



RECREATION

The Central Park play area reopens with more structures

The improvement of this space, with more grass and shaded areas, has involved an investment of 464,363 euros

COMÚ D'ANDORRA LA VELLA



►► One of the new infrastructures of the Central Park play area.

SÒNIA LECHA
ANDORRA LA VELLA
@SoniaLecha

The Central Park playground was reopened last Thursday morning, after the comprehensive reform that has been carried out over the last few months with the aim of renovating the structures and expanding the green spaces. The improvement of this space, the great green lung of the parish and one of the most frequented spaces in Andorra la Vella, has involved an investment of 464,363 euros.

«It is an action that has been requested for some time. The previous games were 30 years old», ex-

plained the Consul Major of Andorra la Vella, David Astrié. The work, which started at the end of April, includes the renovation of the structures, the installation of more inclusive games and the placement of multi-games for children up to 12 years old with platforms, slides, and several levels (in total there are now 15 different game types).

The Minister of Circulation, Parking and Natural Heritage of Andorra la Vella, Gerard Menardia, commented that the play area has been divided into two areas, «one intended more for children aged two to six and another for those aged six to 12 years old». The only structures that have remained are the 12-me-

ter, five-story slide set that was installed in 2019 at the request of parish schoolchildren through the Children's Council, the giant pyramid of ropes and a small climbing wall.

700 square meters of new grass and 700 more of pavement have also been installed so that vehicles can access them for maintenance. In addition, as mentioned, new trees have been planted to create new areas of shade and fountains have been added. Menardia emphasized that they wanted to «save more emblematic games such as the zip line or the spider». The councilor recalled that this inauguration has been delayed a little, as it was plan-

ned that the play area could be available for the village festival, on June 24th. However, the «episodes of rain» have meant that the works have been extended for a couple of weeks more.

Astrié detailed that this new play area completes a series of actions that have taken place in the Central Park in recent years and that began with «the naturalization of the lake that took place three or four years ago», or the opening of the fence along the river promenade «which made people feel more at home» and there are many activities such as «picnics, naps or sunbathing, something that didn't happen before», remark the consul. He also men-



David Astrié

CONSUL MAJOR OF THE CAPITAL

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COUNCILOR OF NATURAL HERITAGE

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tioned the commissioning of the Art Center and the reform of all these games that the children needed.

Once the presentation of the event ended, the Consul Major of the capital received questions from the media who were present at the event. In the first place, he was asked about the partial plan that must assume that the municipality has the green space already in public ownership and Astrié stated that «it has been working on it for some time, it was a bit at a standstill for a study on the river that the engineers are carrying out», should have results in a short time frame. In this sense, he pointed out that one of the pending things to take it forward is this study and that «the result will allow a little more progress in the development of this partial plan».

Astrié was asked about the attraction of the fountains, inaugurated a few weeks ago and he assessed it as a success. «It's a new attraction that, like any new attraction, attracts a lot of attention and we have to see if we continue to arouse this interest over time», concluded the consul. ≡

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SOCIOLOGY

The price of housing is the main problem of the population

The AR+I sociological observatory also includes concern about wages and the cost of living

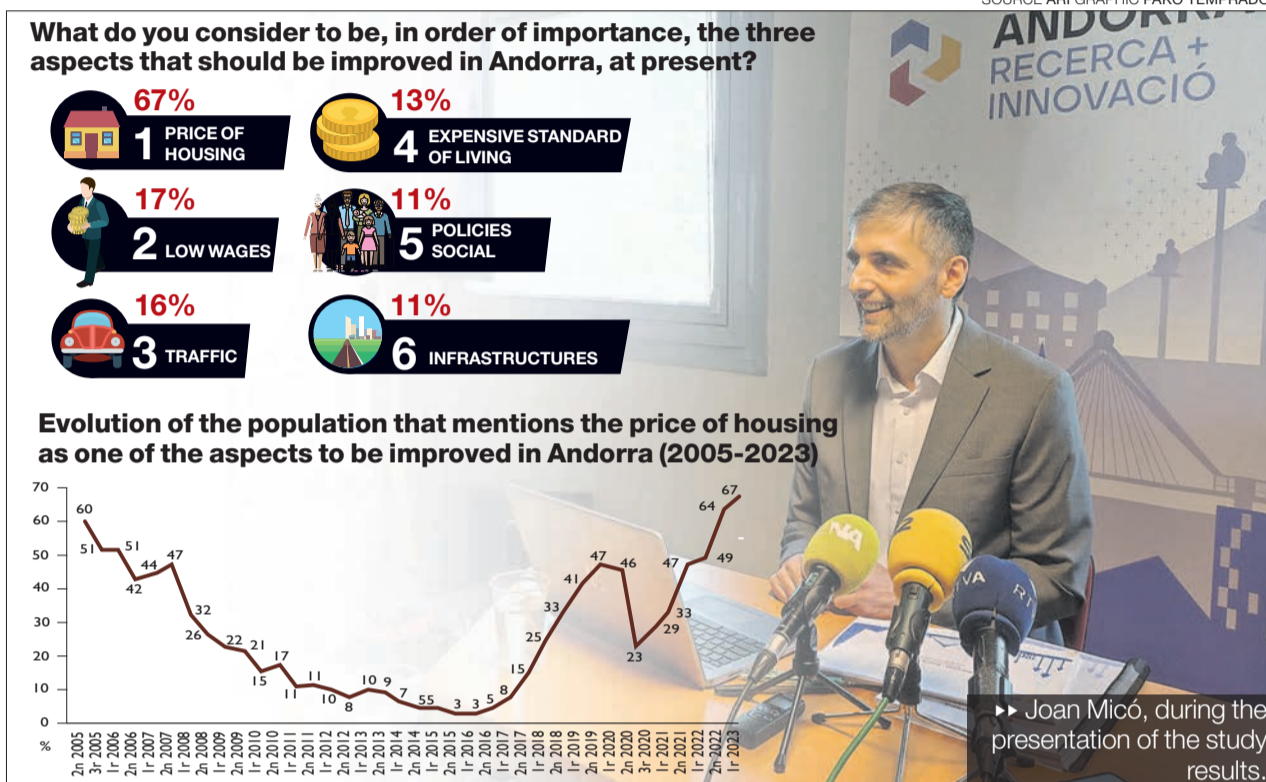
Mental health, Andorra's economic situation and reconciliation are prominent aspects of the study

