

THE ANDORRA HUSTLE

If you have never heard of the country of
ANDORRA

You will now.

COMING SEPTEMBER 4, 2020: Amazon Prime Worldwide
in English, Spanish, and Catalan

1 hour, 53 minutes

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Logline:

In 2015, a private bank was assassinated by Spanish, American, and Andorran governments in their efforts to destroy the Catalanian Independence Movement.

Synopsis:

Andorra, a tiny, independent country situated between France and Spain in the Pyrenees mountains with a total population of 80,000 people found itself at the center of one of the most convoluted and outrageous bank robberies in modern history: on March 10, 2015, *Banca Privada d'Andorra (BPA)*, a private bank in Andorra, was shut down by Spanish, American, and Andorran governments in Spain's efforts to destroy the Catalanian Independence Movement thus leaving dozens of innocent civilians facing prison for money laundering crimes that never existed, and scores of innocent families have had their entire life savings stolen from them.

The incentive for the Spanish government to destroy BPA was part of Spain's ongoing "Operation Catalonia"—a covert state-sponsored war-like operation to undermine the progress of Catalonia's efforts to separate from Spain due to generations of humanitarian and economic repression Madrid has inflicted upon Catalonia. America's incentive was to protect Spain's interests, as an ally of the United States. Andorra's incentive appears to be purely economical on behalf of its leadership.

BPA was targeted due to the assumption that members of the top Catalanian leadership (President Jordi Pujol, President Artur Mas, and Vice President Oriol Junqueras) had their money stored at BPA. Spanish Police were of the opinion that destroying the bank accounts of the Catalanian leadership would help win their war against Catalonia.

A little known fact presented in **THE ANDORRA HUSTLE**: America's FinCEN (US Department of Treasury's *Financial Crimes Enforcement Network*) has the power to shut down any bank in the world with a single press release called a "Section 311" - part of the USA Patriot Act—without requiring any evidence of wrongdoing, under the guise of "protecting the world's financial system". Spanish Police presented fake evidence of money laundering to America's FinCEN, resulting in America issuing a "Section 311" against BPA. In the weeks following, the American private equity firm *J.C. Flowers* purchased the newly destroyed BPA at an 86% discount—precisely verbatim as Spain warned would happen to BPA.

Most mainstream news reporting on the closing of BPA have reported that BPA was shut down due to money laundering activity concerning the Sinaloa Drug Cartel, the Venezuelan government, and Russian and Chinese mafias. This documentary examines these money laundering charges in a forensic fashion, proving that BPA was categorically innocent of these crimes. **THE ANDORRA HUSTLE** gives the audience a well-researched narrative that contradicts all mainstream news coverage of these events.

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Eric Merola, Director and Producer:

Eric Merola is an internationally award-winning documentary filmmaker and journalist. During the first decade of Merola's career he had investigated various stories within the realm of innovative medical science. Merola's first documentary, *Burzynski*, had been viewed by millions and had garnered numerous international awards, including the national and city awards for "Best Documentary" at *HumanDoc* in Warsaw. *Burzynski* also won "Best Documentary" on America's *The Documentary Channel*, and was later distributed on *Netflix* worldwide. Merola's other films include *The God Cells: A Fetal Stem Cell Journey* and *Second Opinion: Laetrile at Sloan-Kettering*. In 2020, Eric Merola has signed a Hollywood deal to adapt his previous documentaries into a scripted dramatic series, in collaboration with Ryan Farley, the Emmy-nominated writer and producer of *Netflix's Ozark*.

About the production / director statement:

THE ANDORRA HUSTLE was produced from March, 2019 to August, 2020, with on-location investigations and filming conducted in Andorra, Spain, Belgium, and the United States.

When director Eric Merola began this investigation he was unaware of the depth of the story and how it related to Madrid's covert war with Catalonia. Merola's original interest was of simple curiosity in how the US Treasury has the power to effectively close any bank of its choosing, anywhere in the world, by simply issuing a press release called a "Section 311" — with the intention of "protecting the US financial system from money laundering and terrorist financing".

