



ECONOMY

The Chamber wants a new immigration framework due to the lack of staff

President Mas presented the Economic Report 2022 demanding measures for 10 economic challenges of Andorra.

EL PERIÒDIC
ANDORRA LA VELLA
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The president of the Chamber of Commerce, Josep Maria Mas, accompanied by the head of government, Xavier Espot, presented yesterday, at the Congress Center of Andorra la Vella, the Economic Report for the year 2022 that his institution has drawn up. During the presentation of the report, Mas stipulated that within the document there are 10 challenges that Andorra will have to face in the coming years in order to grow economically and create employment in the medium and long term. One of these challenges is the adaptation of the immigration and labor framework to the needs of companies and the country. Mas emphasized yesterday during the presentation that «the high current lack of personnel requires working on an immigration strategy that responds more quickly and effectively to the needs of the company. In this sense, the Chamber proposes a continuous dialogue between the employers, the unions, the Government and society as a whole, since it is the way to agree on the appropriate actions», as indicated by the president of the Chamber of Commerce. Mas also pointed out that «it is important to favor an immigration and labor framework that allows the attraction and management of the best talent, a system that favors stability in the workplace and adapts to the specific circumstances of sectors of activity».

This is one of the 10 challenges raised by the Chamber of Commerce in its economic report. The rest of these milestones go, for example, through the shared vision of the tourist model. At this point, the Cham-



►► Xavier Espot and Josep Maria Mas, during the presentation at the Congress Center of Andorra la Vella.



JOSEP MARIA MAS

PRESIDENT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

«The high lack of staff requires working on an immigration strategy that responds quickly»

ber continues to point out this sector as «a great driver of economic growth». For this reason, the Chamber has promoted the signing of a collaboration agreement with 13 entities in the sector to form the Council of the Private Sector of Tourism.

Likewise, the Chamber emphasizes the maintenance of a competitive tax system, mentioning in the report that «to grow in a global environment, the tax pressure cannot go beyond 25%, and during 2022 Andorra surpassed this threshold».

At the same time, the other challenges would address issues such as the adaptation of trade to the new challenges of globalization, administrative streamlining and simplification, the promotion of programs for the modernization and efficiency of companies, the digital transformation of the company, the circular economy and sustainability, a determined commitment to the energy transition and, finally, Andorra's integration with the European Union. ≡



►► Headquarters of the Chamber of C.

The Chamber warns of an economic slowdown

EL PERIÒDIC
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

The economic report prepared by the Chamber of Commerce states that, although the national economic growth has been optimal so far, a slowing of this growing rate is expected due to the effect of inflation and the increase in interest rates. This progressive slowdown in economic growth is already noticeable in factors such as, for example, the moderation in the rate of job creation, although it is still positive. The economic outlook indicates that the euro zone could experience a possible decline in its GDP in the second half of the year, due to the downturn in the German economy. Neighboring countries maintain moderate expectations, as France foresees «weak growth», while Spain's prospects seem to be better, but with growth of 2%. ≡

More pressure on companies for wage increases

EL PERIÒDIC
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The Head of Government, Xavier Espot, during yesterday's presentation of the Chamber of Commerce, commented on different parameters evaluated in the Economic Report presented by the Chamber of Commerce. One of the topics mentioned by the head of government during the presentation was the minimum wage levels. In this matter, Espot expressed the intention of the Executive to continue raising the minimum wage to reach the goal set by the Government of 60% of the average wage. So much so, that Es-

pot asked employers and unions to make «an effort» to reach an agreement between both parts.