JOAN JIMÉNEZ
SANT JULIÀ DE LÒRIA
@JJimenezM97

Before yesterday, the Research and Innovation Area (AR+I) presented, by the hand of Joan Micó, coordinator of the entity, the Observatory of the first semester of this 2023. This study has a sample of 754 people from among the entire population of Andorra over the age of 18, who were surveyed between April 11th and 19th this year and is divided into four branches that are the main problems of the country, the economic situation, mental health and reconciliation between people's work and personal life.

In the first part of the study on the main problems in Andorra, the surveyed sample pointed out, very significantly and exponentially, the problem of housing as the main difficulty suffered by the population of the Principality. With 67.3%, housing is the most significant problem highlighted by the surveyed sample, far surpassing the second most selected problem, which is perceived wages with 17.8%.

This highlight and differentiation of the housing problem in relation to the other problems mentioned is a historical fact, according to the records of the study, since 2004 there has not been such a prominent indication of what was



the main difficulty for which Andorrans cross in their day-to-day life. At the time, the most prominent problem was traffic with 80% of the surveyed sample indicating mobility as the main national problem.

In this first semester of 2023, if a thematic grouping of the various difficulties that have been mentioned in the study is carried out, it is

verified that the main concerns of the national population are the price of housing, wages and high economic cost of living with 70.8%, far surpassing the second group most selected by the sample that refers to social benefits, pensions and healthcare with 17.6% of the total.

During the presentation last Thursday, the sociologist and coordinator of the study, Joan Micó,

stated that, a significant fact that has also been extracted from the study, would be that «administrative staff, for a few years, the perception of their situation has worsened. People who work in sectors such as hospitality, trade, people who work at weekends, with a higher proportion of non-Andorrans, there is this division» of individual perception. ≡

The economy is seen positively

The economic situation of the country is perceived in a more regularized way. Despite international perceptions of fears of irregularities in the world economy, the Andorran population contemplates the country's economic reality quite regularly, according to the AR+I study. 39.8% of the surveyed sample describes Andorra's general economic situation as very good or good, 38.2% classify it as regular, while 19.6% rate the economy as bad or very bad. In the words of the sociologist Joan Micó, «we come from a time of great uncertainty and now we are in another stage where tourism works, there is full employment, it must be made easier for people from outside to come to work. We are in a scenario that cannot be compared with the rest (of countries), but the situation can change if there is a recession» in neighboring countries.

There are irregularities in reconciliation

The AR+I study has considered the area of conciliation between working and personal life. Within this aspect, several gender irregularities have been observed in the different variables analyzed. An example of these can be found in the question of who takes care of care and the organization of activities on days when there is no school in the segment of families with children under 15 years of age. 59% of the women surveyed declared that they are the ones who take care of themselves, while 19.1% of men claim that they take care of themselves. In addition, 19.6% of men declare that it is their partner who carries out these tasks, compared to 4.6% of women who give the same answer. El Micó explained that «men are more optimistic about what they do».

The Observatory detects a worsening of mental health

The study has applied methodologies to detect cases of anxiety and depression

J.J.
SANT JULIÀ DE LÒRIA

In the study presented by the AR+I, the Goldberg test methodology was carried out to assess the possibility of detecting possible symptoms of anxiety and depression. According to the survey carried out on 754 people, it can be seen that 53% of the

respondents say that in the last 15 days they have been worried about some aspect of their life, about 36% have felt very excited, nervous or in tension, 31% have had difficulty relaxing and 22% have felt very irritable. All these percentages have increased compared to previous years.

In addition, the study detected depression items among the surveyed sample. 37.5% of respondents say they have felt low energy in the last 15 days, 17% have lost interest in things, 13% have felt hopeless

and 10% have lost self-confidence in themselves.

At the same time, the study also highlights the use and assistance of psychological services. Among people who are not currently in psychological treatment, a majority of 88% think they do not need it, compared to 11.5% who say they do. Finally, it should be noted that 14.5% of respondents who have minor sons and daughters say that one of their children is currently being treated for some psychological problem. ≡



►► Hospital of Meritxell.

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