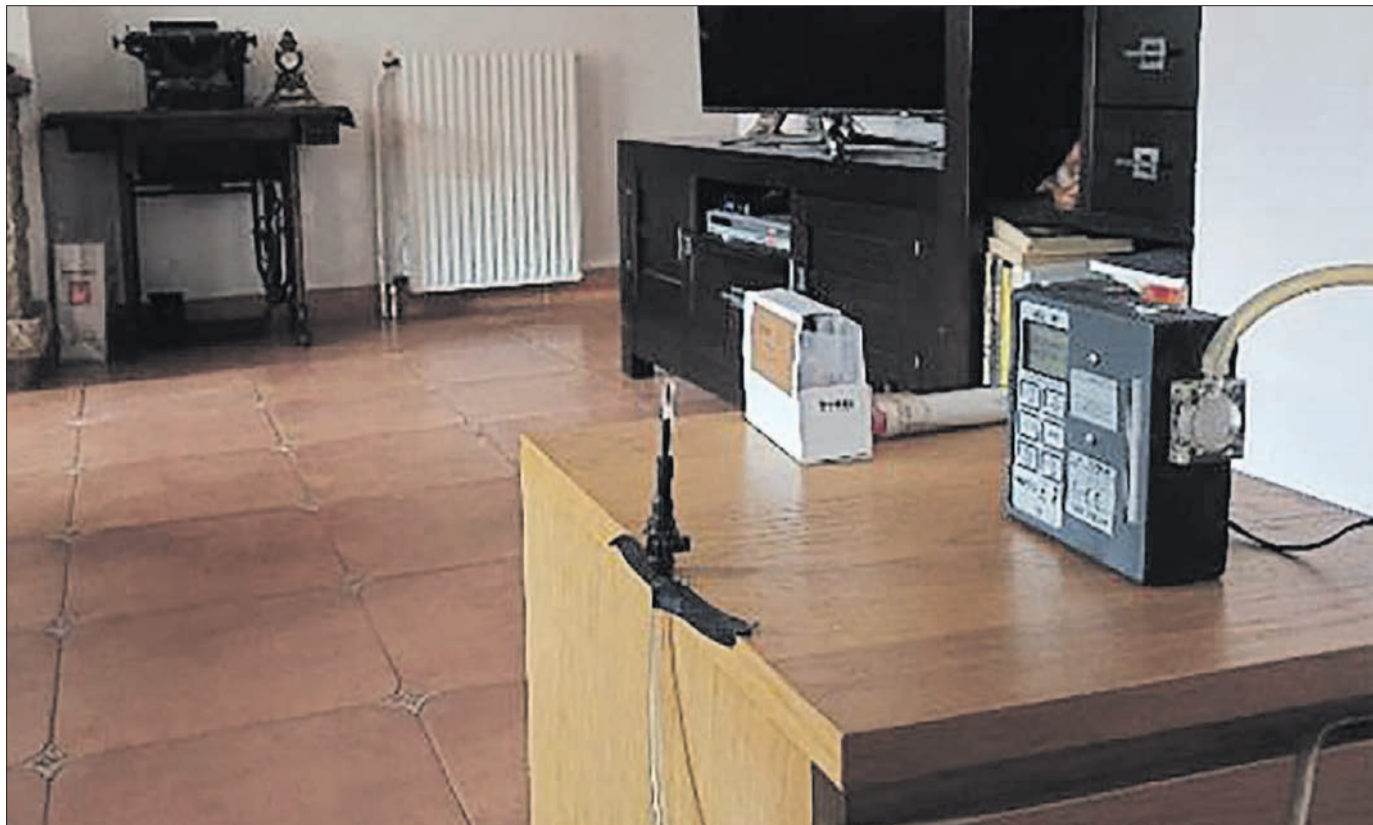




SOCIETY

EL PERIÒDIC



►► On the left, the dining room with the toxicity meter, and on the right, the product used during the works.

## The case of those poisoned by toluene, about to enter the General Council

The owners of the affected flat are ready to take the case to Europe if the TSJ dismisses their claim.

ALBA CLADELLAS  
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY  
@PeriodicAND

The toluene case is still ongoing, and the fact is that the family that had to leave their flat on the Engolasters road because of works carried out by their neighbor with this toxic agent, is still unable to return to their home. Now, after feeling ignored by the Government and awaiting the response of the Superior Court of Justice, the affected family plans to send all the documentation to the various parliamentary groups to get the issue discussed in the General Council. Who has already shown their support is the leader of Andorra Endavant, Carine Montaner, emphasizing that «we consider it a public health problem», in addition to explaining that «we hope that something will be done in this legislature. We want the PS to change its mind and so does the majority. For us, the ban

on toluene is a priority.» The story goes back to the months of February and March 2022 when the neighbor of the couple formed by Manel Álvarez and Virginia Claverol carried out work on their flat to place an acoustic fabric. To stick it, a professional contact adhesive containing toluene, a product that can be dangerous to people's health, was used. In fact, toluene is highly regulated in the European Union, prohibiting concentrations equal to or greater than 0.1% for sale, and banned in many countries, including Chile. After the firefighters had to go to the home of the affected and as a result of the dizziness they were suffering, the couple entered the Emergency Department of the Hospital Nostra Senyora de Meritxell.

