



HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Deaf people, a pending subject in Andorra

This group is invisible to most people living in Andorra

Deaf people ask that accessibility to public places be prioritized for the group

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The recognition of people who suffer from deafness is an issue that seems to have been postponed in the Principality. Today, there is no data to know what the population of this group is. Nor has technology been made easier to reduce the restrictions that these people suffer in society. In fact, this group is invisible to most people living in Andorra. The ANA agency has contacted Alexia Vallés, a member of this group.

Alexia is a 26-year-old Andorran who has had an autoimmune disease for six years, which has caused her hearing impairment. Since she was diagnosed, she has done a lot of internal work to accept herself and make the people around her accept her. This year she graduated in Communication Mediation, a higher degree training course given by the Ceir Arco center in Barcelona. The course, lasting two years, aims to learn techniques to provide communicative support to deaf, deaf-blind and hearing impaired people.

Having completed these studies has given her the possibility to acquire the knowledge to act as a guide for deaf-blind people and she has also learned sign language for deaf and deaf-blind people, which is done by touching the signer's hand. In addition, she has learned programs for the promotion of sign language users, and for social awareness, respecting the idiosyncrasies of these people. The difference between an interpreter and a communicative mediator, explains Vallés, is that «the communicative mediator, in addition to interpreting, adapts the information for the person according to their disability and their communicative level».

This summer she is working as an informant at the tourist point of the Comapedrosa natural park, but even so, the possibilities open to her with these studies are significant, and she is very eager to undertake. Professional outings, she adds, can be adapted to any field, as long as disabled people are accompanied and the work of communicative mediation is needed. She comments that,



►► Portrait of Alexia Vallés.

for example, a professional exit could be to give school reinforcement to children who may need it, although he does not want to specify what her future projects are.

THE GROUP WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN ANDORRA // In Andorra, unfortunately, this group «is invisible». In fact, Alexia herself does not know anyone else in her situation. And she claims that when the disease broke out she had to ask for help outside the Principality. In fact, in statements to the ANA, she assures that she did not find a point of comfort even in the Visual and Hearing-Impaired Association, and that is why she decided, more than two years ago, to stop being its vice-president. Currently, she is part of the Barcelona ACAPPS Federation, which, as she explains, brings together Catalan associations of families and people with deafness with the aim of defending the global rights and interests of people with deafness and their families, at all levels and before society.

Thanks to the final work of the training she has done, which focused her on studying the situation of this group in Andorra, Alexia has discovered that, in fact, there is no exact way to know what the magnitude of this group is. According to the statistics offered by the Government, the group of disabilities is divided between mental, physical or sensory, but it is not specified what type of disability it is: auditory, visual or language, among others. Therefore, «it is completely impossible to know the number of people with deafness that are currently there». Alexia, however, investigated further and decided to contact the different hearing centers in Andorra. Amazingly she cites five, of which

Deaf people have very few opportunities to go to the cinema or the theater in Andorra

two claim to have more than 2,000 customers each.

THE CURRENT LEGISLATION // Although updating the accessibility legislation has been on the table for a long time, last March 30th of this year the preliminary draft was presented to modify the accessibility law of 1995. Although Alexia has not had the opportunity to read it, she would like to prioritize accessibility in public places for people like her, so that, for example, they can do procedures alone. Thus, it demands that magnetic loops be installed or, at least, one on a table in the headquarters of the Government's proceedings so that the sound can be inhibited. This is a wiring system that incorporates a microphone that allows it to go directly to the hearing aid, so people with deafness can understand what is being said to them, as these devices reduce most of the sounds in the environment. Vallés comments that there are many elderly people who wear hearing aids and that they

would also appreciate it. And she gets angry when she says that «even in Barcelona's metro stations there are them!».

Having recently returned from Barcelona, where she studied, she recognizes that the city is very adaptable, which has made her life a lot easier. On the other hand, in Andorra, despite having the same rights as anyone else, «here we think that by shouting more they will hear us», but, in fact, «this is not the solution». An example she gives is access to culture. In the country, she has very few chances to go to the cinema or the theatre, as the films do not have subtitles and there are no magnetic loops. Thus, her life is even more restricted. Vallés believes that everything should be done to make life easier for these people and their relatives and close people, in order to reduce the restrictions they suffer. «We need to work together so that they don't feel displaced and so they can integrate normally into society, and be able to participate in it». ≡

