

el Periòdic News

EUROPEAN UNION

Exit shot at town meetings to present the Agreement to the public

Riba states that the referendum would take place «at the end of the first quarter of 2025 or at the beginning of the second»

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ENCAMP

Encamp yesterday became the first parish to participate in the town meetings on the Association Agreement with the European Union. The event, which included the presence of the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, and the Secretary of State for International Relations, Landry Riba, served to put on the table all those questions and doubts raised by the people of Encamp towards this text throughout the last months and weeks.

Speaking to the media before kicking off the meeting, Riba was optimistic, as well as curious, about the possible issues to be resolved: «The objective is to conclude the session having achieved a more homogeneous level of information». An objective that goes through a new format of meetings, in which the most purely theoretical explanation is left behind to «privilege the time for questions and answers».

Within the implementation of this format, one feature stands out that will be maintained throughout all the town meetings that are scheduled for the next few days: the placement of a ballot box at the front door where the relevant meeting is planned to be held. Being a very similar exercise to the one already carried out during the Andorra la Vella Fair, the intention of this urn is that everyone can leave their question and concern, which will



Image of the town meeting in Encamp to present the Association Agreement with the EU.



LANDRY RIBA

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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be answered more individually. «Then it will be published on the web so that everyone who wants to can take advantage», emphasized the Secretary of State.

When asked about the issues that most interest citizens, Riba mentioned that «maybe before they were more general issues and now they are more precise», referring to the fact that they are all from very diverse areas, from those linked to the movement of people to others more related to public procurement, product safety or the environment. A precision on the part of the public that is undoubtedly defined by the fact that a first version of the Agreement in English is posted: «Now that it is posted, these are

matters of great sectoral detail, of some specific procedure», expressing that, no doubt, people have «noticed the change» since then. The Secretary of State, however, could not avoid lamenting the delay in the Catalan translation of the Agreement. The scenario under which they are working leads them to a possible publication between the end of June and the beginning of July, since the Catalan version «must be homogeneous with the other 24 versions of the European Union».

Even so, it seems that the exchange carried out on Tuesday, in which Espot presented the closing of the negotiations and presented the final text to the European Commission, has been able to change everything. And despite the fact that the Government's forecast was to carry out the referendum consultation around the end of the first quarter of 2025, the scenario could be delayed a little if the European Parliament really could not work on the text until the end of the year or at the beginning of the next. «The referendum would take place at the end of the first quarter of next year or at the beginning of the second», emphasized Riba, stressing that, today, the decision that the Agreement must be approved by the 27 parliaments has not yet been made that make up the European entity. «We have worked with the Commission to make it a bilateral agreement and this would delay the process even more». ●

COMPANY

The Principality has a hundred start-ups

The fourth edition of the Andorra Business Market was held in Andorra la Vella with more than 300 attendees

EL PERIÒDIC
ANDORRA LA VELLA

The director of Andorra Business, Judit Hidalgo, explained in the framework of the Andorra Business Market forum that the country, at the moment, would have a total of a hundred start-ups. «We don't have the real figures. It's an estimate based on two things: registrations on the start-up platform and those who are interested in us, and who, therefore, we know personally», said Hidalgo.

The fourth edition of the Andorra Business Market was held this Thursday in Andorra la Vella with more than 300 attendees. National and international companies, as well as investors and entrepreneurs, interacted in this entrepreneurial forum. Specifically, representatives of 31 startups, 15 of them Andorran, and 40 investors took part. In this sense, Hidalgo pointed out that they also received the interest of more than 50 others and entrepreneurs to participate, highlighting that «more and more investors are coming, so investors from outside the country as of the country», a fact that he assured that «is a reflecti-



A snapshot of the Andorra Business Market forum, held at Unsquare Studio.

on of what is really happening in the Andorran sector».

In relation to the event, Hidalgo recalled that the objective of the forum is multiple, since it becomes a point for interesting projects in the country to find investors and to grow, but it also fulfills many other objectives such as, for example, the fact of uniting all the people of the ecosystem: «I think that, in some way, it's a way

of making it grow and of learning between us», added the director of Andorra Business, while indicating that another purpose of the meeting is to «put investors in contact» and «for people to learn things».

For his part, the Secretary of State for Economic Diversification and Innovation, Marc Saura, emphasized that the event is already fully consolidated in the country

with more than 300 attendees and that for entrepreneurs «it is a great opportunity to present in front of around thirty investors, with the aim of seeking support and collaboration to push their projects to a higher level». Saura also explained that they have been working on the legislative framework for a few years with the laws that have been developed and that they are now starting to see the results with the start-ups that are being created in the country.

On the other hand, and when asked about it, the Secretary of State acknowledged that investors interested in the country may have had some «misgivings» in relation to the new Catalan Law, the reform of foreign investment or quotas. In this regard, Saura assured that they will explain all the laws once they have been defined and pointed out that «we will continue to provide facilities or bet on them». Saura detailed that there will be a bit permissive for the country's priority sectors to «be able to give these companies more opportunities to come».

Regarding the question of foreign investment, Saura said that on Wednesday he held talks with the staff of the Department of Statistics to find out how they can have data on foreign investment or companies that have come from outside: «We to be working to be able to have a record where it is recorded which sector they have gone to, what amount of business they are generating in the country or if, with the CASS, we can also see how many workers are in these companies», concluded the secretary of state. ●

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