



THE COUNTRY ALIGNS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

Andorra joins economic sanctions against Russia

The package includes the possible freezing of assets in the country from a list of 50 companies and 700 people

Esport admits that the impact will not be «very high», but it serves to side with Europe



REUTERS/CARLOS BARRIA

►► A TV tower burns down after Moscow's first announced attack on Kiev, Tuesday afternoon.

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For the first time in history, Andorra is facing a war conflict, joining the list of countries that have joined the package of economic sanctions against Russia. «From the beginning we have been in favor of this measure because we believe that it is the best mechanism to suffocate the war effort and put an end to this undesirable situation,» said the head of government, Xavier Esport, adding that before making it official, however, it took «a reasonable amount of time to analyze our capacity for application.» In this way, the legal cabinet of the Government and the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs have come to the conclusion that a specific bill should be processed to protect the sanctions, as the current legislation only allows the

freezing of assets and similar in the event of a court order or suspected money laundering and terrorist financing. «As we do not have enough legal support, we have to build it and with the pre-agreement of the Government [...] we have worked on a text that will be submitted tomorrow [today] in the Council of Ministers, it will go through the extreme procedure urgency in the General Council and it will be debated and approved on Friday,» announced the head of the Executive.

The package basically includes the freezing of assets of 50 companies and 700 people linked to the Russian regime, which according to the European Union (EU), the United States and other allied members are supporting President Vladimir Putin in war. There are also other points, such as airstrikes or the export of products, which the head of government acknowledged would

have «zero impact». Once the law is passed, the European Union will pass on to the Government a sort of list of companies and sanctioned people, and it will be known if any of them have any financial ties to the

Principality.

However, Esport predicted that the consequences «would not be very high», although the gesture adopted by Andorra «goes beyond the economic one; it's a matter of

The Red Cross is preparing an economic and commodity fundraiser for the victims

►► The Red Cross is helping to curb the situation in Ukraine through economic resources and by providing all kinds of commodities, such as food and medicine, to the civilian population that is suffering the ravages of war. The organization has announced the launch of a fundraiser through the International Committee (ICRC), which is the body that can intervene in places where there are wars. In order to encourage Andorran collabora-

tion, the Red Cross will open an account number for all banks to receive donations from anyone who wishes. There will also be a collection point for products, mainly medicines, at the Red Cross headquarters according to a list compiled by the Andorran Association of Ukrainians. The idea is to align with the French embassy and also with the Ukrainian consulate in Barcelona to bring the products to the territory.



Xavier Esport
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

«We don't expect the impact to be very high, but that goes beyond the economic one; it's a matter of conviction»

conviction and doing the right thing». «No one likes it, much less coming out of a crisis like the current one, but short-term sacrifices are needed to make long-term victories. We can only support these measures and stand by the countries that defend values that are also ours», he added.

HUMANITARIAN AID // As for humanitarian aid, Esport recalled that, in addition to the family group with residents, all people can reside in the country for a maximum of three months without any authorization and reported that during this time possible solutions for hypothetical refugees, Ukrainians and everywhere, will be studied, as the protection and transitional law is specific to Syrians. «These two mechanisms may be insufficient, we will assess what else we can do,» the head of government said a few hours before Russia launched a «precision attack» on Kyiv that has already left dozens of dead. In addition, Andorra works, through various international organizations, in the field, providing human resources and basic necessities.

In the last hours of Tuesday afternoon, the Russian army had attacked a TV tower that left at least five dead, crashing into Kharkiv, when a missile hit the regional government building from where the defense of the city was coordinated causing a dozen of deaths and 35 wounded, and a 60-kilometer military convoy approached the Ukrainian capital, while diplomacy continues to fail. ▬

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BILL

The government creates the legislative framework for health and biomedical research

The standard will allow research with animals, with biological and drug samples, as novelties

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The Government has drafted a draft law on research in the field of health and biomedicine, based on international regulations and which complies with the standards set out in the Oviedo Convention, and which will now enter parliamentary procedure for its amendment and ratification, if it is necessary. This was announced yesterday by the Secretary of State for Health, Helena Mas, and the technical adviser of the Ministry of Health, Cristina Vilanova, who made public the main features of the legislative text. «This is a general framework for carrying out health research projects,» said Mas, who pointed out that «we want it to be very broad and open, so that as the research progresses, the law adapts». In this sense, the Secretary of State emphasized that «one of the objectives of the legislature is economic diversification», and from the Ministry of Health «we have made a clear commitment to innovation and research, which has implications and links in economics, education and talent retention». In any case, Mas explained that previously, in the Principality, laws have been approved and initiatives have been carried out that include research in the field of health. This is the case of the Law on the Rights and Duties of Patients and Clinical History (2017), the Law on Organs, Cells, Tissues and Blood (2018), the Law on Assisted Human Reproduction (2019), the creation of the National Laboratory of Epidemiology (2020) and the Research Ethics Commission (2021) and the signing of the Oviedo Convention (2021).

Thus, according to Vilanova, the law will have four main areas of application, most of them newly created in Andorra. First of all, the project involves conducting clinical trials of medicines and health products. In this regard, the ministry's adviser noted that the legislative text includes a final provision amending the Law on the Possession and Protection of Animals to establish «the conditions for experimentation with animals for scientific purposes.» The basic princi-



► Helena Mas and Cristina Vilanova, at one point in their appearance to present the bill.

ples of this practice are those of exclusivity, to test the safety of drugs or in other types of medical research; of necessity, that they guarantee that they are done because there are no alternatives; number minimization; damage minimization; and non-reuse.

The bill considers research with biological samples, including their use and destruction, the need for informed consent, and the possibility of creating biobanks, «centers that collect and distribute samples for the purpose of research». It also includes genetic analysis and screening, which should be used to detect diseases or the predisposition to suffer from them, and in the case of minors, it can only be carried out if it is «for the benefit of their Health». Ultimately, the text recalls the ban on embryo research in the Assisted Human Reproduction Act and adds the refusal to constitute embryos for experimentation, but regulates human genome research.

The sanctioning regime provides for fines of up to one million euros and the possibility of closing the offending center

The text maintains a ban on embryo research, but regulates human genome research

GRIFOLS PROJECT // The approval of this law is necessary for the immunology research center planned in Ordino by Grifols to be able to go ahead. Asked by the press, Mas said that «the law is necessary for any research to be carried out in the field of health and biomedicine», and added that the regulations «are a framework that will fit its activity, as well as those who are already in the country or those who may come». And also, at the request of the media, the Secretary of State for Health shared that the legislative text has provided for a sanctioning regime for companies or institutions that do not comply with this legal framework. Three degrees of infringement are foreseen: minor, moderate, and serious, and fines of up to 2,000 euros in the first case, up to 10,000 in the second, and up to one million euros in the third. In addition, the offending center could also be closed. Both participants noted that research controls will be

carried out by two bodies: the Research Ethics Commission (CEI) and the Centre's Research Ethics Committee (CEIC), in addition to the fact that the Ministry of Health may suspend the activity as a precaution if it considers that there is a risk to human health. It should be noted that the main purpose of the law, according to Mas, is to «protect the health, interest and well-being of people involved in research projects above the interest of science,» and respecting this principle, «favoring the development of the research and innovation sector». The proportionality of risks and benefits, the confidentiality of the data, the gratuitousness of the donations, and the protection of the vulnerable groups are also indispensable.

The draft text was prepared by the President of the Spanish Bioethics Committee, Federico de Montalvo, defined internally and revised externally - SAAS, ARI, UdA and the Council of Europe. ≡

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