherapy unit, the head of government de-



XAVIER ESPOT
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

«It's true that taking into account the increase in the cost of living, we fall short»

fended himself by saying that not only does it depend on them, but there are also legal limitations that make it difficult. Espot also claimed that it is necessary to work to be able to provide a better quality of care, but that this did not happen only through a specific infrastructure such as the radiotherapy unit. «The debate is still open and it may never be closed, but I think that what we have to achieve is to give the best possible treatment and if this treatment cannot be done in Andorra, accompany them to where they can be offered from the best possible way».

This would go through the costs of accommodation, transport and the economic loss it may entail for the families who have to accompany the patient. ≡

ECONOMY

The Borda Mateu and the Municipal Stadium, options for the multifunctional complex

The municipality allocates another 200,000 euros in the 2024 budget to deal with inflation

A very satisfactory result after receiving more than 70,000 people in this year's edition

COMÚ D'ANDORRA LA VELLA / TONY LARA



►► Residents and citizens at the 44th edition of the Andorra la Vella Fair.

SÒNIA LECHA
ANDORRA LA VELLA
@Sonia Lecha

There are different options for the multi-functional venue. «One is the Borda Mateu and the other is the plot of the Municipal Stadium», commented the junior consul of Andorra la Vella, Miquel Canturri to EL PERIÒDIC after taking stock of the 44th edition of the Andorra la Vella fair. Borda Mateu «is a land that should be ceded. We are talking with the property and if FC Andorra is interested in building the stadium there, it would be a transfer land», detailed Canturri. The other option being considered is «the plot of the Municipal Stadium, which had already been discussed at the time and is a good location», specified the consul.

«My prediction is that next year the Fair will be held here», answered Canturri to one of the questions asked by the media during the statement of the balance sheet. The tent erectors commented that it will surely be more expensive due to inflation. The municipality wants to anticipate this fact and has done so by allocating 200,000 euros more in the 2024 budget.

«The balance has been very good. According to what the exhibitors say, there has been a lot of influx of people», explained the minor consul of the capital. Regarding the number of visitors during the three days of the Fair, this ranges between 70,000 and 75,000 people and «just like in recent years, it has been a great success», specified Canturri. This figure includes both residents and people from outside the country,

some of whom did not know it and «were surprised to see it», detailed the consul.

The Association of Agricultural Producers of Andorra made a very good assessment of the activity and detailed that even some stands ran out of stock. In the same vein, the exhibitors who have participated for the first time in the event have taken away very good feelings. «All the vehicle dealers who have come and from the Association of Vehicle Importers (AIVA) have told us that there have been a lot of inquiries and sales», specified Canturri. Many of

these sales are planned and will take place in the coming weeks.



Miquel Canturri

MINOR CONSUL OF ANDORRA LA VELLA

«The plot of the Municipal Stadium, which had already been discussed at the time, is a good location for the multi-functional complex»

«The balance has been very good. According to what the exhibitors say, there has been a large influx of people. It was a success»

Regarding the improvements to the Fair for next year, the minor consul commented that «the place where the vehicles are could be improved and made more attractive». They want to talk to AIVA, as the contract with them ends this year and Canturri would like to talk to them to be able to make it more spectacular. As for the associations, they are very happy for them, since it is «a key opportunity to be able to make partners», explained the consul. Canturri thinks it is good that there are media present at the Fair because it is a way to have contact with the population of Andorra and that is good.

Finally, as regards the figures for the inflatables, around 1,500 children have passed through the fair. From the Municipality they make a very satisfactory balance of this 44th edition. ≡

Grandvalira sells 18% more passes.

►► Hundreds of people visited the Grandvalira Resorts stand at the Andorra la Vella Fair over the weekend. The outlook for reserves is very positive and is slightly above last year's levels. Also, sales of Season Passes at the stations' stands have increased by 18% more compared to last year, mainly from customers resident

in the country, who have taken advantage of their visit to this social event. There are three types of season passes: the Andorra Pass which gives unlimited access to three stations; the Nord Pass with access to Pal Arinsal and Ordino Arcalis; and the Mountain Pass that allows the practice of snow sports such as alpine skiing.