A document dated March 2nd of that same year issued by the Department of Health and the Development, Safety and Industrial Quality

Area ordered that the residence be uninhabitable until the vapors disappeared - which almost two years later still have not 100% gone -. As a result of this report, seeing that the neighbor of the works - a vascular doctor - did not pay attention to them and faced with the consequences it was causing to their health, the couple were forced to leave their home and go to live in a hotel.

Even so, they feel abandoned by the Government, considering that they haven't lift a finger and sent them to the Batllia so as not to face the problem that, «unlike what they say, it is a public health problem», explained Manel Álvarez. In the measurements carried out at the plaintiffs' homes, the levels were double the limit considered toxic, and therefore the problems for people's health were

re more than obvious.

On June 7th, 2022, the oral hearing was held at the Headquarters of Justice and, far from the urgent request by the complaining family, the sentence of the court was made to wait for months, during which time, the injured were living in a hotel - at their expense, since the Administration ignored the issue. Despite the documents provided by the complainants and the testimonies of other affected neighbors and the pulmonologist who treated the complainant, Judge David Moynat considered that there was insufficient evidence and acquitted the owner of the flat, the construction company and the director of the work.

In statements to this medium, Álvarez explained that the last measurement that was made was in November 2022 and that there was still toxicity in the home. In addition, he details that «I am ready to arrive in Europe». ≡

### the keys

- 1 WORK WITH TOLUENE** A married couple living next door to a house on the Engolasters road was affected by the work on the flat next door where a product containing toluene was used.
- 2 AWAY FROM HOME** A report from Health and Industry specifies that the property is uninhabitable and Manel and Virginia are forced to live in a hotel.

- 3 BATLLIA** The court dismissed the case considering that there is insufficient evidence and left the defendants free of guilt. The case is in the hands of the Superior Court of Justice.
- 4 GENERAL COUNCIL** Those affected want the issue to reach the General Council and are prepared to go to Europe if responsibility is not sought in Andorra.

### ECONOMIC AND MORAL DAMAGES

## Two years away from home and abandoned by the Administration

**Manel and Virginia feel powerless** in the face of the violation of the right to housing and health

A.C.  
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

Manel and Virginia bought a flat on Engolasters road with their savings and many years of work. In doing so, they didn't think that they would end up living in a hotel for 10 months because of the neighbor's works, and that they

would have to look for another home with the financial consequences that this would entail.

The couple feels abandoned by the Government, «I feel powerless because it's my house, we thought we had rights and the Administration has violated them, all the responsibility has fallen on us», explains Álvarez. During the conversation, the owner of the affected flat complained that «we have been evicted and no one has cared about us». Beyond the financial impact of having to pay for a hotel themselves, «the hardest part was having to live for 10 months in a hotel without privacy and outside

our home».

The indignation is obvious, but above all the feeling of abandonment by the country's institutions: «at the time we spoke to the Citizen's Ombudsman, the union, the head of government, and no one paid attention to us». Álvarez criticizes that «the Andorran Constitution

on talks about the right to housing and the right to health and we have had these rights violated».

What this couple is reporting has happened to them, but anyone could be affected, as toluene is a prohibited product in many countries, but not in Andorra. On this issue, Álvarez explains that «we fill our mouths with Europe, but our country does not comply with European regulations». ≡

POLITICS

# Concòrdia asks for the Fire Brigade, the airport and the EU

The party will question the Government at the General Council on January 18th



CONSELL GENERAL / EDUARD COMELLAS  
► The General Counsel Escalé.

EL PERIÒDIC  
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY  
@PeriodicAND

The Concòrdia parliamentary group has formulated four questions addressed to the Government. These demands, which are required to be answered orally, will be part of the discussion in the next session of the General Council, set for January 18th. The first question focuses on the current negotiations between the special fire brigade of Andorra and the Government to improve the working and salary conditions of the firefighters. The parliamentary group expresses its concern about how vacancies are managed in fire stations, especially in a context in which the Fire Service does not work overtime to cover them - as a pressure measure -, leaving some barracks with agents under minimum. In the educational field, the group has questioned the policies of the Ministry of Education regarding the use of tablets and

screens in schools. This question derives from the prudence recommendations of the OECD and the school plan announced by the minister to evaluate the use of technologies in Andorran schools. In terms of transport, a question has been submitted regarding flight diversions at Andorra-La Seu airport. The parliamentary group is looking for answers on the Government's strategies to improve the situation, especially in view of the expansion of regular flights to other European destinations. Finally, the group wants clarification on the accounting of the Association Agreement between Andorra and the European Union with the restrictions on foreign investment in real estate. Details are requested on the specific protocols or measures that will be taken to limit the purchase of second homes by citizens of EU member states in Andorra. ≡

GRIFOLS



► The General Counsel Baró.

