



POLITICS

Vives does not believe that the decriminalization of abortion will arrive by 2025

The co-prince repeats the words of the Vatican Secretary of State claiming that it will be very slow and difficult

TONY LARA / COMÚ D'ANDORRA LA VELLA



►► The episcopal co-prince, Joan-Enric Vives, last Thursday with the councilors of the Municipality of Andorra la Vella.



Joan-Enric Vives
CO-PRINCE OF ANDORRA

«I say the same as Cardinal Parolin, who wants to find some inventive situation, but he said it was very slow»

«The demonstrations have been a wake-up call, democracy is that people can express what they think»

certain national inventiveness that the co-prince exhibited was the Covid-19 pandemic, as he sought to «have solutions for us, which we did not have in the European Union (EU) behind and which was a bit aggressive. Normal thing because every country was afraid and this is a bad counselor. But, instead, we knew how to find the way to solve the health crisis. In fact, a practice that the bishop of Urgell mentioned was the arrival of doctors from Cuba to provide health support to the Andorran health system during the most complicated moments of the pandemic, where the health workers were also becoming infected and the Cuban assistance could be a good medical support at that time, as Vives recalled.

During his speech before the Municipal Council of Andorra la Vella, the co-prince congratulated the consuls and councilors for the evolution of the parish, as well as the political legacy inherited by the former and current consul major of the capital Minister of the Presidency, Economy, Work and Housing, Conxita Marsol, who was present during the event accompanied by the former Minister of Culture and Sports in the last legislature, Sílvia Riva. Likewise, Vives wanted to encourage the future members of the Municipality once the elections have ended, to face challenges such as climate change and economic growth knowing that the parish of Andorra la Vella has the peculiarity and speciality of being the national capital, and that it must be developed as such. ▬

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In his visit to the Municipality of Andorra la Vella last Thursday morning, where he was welcomed by the councilors general and the consuls of the capital, David Astrié and Miquel Canturri, the episcopal co-prince, Joan-Enric Vives, attended to the media and was asked about the issue of abortion and the statements of the Minister of Institutional Relations, Education and Universities, Ladislau Baró, where he affirmed that decriminalization was a priority objective for this legislature and that there is the will to come true by the year 2025.

The co-prince's response was that «I say the same thing as Cardinal Pietro Parolin said», when the Secretary of State of the Holy See visited the Principality for Meritxell's day last September, where he explained that «it is wanted maybe look for an inventive solution, discuss it and that (the affair) was very slow». Vives understood that there is a desire in society for decriminalization, but he appealed again to the slowness and comple-

xity of the process. When questioned more specifically about Baró's statements, the head of state testified that «the minister does what he can, but not», explaining that he will do what he can but that nothing has been agreed with the Holy See. Vives mentioned that he does not know how the negotiations with the Vatican are going, since «it is the Government that, with its authorities, showed themselves to be collaborators and to want to find a solution that was good» and who will be responsible for finding a resolution for this matter. Even so, the co-prince reiterated that «it is a long and difficult process. Because the Catholic religion is what it is, and then it is also necessary, as in all things, to see together what it is that we win and lose.»

At the same time, the episcopal co-prince also made an assessment of the housing problem in the country and of the demonstrations that have occurred as a result of this problem. Vives declared, regarding the latter, that «they have been a wake-up call», since «being in a democracy also means being free to express what you think, especially if it is with res-

pect and in peace. That's a right, isn't it? And it's been good, they've expressed that they want some solutions.» In this sense, the co-prince also stipulated that he also «supports that it be requested», since it is «suitable» to ask the «Government and the Municipalities to put a remedy».

Likewise, the bishop also declared that «it is my turn to tell the public that these are issues that affect many other places and this does not fix it for us. We have some particularities and

The co-prince encouraged finding «inventive solutions» prioritizing young people and families for the housing problem

that, in addition (the problem) has a very slow point». Apart from this, the co-prince explained that «the free movement of purchases, sales and people also means that things, in the free market, have their disadvantages», explaining on this basis that there is a possibility that prices rise artificially.

Although the circumstances are not easy, Vives wanted to encourage action to solve the housing problem, placing special emphasis on young people «who want to become independent» and families, «who have more normal salaries, that they are not that high», to whom the co-prince encouraged the fact that they are in the foreground when it comes to solving the crisis with an answer that ensures that the authorities are already working to prepare it.