Since the enactment of the USA Patriot Act in 2001, which gave birth to FinCEN's "Section 311": 26 banks in the world had a "Section 311" placed against them, including BPA, with 16 of those 26 banks having their "Section 311" notice "rescinded" or "withdrawn" shortly after, including BPA. All of these banks were tiny banks with no significant standing whatsoever in the world's financial system. [\[Source\]](#)

Simultaneously, numerous large powerful banks that had been caught red-handed laundering billions for various drug cartels and terrorist groups never had a "Section 311" issued against them. These banks include HSBC (over \$1 billion laundered for the Sinaloa Drug cartel, Iran terrorist groups, etc), Danske bank (\$230 billion for Russian criminal groups, Iran, and North Korea); the list goes on and on.

It became apparent that FinCEN's "Section 311" is being used for everything but "protecting the US financial system", and is instead being used as a political weapon — like a drone missile to take out any bank of its choosing to accomplish certain political goals. The fact that 16 of the 26 banks that were destroyed by a "Section 311" since 2001 were later withdrawn, implicitly demonstrates that at least 16 of those 26 banks had no money laundering activity that FinCEN could prove, including BPA. When a "Section 311" is issued against a bank, all correspondent banks must immediately cut ties with that bank — resulting in that bank's inability to operate — thus resulting in its closure.

Once a bank is closed due to a "Section 311", what happens to all the money in that bank? What happens to the life saving of families and all the bank accounts of the innocent customers? This entire process sets the stage for an opportunity to co-opt everyone's accounts and effectively and legally commit an old fashioned bank robbery. This has been apparent in the case of BPA.

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Since the US Treasury’s withdrawal of its “Section 311” against BPA was the fastest in its history, and since the owners of BPA were working with American attorneys taking FinCEN to court in the United States requesting the US Treasury provide proof of money laundering at BPA, and since BPA was the only “on shore” bank in Andorra—the more this story unraveled, the more intriguing it became.

Then, once Merola dug deeper and discovered that this entire event occurred because of Spain’s war with Catalonia, and found an audio recording of the head of Spanish police threatening BPA in Andorra with precisely verbatim what occurred if BPA didn’t hand over the bank accounts of the Catalanian leadership to Spanish police—providing smoking gun evidence of the intentions of the entire “Section 311”... Merola concluded, *“this needs to be a documentary!”*

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Written, directed, and produced by: **Eric Merola**

Director of Photography: **Kate Merola, Eric Merola, Rebecca Parkin, Harold Moss**

Music: **Peter Venne, Maxime Carpentier (Studio Viking)**

Produced by: **Eric Merola, Kate Merola**

Edited by: **Eric Merola**

Motion graphics: **Eric Merola**

Spanish translation assistance: **Xiomara Garcia**

Catalan translation: **Kathryn Boyd**

English narration: **Eric Merola**

Spanish and Catalan narration: **Jordi Boixaderas**

JC Flowers animation “Que Viene el CoCo”: **Little Mamut**; animation: **Pere Roca**; artists: **Pere Roca, Alex Martinez**; music: **Envato Elements**

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Interviewees in order of appearance:

Isabel Sarmiento: Former Head of Compliance, BPA

Joan Cejudo: Former Deputy General Manager of Corporate Operations, BPA

Santi Rosselló: Former Director of International Operations, BPA

Josep Antoni Silvestre: Attorney, Silvestre Advocats

Gonzalo Boye: Human Rights Attorney, Partner: ECCHR

Artus Mas: Former President of Catalonia

Carles Puigdemont: Former President of Catalonia

Pablo Laplana: Former Deputy General Director International Business, BPA

Miguel Sebastia: Former Executive Director of the Board of Spain-USA Chamber of Commerce

Ares Rosselló: Santi Rosselló’s daughter

Jaume Reixach: Journalist: El Triangle, La Valira

Eric Lewis: Attorney, Lewis, Baach, Kaufmann, Middlemiss

Carles Quílez: Journalist: Global Chronicle, El Taquígrafo

Ana Sole: Attorney, S&M Advocats

Gema Martinez: Attorney, S&M Advocats

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Jordi Segura Cobo: Attorney, Despatz Segura Advocats

