

el Periòdic News

HOUSING

The PS creates a Housing Commission to act as a link with civil society

Baró directly catalogs the forms of Government «like a shoddy»

ANNA MENCOS VIÑALS
ANDORRA LA VELLA

The social democratic party has created a Housing Commission with the aim of acting as an annex between civil societies and social democratic politicians, with the aim of sharing and working on short, medium and long term solutions to alleviate together the effects of the housing problem and transfer them to the Government, the General Council and other areas of action in the matter.

The Commission aims to join efforts to promote access to decent housing and price regulation in this sector.

During the press conference in which the initiative was presented, the president of the PS, Pere Baró, explained that although they agree with some of the measures proposed by the Government in the shock plan, because they coincide with the proposals from the party in the electoral program, do not match the way in which things have been done, to what they describe as «shoddy».

The first secretary of the PS, Marta Pujol, detailed that a problem like that of housing «cannot be developed with a PowerPoint, mixing concepts and presenting a law that is not yet in place», and claimed that it should have worked

within the housing working group, a group that ceased to function when the Government decided to come up with measures unilaterally without having previously commented on it, not even to the other parties that were part of it of the work group.

In this sense, Pujol emphasized that the measures propo-

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Pere Baró

PRESIDENT OF PS

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Marta Pujol

FIRST SECRETARY OF PS

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sed by the Government do not include the reference public register, a reference price index, nor is the affordable price defined, factors without which the social democrats do not believe that it will be a possible way.

The social democrat also explained that the difference between small owners and large holders should be applied, since they consider that this distinction must be taken into account so that the new measures do not affect owners who «have invested their savings in real estate» and protect those who do business there with speculation.

For his part, Baró pointed out that announcing the measures in this way «makes us think more about a test announcement to see how the real estate sector reacts and see if they get support», he said, while adding that «they have done it without considering the working group. It doesn't make sense that it was announced in such a quick and uncoordinated manner.» In addition, the social democratic president criticized that the Executive presented «a bill that does not exist», since he considers that what this causes is a knock-on effect, and he assured that «until this law does not exist, the problem will not it will be solved».

It is for all these reasons that



The president of the social democratic party, Pere Baró, and the par

the social democrats decided to create the Housing Commission in order to become a link between civil society, the Coordinator for Decent Housing and the associations, since they consider that «it must be the same is the case in organized civil society as in the Professional College of Real Estate Agents and Managers of Andorra or the Association of Pro-



A.M.

Baró asks a big number of questions to the Government about the “thread trap”

►► The president of the social democratic party, Pere Baró, took the opportunity to inform that a number of written questions had also been sent to the Trade Union regarding the monitoring of article 2.4.b) of Law 24/2023, of November 28, of measures to stimulate and stabilize the housing rental market, which is often used to commit an irregularity popularly known as “thread trap”. It must be remembered that this trap consists in using this legal figure to recover the illegally leased home, a trap that does not stop increasing. For this reason, the social democratic general councilor informed that he has requested the Executive to know how many inquiries the Department of Housing has received with reference to this problem, how many have been made by tenants and how many by landlords. The councilor has also asked how many files have been opened since the law came into force, as well as how many have been sanctioned and what has been the follow-up of these files.

party Owners», added Pujol. This Commission will be open to all members and supporters of the party and it is expected that it can be formed in about 15 days. ●

ty's first secretary, Marta Pujol, during last Monday's appearance.

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«Decorating a flat is like getting dressed in front of a mirror»

OLGA MERCADAL, AN INTERIOR DESIGNER



To transform your home into an attractive and comfortable space - to create a personalized and harmonious environment - are the main objectives of an interior designer. It is he/she who considers planning solutions, communications, decoration options, chooses a particular style and creates a design project. In this profession, there are no templates - each project is strongly individual and should be not just functional, but also fully correspond to the lifestyle of the owner. Hence the popularity of this profession: experts predict that the growth of the international interior design market will exceed 5% in the next three years.

We talk to Olga Mercadal, an interior designer for ENDOR HOMES, SL, about modern design trends and ask her opinion on how to create the flat of your dreams.

—Could you tell us about your professional background?