Specifying more in this answer, the bishop has asked for «inventive solutions», using the Jovial project as an example, since in this case «a formula was sought that was limited in time and in the people who participate by making adapted floors also for the disabled. I remember that it was a very beautiful work».

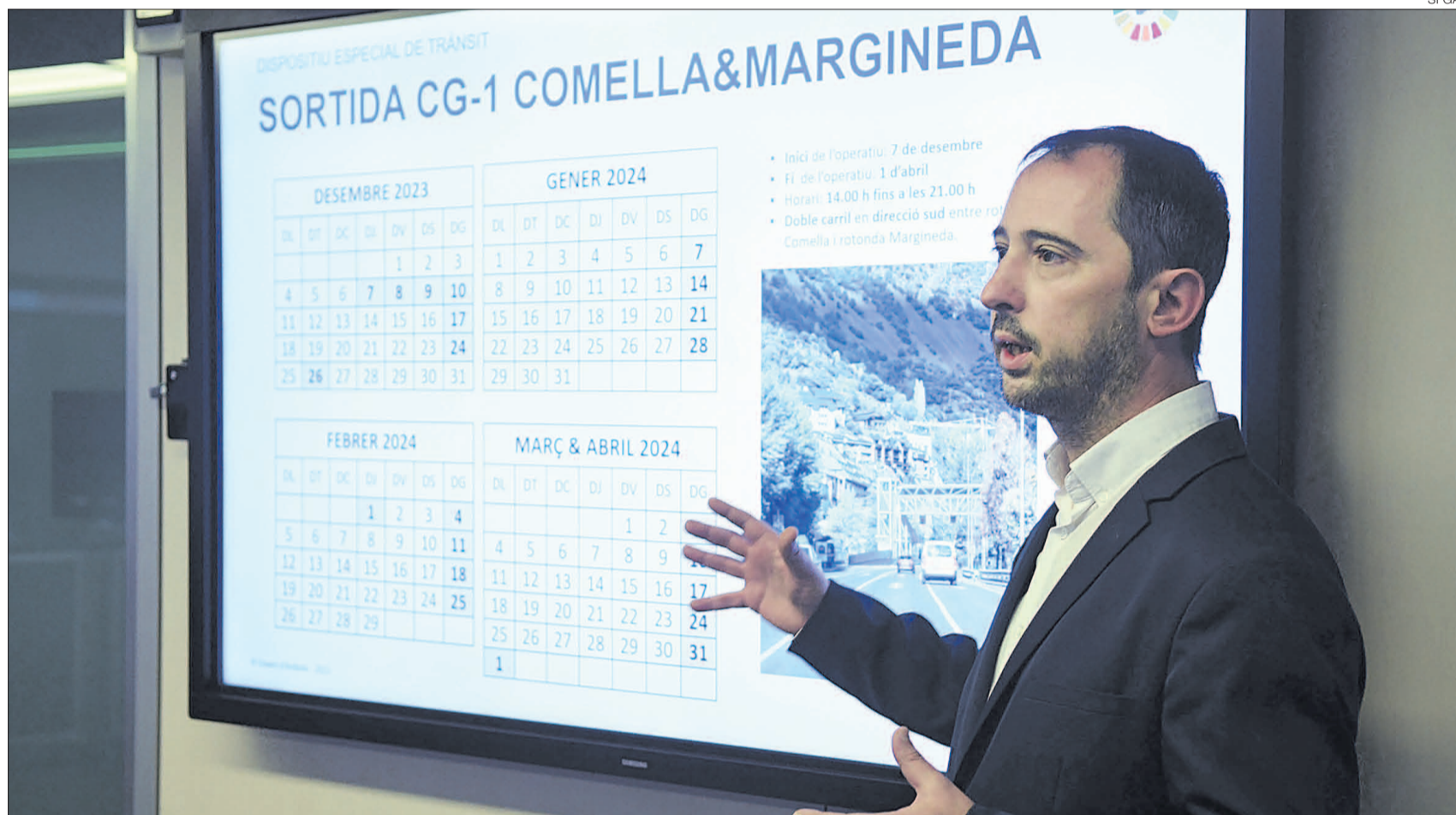
Likewise, another example of a

TRANSPORTATION

The Puríssima long weekend is being prepared for the entry of 112,000 vehicles

Mobility activates a special device to give greater fluidity to the road network

Public transport lines are being reinforced, with the aim of betting on greater sustainability



►► The director of Energy and Transport, Carles Miquel, during the presentation of the new special traffic devices.