# Baró asks for the Government's position with Grifols

The PS questions the Executive following the Gotham City report

EL PERIÒDIC  
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

The General Councilor of the Social Democrat parliamentary group, Pere Baró, submitted a question to the General Council last Wednesday with an urgent nature in reference to the agreement that the Government has with the multinational pharmaceutical company Grifols.

Baró asks the Executive about what is the Government's position with regard to the agree-

ment it has with Grifols, following the latest information published about the multinational following the report by the consultancy Gotham City Research, a bearish fund that analyzes the accounts of the companies looking for irregularities and brought down Gowex, who accuses the company of manipulating the accounts to reduce debt, causing a drop of approximately 40% in the value of Grifols shares on the IBEX-35.

The Government must answer this question in the next parliamentary session of the General Council which will be held next week, on January 18th. ≡

# Espot still trusts the continuity of the P3 laboratory

EL PERIÒDIC  
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

The Head of Government, Xavier Espot, made statements in reference to the affair of the Grifols P3 laboratory project in relation to the information extracted from the analysis of the bearish fund, Gotham City, in which it is explained that Grifols would be falsifying its accounts in order to hide the debt held by the pharmaceutical multinational. Even so, the head of government stipulated that «regardless of these facts, which I do not know if they can be true or not, I have no indication to think that the project of the immunology research center in Ordino is in danger». Likewise, the new consul major of Ordino, the democrat Maria del Mar Coma, also made statements for RTVA separately where she demanded the pharmaceutical company «to tell us if they are still interested or not» in establishing in Ordino, due to the multiple changes in directives that the entity has made in recent times and that could have caused a change in preferences on the part of the company. The consul believes that «we need an important communication about what Grifols wants to do and what it wants to stop doing. This must be communicated to society», pointing out that neither the company nor the Executive have made many details of the project public, according to RTVA. ≡

FINANCE

# Andorra Endavant wants a residence for the elderly

Montaner proposes 10 amendments to the budget law that include the balance of the items for the deviations of the Massana and Sant Julià de Lòria

EL PERIÒDIC  
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

The parliamentary group of Andorra Endavant, led by Carine Montaner, presented last Wednesday 10 amendments to the bill for the 2024 budget. Among them, the inclusion of an item for a project to create a residence for the elderly dependents with an item of 5,000,000 euros. This would be financed through the redistribution of Andorra Telecom's results for the amount necessary to finance the item. Montaner's motivation comes from the fact that the waiting list currently has a waiting period of between

one and two years for places in a medical residence specialized in dependency issues and the numerous demands of the school and family members. For this reason, Andorra Endavant proposes the creation of a new residence with a minimum of 100 places and foresees the multi-year financing of the project. Likewise, Montaner also suggests an amendment with reference to the road diversion of La Massana and Sant Julià de Lòria, increasing the budget item by three million euros. This amendment is justified by Andorra Endavant due to the need to reduce traffic problems

and calls for a balancing of the budget items for the two infrastructure works. Then, the general counsel also suggests the creation of an aid to compensate for the loss of salary due to accompanying a minor child hospitalized or undergoing treatment outside of Andorra. The party defends this amendment of 1,000,000 euros, which would also be taken from Andorra Telecom, since they consider the four-day leave insufficient for a child with a serious illness in the event of an operation or others, and consider that the Government must compensate the salary of one of the



► The parliamentary group of Andorra Endavant.

parents who takes care of the child and who accompanies the child outside of Andorra for treatment. Finally, Andorra Endavant has also made amendments for the deployment of the mental health plan with the associations, the Christmas wage increase

for the elderly with few resources, the creation of the 'Solidarity Shop' project against impoverishment, the creation of projects of solidarity national fairs such as Vide Dressing, the sustainability of the pension plan for public workers and the civil service. ≡

**Your leading real estate agency in Andorra.**

*Our experience guarantees results, realtors since 1988.*



**LA PORTELLA**  
IMMOBILIÀRIA  
REAL ESTATE

☎ (+376) 353 424 / (+376) 379 769

☎ (+376) 747 747

✉ laportella@andorra.ad

📍 Casa Nova Olivet 10 · Ordino

🌐 www.laportella.ad