—I graduated from the Escola d'Art Superior de Disseny in Barcelona, then continued my postgraduate studies in Window Dressing and Visual Merchandising at the Artidi Escola Superior (Barcelona). In 2022, I obtained a master's degree in Interior Design at Escuela Madrileña de Decoración (Madrid).

In Barcelona, I had a workshop where I restored furniture and made customised pieces and decorations for all kinds of

events. When I came to Andorra, I worked with different architects, doing more architectural interior design than decoration work.

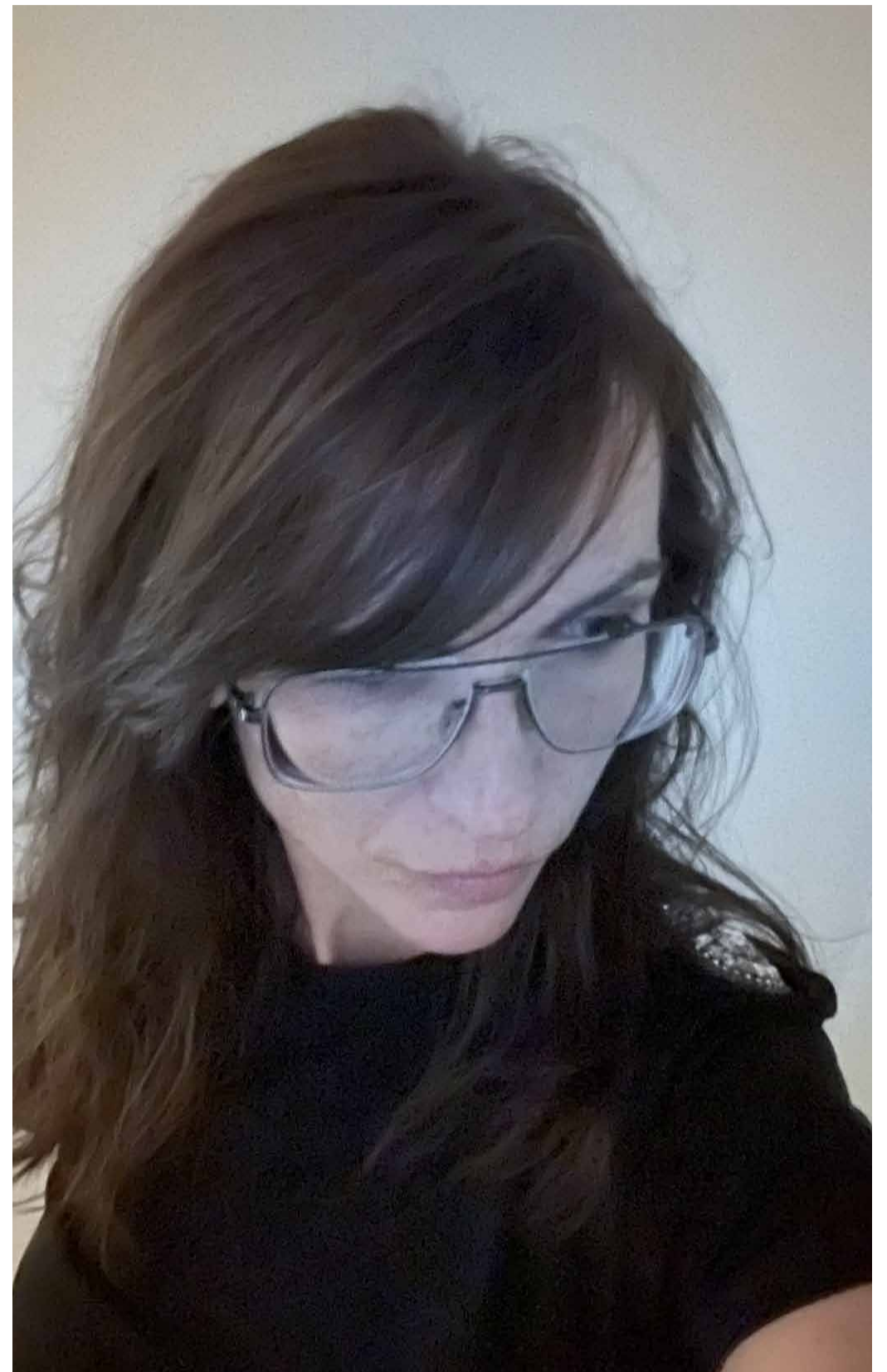
Currently, I am working as an interior designer for ENDOR HOMES, SL, promoting, among other things, one new residential complex at el Tarter, scheduled for finalisation at 2026. This building is characterised by modern design flats that use wood in the interiors.