This desire to increase the minimum wage would be a complex affair for companies. As the Chamber of Commerce highlighted in its report, economic growth in the Principality will be lower, although it will remain positive, which would indicate an economic slowdown due to the effect of inflation and the increase in interest rates. The Chamber highlighted the fact that the euro zone could suffer a GDP recession in the second half of this year, due to the decline of the Ger-



►► The head of government, Xavier Espot, and government ministers, at the event.

man economy. In neighboring countries, the economic prospects are not the best in the same way. In the Chamber's report, it is detailed that France has forecasts that would point to a «weak growth» of the Gallic economy. Although the prospects for Spain are better, the Spanish economy would only have an increase in its GDP above 2%. Regarding the Principality, the prospects point to a moderation of its growth as a result of the weakening of the global situation and the end of the recovery of pre-pandemic levels of activity before Covid-19. ≡

LANGUAGE

Espot excludes passive residents of the new Catalan law

The head of government takes a step back and thus responds to the controversy that has arisen these days

According to the leader of Concòrdia, Cerni Escalé, the regulations are «an injustice and a lack of fairness»

GOVERN D'ANDORRA



Xavier Espot
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

«The Government's idea is that this new law focuses, especially, on people who work in front of the public»

Cerni Escalé
CONCÒRDIA LEADER

«The law creates a gap between citizens with a high purchasing power and those with a lower one»

Susanna Vela

LEADER OF THE SOCIAL DEM. PARTY
«Andorra must see if it really wants to count on passive residents and if so, under what conditions and criteria»

Ian: «The law was good, but it has not been implemented due to lack of resources, due to language policy and due to a lack of political will when it comes to applying the different sanctions that the law contemplated». In addition, the minister emphasized once again that «linguistic rights must be protected and strengthened, but not mixed at any time with the issue of passive residents». ≡

►► The Head of Government, Xavier Espot.

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As indicated by the Head of Government, Xavier Espot, during his intervention on 'El matí de Catalunya Ràdio', the new Catalan law will exclude passive residents from the obligation to reach a minimum level of the language in order to renew their permit of residence: «The Government's idea is that this new law promotes the social use of Catalan and that it focuses, especially, on people who work in front of the public», stated Espot, adding that the aim is to guarantee that residents or tourists «have the right and the possibility of being served at least in the official language of Andorra».

In this way, the representative responds to the controversy that has arisen these days following the publication of the new mandate, as well as to

the criticism of a resident YouTuber. «We will not turn the country into a linguistic dictatorship and everyone will be able to continue speaking the language they want, since the law will not be extended to everyone», he assured.

However, Espot took advantage of his intervention to talk about the integration of Catalan and Andorra's approach to Europe: «The purpose of the agreement is that we can belong to the internal market, although this fact does not give us the right to demand that Catalan be an official language within the European Union», emphasizing, however, that the inclusion of the country's official language within the European body «would make things much easier for us from a practical point of view».

THE GROUPS OF THE OPPOSITION, IN DISAGREEMENT// The answers from the

parliamentary groups of the opposition to the statements of the democratic leader did not take long to be made. As the leader of the Concòrdia parliamentary group, Cerni Escalé, stated exclusively to this medium, «it is an injustice and a lack of equity to create differences between salaried people with residence and work permits and those who work for their own account or who they are simply residing in the country».

A social differentiation that, as Escalé indicated, «creates a gap between citizens with purchasing power and those with a lower one», adding that «we cannot allow Andorra to become a country of the rich». However, the leader of Concòrdia wanted to point out positively the fact that the level of Catalan demanded is increasing as the permit renewals happen on time, since it is a way «to defend Catalan and

the identity of the people who live in Andorra».

A regulation that was also well received by the Social Democratic parliamentary group: «We believe that for a first renewal this more basic level would be useful, but as the authorization is renewed the demand for levels must also be progressive», detailed the general counsel, Susanna Vela. However, she wanted to leave aside the issue of passive residents, as it is a broader debate: «Andorra must see if it really wants to count on them and if so, under what conditions and criteria», adding that «it is insufficient to ask for a basic level when renewing the residence and work authorization».

Finally, Vela recalled the law established in 2010, which already contemplated similar regulations regarding the proper use of Cata-

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