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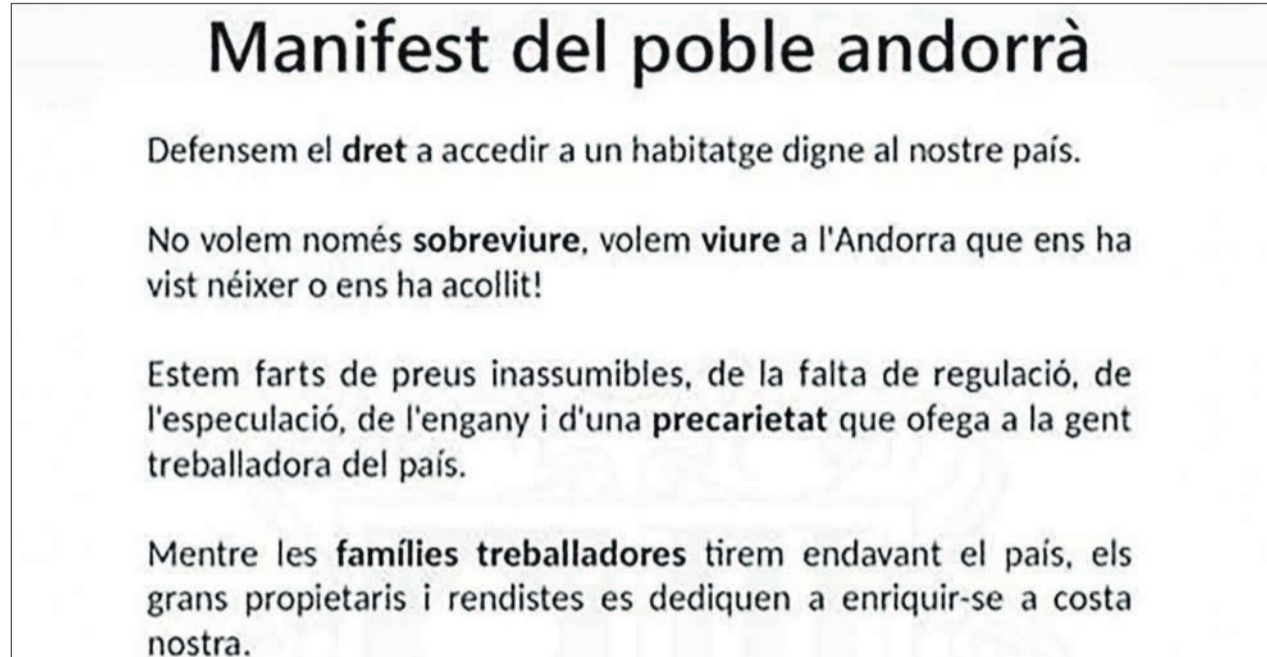
DenunciAND says enough about the unaffordable housing prices

The entity against the «selfish and greedy» policies of the Government

EL PERIÒDIC
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY
@PeriodicAND

Days before the strike for decent housing, the DenunciAND entity issued a manifesto through social networks to claim the right to access decent housing in the country: «we don't just want to survive, we want to live in Andorra that has seen us born or welcomed us». The organization stated that they are fed up with «unacceptable prices, the lack of regulation, speculation, deception and a precarity that suffocates the working people of the country», they pointed out while adding that while the working families they move the country forward, «the big owners and renters are dedicated to enriching themselves at our expense».

From DenunciAND remember that housing is a fundamental right recognized in the Andorran Constitution and that for this reason it cannot be accepted that it is



► An image of the manifesto published by DenunciAND.

The entity is fed up with the lack of regulation, the speculation, and the precariousness that is suffocating the country's workers

speculated with a basic need. That is why they are calling on all citizens to take to the streets next Tuesday and shout «enough is enough!».

They pointed out that this October 31st will be the day that the movement for the right to housing begins in the country, and that it will be the day when everyone to-

gether will say enough is enough and «let's start a fight against the selfish and greedy policies of a government that only looks out for the interests of a few».

DenunciAND ended the manifesto claiming that «we are here, as the first step of many, because Andorra is all of us. We will work to-

gether to strengthen ourselves and make a loud and clear call for decent housing.»

It should be remembered that the strike proposed by the Trade Union of Andorra against the current housing situation in the country will be this Tuesday, October 31st, in Plaça de la Rotonda in Andorra la Vella, at 7:30 p.m. hours, a meeting or protest organized by the people of Andorra, thus giving the starting point to citizen mobilization for decent housing. The organization has invited all attendees to wear chestnuts or something similar, representing «the bad management of our politicians». It is planned to dissolve the meeting at 8.45 pm, although it will depend on the motivations of the moment.

The association Somveïns d'Andorra supported the initiative stating that «we cannot do anything other than support it, as well as all those initiatives that seek to improve the quality of life of the residents of our valleys». they indicated, affirming that «we cannot close our eyes to the serious situation that the residents of all the parishes are going through and that affects Andorrans and residents who have been in our country for many years».

Concòrdia also showed its support for citizen mobilization, mentioning that «it is a crisis that affects people's lives, their stability and sense of security, threatens the well-being of the community and worsens living conditions in the country». ≡

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