More specifically, I am responsible for making sure that all of the flat plans made by the architects take into account all the needs that we, as interior designers, consider important: for example, a hallway with built-in wardrobes, a convenient utility room and a large dressing room, so that all rooms are rationally used, comfortable and attractive. I also make sketches in case a client wants to change the layout or join two floors into one, etc.

We are considering the possibility of creating a special interior design department to be able to accompany our clients until they settle in. This is a service we requested to provide, especially by clients who come here from outside Andorra.

—According to your experience, which clients are more common: those who need the services of professional interior designers or those who prefer to decorate their flats themselves? Why is it important to work with professionals when creating an interior?

—A new flat is like a blank canvas, and it is difficult for clients to visualise the final result. Working with professionals saves time,



allows you to avoid mistakes - such as buying furniture of the wrong size - avoid dubious combinations and do everything that you like from the first time.

There is an opinion that the services of an interior designer are something elitist; however, this is wrong.

—Do you agree that a designer, above all, should be empathic?

—Yes, a designer is like a psychologist in that way. We should communicate with the client, offer solutions to meet their needs depending on their daily habits and turn their dreams into reality, so that, in the end, the result suits their preferences and not yours. We can't impose our tastes, but we have to be able to imagine what the client wants and what

he might feel like in such a space: i.e., whether he will be comfortable in the atmosphere we created.

I don't have any particular reference point; I just try to keep up to date with the latest trends in all areas of design. Fashion is my source of inspiration. I am also inspired by jewellery, sculpture and so on. It's all very interconnected.

—What advice would you give to future apartment owners of structures built in the mountain style that prevail in Andorra?

—We wish to create an interior that goes beyond the rustic: with modern lines, but still inside a mountain cabin. This is the feeling we want to convey with the materials used: wood ceilings and floors, fireplaces integrated into avant-garde furniture.



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RON ARAD 'Sit!' chair, produced by The Gallery Mourmans, The Netherlands.

That's what creates the contrast! I would recommend sticking to this concept, combining it with the rest of the elements to create a calm and cosy environment.

Decorating a flat is like getting dressed while standing in front of a mirror. First the base (furniture) is used and then design elements or accessories, which are the easiest and simplest to change (fabrics, paintings, lamps), are added. And when we change accessories, we give a space a completely different look.

It is important to consider the purpose: is it a weekend or seasonal flat, for the whole family or just for a couple?

Either way, the idea is to enjoy the mountain views and feel comfortable when you come home.

—What would you say about how customers' tastes are changing? Is the mountain style structures and minimalism in the interior a good combination?

—After the pandemic, terraces and large façade openings are

much more appreciated, so that you can enjoy the views. Rooms for everyday use should be comfortable and easy to clean.

Our society is becoming more minimalist; we more easily get rid of elements that don't contribute much and, on the other hand, update accessories more often. We no longer have furniture to store Sunday dishes or grandma's china. We've become more practical.

Another trend is open kitchens. The kitchen has become the centre of the home and a place to gather with family and friends.

—Are all the materials easy to find here in Andorra, or do clients have to order them from Spain or France?

—In Andorra shops, you can find a large number of brands and catalogues, with professionals in their business who advise the market and help us buy the products we need. However, there is a problem with delivery times, so we have to wait a few months.

To create a more personalised interior, clients sometimes make custom-made furniture or exclusive items. If they need our help, we look for craftsmen to realise each design request.

—Renowned designer Ron Arad once said: "Art begins when the problems of survival have been solved and the time for excess has arrived. The more design goes beyond real needs, the closer it becomes to art. I very rarely design what is really necessary." What is design for you: art or necessity?

—I think it's a mixture of both - it really depends on each person's needs. For example, in a bedroom, you need a bed to sleep in, but you end up buying a headboard, bedside tables, maybe a carpet, which you don't really need that much.

The taste of coffee changes depending on whether you drink it from a glass, plastic or cup. This example can be applied to everything. Everyone has a different idea of values based on his/her life experiences.●