



The Catalanian Minister of Trade, Tourism and Consumer Affairs says that the *Snow Executive Plan* will strengthen the financial profitability of mountain resorts

The titular of Tourism says that this instrument will allow a more proactive presence of the Government in the ski sector, and will galvanise the mountain regions

Friday, 5 December 2005.— Josep Huguet, the Catalanian Minister of Trade, Tourism and Consumer Affairs, announced that with the arrival of the Mountain Resorts Executive Plan, Catalonia will have its own instrument to guide public intervention and promotion of the sector. According to the titular of Tourism, ***“it is the first time that the Government devises such an instrument to act in such an important sector for Catalonia, both from the tourist and the financial point of view, as a result of the Snow Executive Plan previously elaborated by Turisme de Catalunya in collaboration with Acem”***.

The Government is finalising the elaboration of the Mountain Resorts Executive Plan to promote the sector and to ordain public intervention. The plan, framed within the period 2006-2010, lays down, among other measures, the strengthening of public aids to the sector. Minister Huguet says that ***“with this new instrument we shall move from a public intervention to solve situations exclusively in moments of crisis, to a more proactive and galvanising presence of the sector”***. According to the Minister, ***“the importance of this Plan is that there was no model before, and Government action was carried out through the Institut Català de Finances (Catalonian Institute of Finance), with the granting of a number of credits that were very difficult to return due to very high investment and rising amortisations”***.

On the other hand, the Titular of Tourism pointed out that the Catalanian ski resorts enjoy excellent facilities and services. ***“They are necessary, though not sufficient at the time of optimising the performance of the sector, and obtaining the de-seasonalisation”***. Minister Huguet insisted: ***“What is needed here is a link between skiing and complementary activities, through cultural products such***



as gastronomy – a differentiating element that makes us competitive in opposition to other destinations”.

According to the Minister, ***“the current competition environment requires strong private investments, as well as public policies that encourage the financial development and well being of all the Pyrenean regions”.***

The Catalanian Minister of Tourism also singled out the important economic effort being made by *Turisme de Catalunya* for the tourist promotion of the Catalanian resorts, to which it has destined 700,000 euros, twice the amount of last year. This figure must be added to the resources already allocated by the Ministry of Tourism to the autumn-winter tourist promotion campaign, which involved a total amount of 1.3 million euros in promotion activities.