

Your Excellency,

We are pleased to learn that your Excellency is going to visit the Norwegian community in Alfaz del Pi to join in the celebration of our National day on the 17. May, and, in that way, showing that your Excellency on behalf of the government recognises the importance of this large Norwegian population that reside here in the Costa Blanca for large parts of the year (6000 Norwegian residents in Alfaz del Pi).

This is in many ways a kind of paradise for all those that, for different reasons, have chosen to reside, live or spend their vacation time here, not least for the favourable climate which especially many Norwegian pensioners find adding considerably to their quality of life as they get older.

Despite the many favourable living conditions and the generally friendly and welcoming atmosphere of the local Spanish people and communities, there are some very serious concerns for the many Norwegians, and others, owning a property in the Valencia region which we would like to draw to your attention. These concerns are all linked to the infamous "landgrab" laws (LRAU and LUV) which basically deprive a land-and/or house owner of most of the basic rights generally accepted as obvious and fundamental in almost all other European and other civilized countries in the world. In our case, owning a holiday house in one of the areas of Alfaz del Pi affected by an urbanistic development plan, a "PAI" called Plà de la Serra, it means:

- Having to give away large parts of our land **for free** to the developer which are to effect the plan.
- Having to pay a considerable amount, in our case approx. **EUR 50.000**, to contribute to the development of new infrastructure within the planned area.
- In worst case, if your house is situated in an area designated for another type of buildings, or if you don't have enough cash at hand, or if your plot is relatively small, you risk your house being **demolished** without receiving proper compensation enabling you to build a similar house elsewhere.
- Not being able to sell our house, should we so wish, until this matter is resolved with a positive outcome. Should the outcome be negative it will mean losing a large part of its value.

We can understand if this is hard to believe, but for many people this has sadly already become a reality. With many other similar development plans also under planning in Alfaz del Pi, the same consequences can become a reality also for many other Norwegians owning a house within this municipality or elsewhere in the Valencia region.

We are of course trying to fight these consequences as best we can and in all possible ways, and have also approached the Norwegian embassy in Madrid and the consulate in Alicante and Valencia to try to get their support in protesting our case for the local political authorities. We must admit being somewhat disappointed with their supportiveness as we have seen that our neighbours from other European countries seems to have been, and still are, backed more actively from their local diplomatic representatives. We now put some hope in the actions very recently taken by the EU and its subcommittee, headed by Margrete Auken, to try to convince Spain to see to it that these laws and their applications are being changed to come in line with the rest of Europe, but based on the very large Norwegian population residing here we would also hope that your Excellency and the Norwegian government could find a way to express a similar concern about the injustice being done to us and many others every day.

Yours Sincerely,

Morten & Randi Lehne

Very concerned, frustrated and despaired owners of a house in
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