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SOCIETY

Technical stop of the Serradells indoor pool

Maintenance work will be carried out on the beaches and stands

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The indoor swimming pool of the Serradells Sports Center will have a technical stop during the month of August. Specifically, it will be closed from Monday, July 31, until Sunday, August 20. The aim is to be able to carry out various maintenance tasks on the beaches and bleachers taking advantage of the summer season, where demand is lower than the rest of the year. Throughout the year, this facility is used not only by private users, but also by professional sports groups and teams who train in the pool. During the month of August, however, athletes take vacations and a large number of users take advantage of the opening of the outdoor pool. For this reason, it has been decided to carry out the tasks during the weeks of less activity and thus have less impact. The work that will be carried out during these days will focus on the beaches and the bleachers, without affecting the swimming pool area. This year, the water in the pool will not be emptied, as was done previously. Despite the fact that it was opened last year after the fire of 2018, actions are taken every season to guarantee the good conditions of the equipment. As an alternative, users can go to any communal swimming pool that is



►► The indoor pool of the Serradells Sports Centre, in Andorra la Vella.

open during this period. In this way, by identifying themselves as users of the Serradells, users will be able to access the equipment of the pools in Escaldes-Engordany, Pas de la Casa, Ordino and Sant Julià de Lòria. We remember that last July 4 the sports center inaugurated the out-

door swimming pool, since it was almost completely remodeled with the installation of a floating synthetic floor that imitates parquet, 1,000 square meters of grass, the tiling of the interior of the swimming pool, and finally, with the placement of the giant slide. ≡

PARISHES

ARXIU ANA



►► The festivities radio, in the 2021 edition.

The radio returns to the Festivities of Sant Julià de Lòria

The intention is to turn it into an event «full of emotion and energy»

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The opening shot of the Festivities of Sant Julià de Lòria begins with the group of young people from the Colla Laureadiana, which bets for one more year on the traditional radio. As they reported last Tuesday, the intention is that this initiative and the party as a whole «become an event full of emotion and energy where our cultural heritage stands out and the promotion of the active participation of citizens». In this way, the opening of

the radio will take place next July 28th, from 6:00 p.m. in the main square of the parish. It will be the Major Consul, Josep Mayoral, who will welcome the attendees and offer a message to the entire community to mark the start of the festivities. Next, the program 'entities vs. authorities', a face-to-face where the different entities of the parish will analyze the four-year mandate, which comes to an end this coming December.

Therefore, this debate will be an opportunity to assess which projects have been carried out and which have not been completed, as well as to learn about the concerns of an important part of the parish community. ≡

COMPANY

The quality certification of Creand Crèdit Andorra has been renewed

The scope has also been extended to all departments in the Investments area

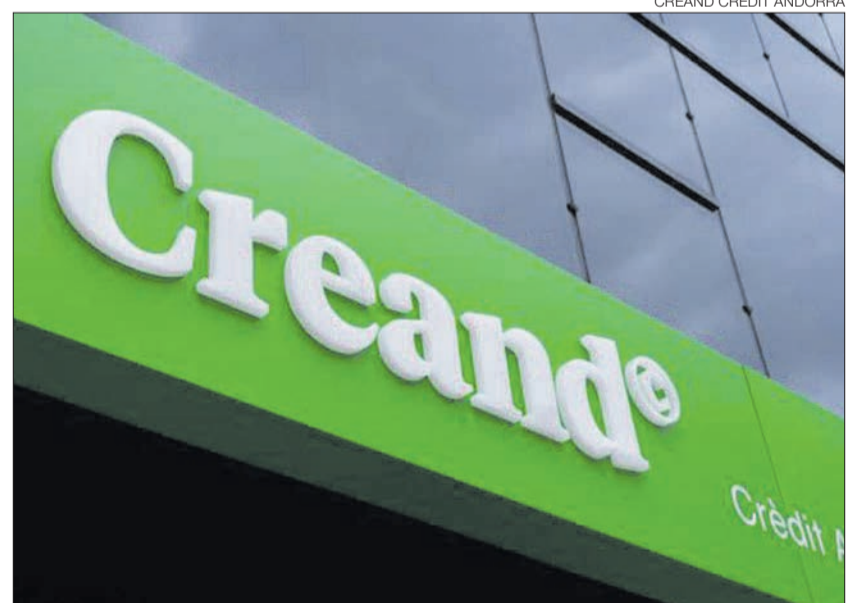
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The banking entity Creand Crèdit Andorra renews the ISO 9001:2015 quality certification and extends its scope to all departments of the Investments area. Until now, the quality seal was only available for the areas of Treas-

ury, Balance Sheet Management, Market Administration, Structuring and Distribution Table, thus the certification is now extended to the areas of Asset Management and Financial Institutions. This extension has also been made effective for part of the operational processes of the department of the Central Administrative and Correspondence Office, under the dependency of the Central Operational Services. Therefore, the management audit report of the BSI certification

company, which has carried out the two assessments, endorsed the efficiency of a quality management system and continuous improvement, with the intention of guaranteeing customer satisfaction, and which considered the completion of the integration of Vall Banc and the consequent incorporation of both portfolios and customers as well as part of the team. However, the audit also highlighted the rebranding and launch of the Bizum instant payments service. ≡

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