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The Department of Mobility has launched, together with the rest of the national special forces, various preventive traffic devices for the winter season, when the maximum influx of vehicles in the country is usually recorded. The start of this arrival of visitors to Andorra will be with the Puríssima long weekend, which is why the first device will be enabled this weekend: «Between December 2nd and 10th, an entry into the country of «about 112,000 vehicles, 85,000 for the Spanish-Andorran border and 27,000 for the French», declared the director of Energy and Transport, Carles Miquel, who also highlighted that, in terms of figures, they are very similar to those of the last season although the reality «is that 5% more visitor tickets are expected». This will mean mobilizing more than 250 personnel be-

tween the Police, Municipal Traffic Services and Mobility, with the performance of more than 1,100 services.

With the aim of maximizing vehicular flow, Mobilitat has planned to activate one of the most outstanding novelties this year: a special device between the Comella roundabout and the Margineda roundabout. «This is an exit device that will enable a double lane in the south direction between both roundabouts, on Sundays and public holidays from December 7th to April 1st», indicated Miquel, emphasizing that cones will be placed limiters «so that there are no misinterpretations as to the direction of the road». This device will be added to another entrance located on the CG1 of Sant Julià de Lòria, with a double lane heading north on Francesc Cairat avenue. It will be open between December 2nd and until March 30th, both on public holidays and on Saturdays, with the aim of «responding to vehicle entry points».

CARLES MIQUEL
DIRECTOR OF ENERGY AND TRANSPORT

«We will activate an exit device that will enable a double lane between the Comella roundabout and the Margineda roundabout»

«We have strengthened certain lines to favor the hierarchy of mobility actions»

Questioned about the demonstration scheduled for next December 8th, which could affect these traffic devices, Miquel emphasized that «the organizers are working with the Ministry of the Interior to reach an agreement on what is the best itinerary so as not to obstruct visitors and that allows compatibility».

Reinforcement of public transport/ One of the most prominent measures to continue decongesting the country's roads is the reinforcement of public transport lines: «We have reinforced certain lines to accommodate both the residents of Andorra as well as temporary workers and visitors, since in this way we will encourage them to move around the country on public transport and for mobility actions to be prioritized», said Miquel. However, it also claimed that bus journeys have increased by 64.8% this year.

In this way, the L3 line will have a greater time span from 06.30 hours from Andorra la Vella to Soldeu un-

The figures

112.000 vehicles for the Puríssima long weekend.

202.000 vehicles for the Christmas season.

69.000 vehicles for Easter.

til 21.45 hours in the opposite direction, with a service every 30 minutes. The L4 line that connects the capital with Pas de la Casa has seen increased frequencies from 30 to 20 minutes. In this regard, for the lines that cover the northern valley (L5 and L6), the frequency will also increase every 15 minutes, from 4.25pm to 8.10pm. Finally, the express line that connects to Sant Julià de Lòria has extended peak hours between 07.00 and 10.00 and between 16.00 and 18.00.

«We know that the road network has a significant degree of saturation, although it is not yet in a critical situation», said Miquel, questioned by the launch of these more sustainable transports. Likewise, he affirmed that «we have tendered some work that should allow us to create a segregated transport, outside the road networks and that transports everyone in a sustainable way». The study of this project is planned for 2024.

GREAT TURNOUT FOR CHRISTMAS AND HOLY WEEK// The Director of Energy and Transport highlighted that, aside from the Puríssima long weekend, «202,000 vehicles are expected to enter Andorra between December 22nd and January 7th, which is 4 or 5% more than last season». In a more detailed way, it is estimated that around 138,500 will access the Spanish-Andorran border and around 63,500 via the Franco-Andorran border. With regard to the Holy Week of 2024, the forecasts are that, between March 27th and April 1st, 69,000 visitors will enter the Principality, of which 45,000 would do so via the border with Spain and 24,000 via the French border. ≡

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