Ferran Sicart: Economist, Founder: Tracis

Claudia: Barcelona/Catalonia resident

Alfons Clavera: Human Rights Attorney, Bufet Clavera

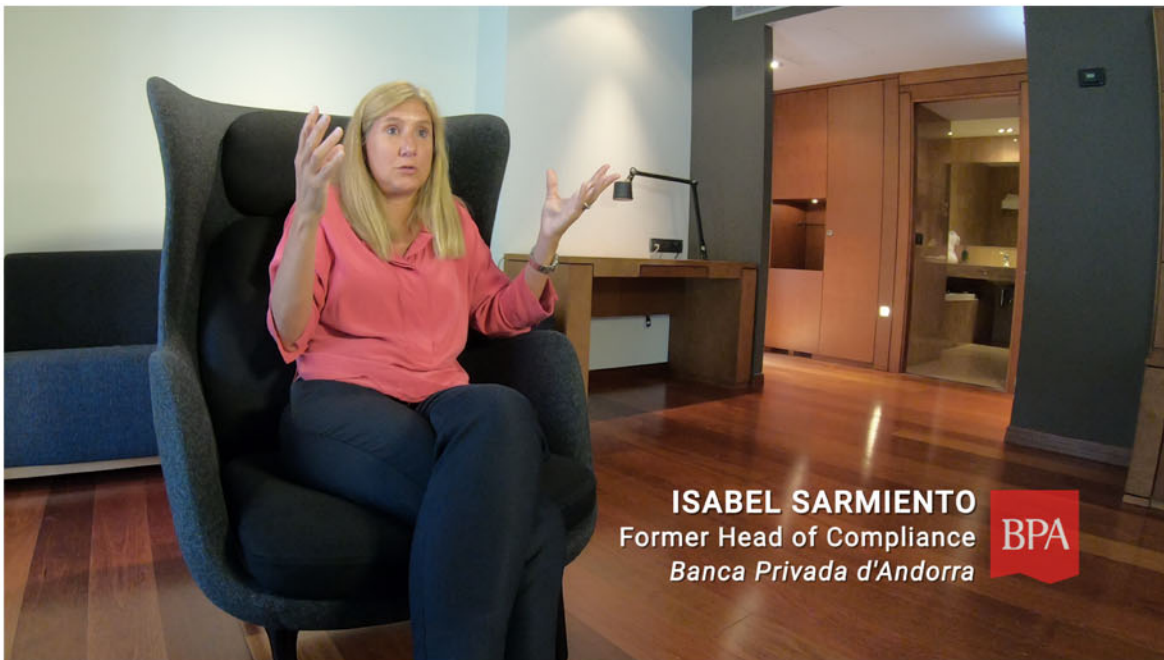
Elisa Muxella: Director, Andorran Institute of Human Rights



CARLES PUIGDEMONT
President of Catalonia
2016-2017



ARTUR MAS
President of Catalonia
2010-2016



ISABEL SARMIENTO
Former Head of Compliance
Banca Privada d'Andorra



PABLO LAPLANA
Former Dep. Gen. Dir. Int'l Business
Banca Privada d'Andorra



JOAN CEJUDO
Former Dep. Gen. Mgr. Corp. Operations
Banca Privada d'Andorra



BPA **SANTI ROSSELLÓ**
Former Dir. Int'l Operations
Banca Privada d'Andorra



ERIC LEWIS
Attorney, New York City
Representing BPA vs. The US Treasury



**JOSEP ANTONI
SILVESTRE CÁNOVAS**
Attorney
*Representing BPA clients
Andorra*



GONZALO BOYE
Human Rights Attorney



ANA SOLE, GEMA MARTINEZ
Attorneys
*Representing BPA clients,
Andorra*



CARLOS QUÍLEZ
Journalist: *Global Chronicle*



FERRAN SICART

Economist, founder: TRACIS
Barcelona, Spain



ELISA MUXELLA

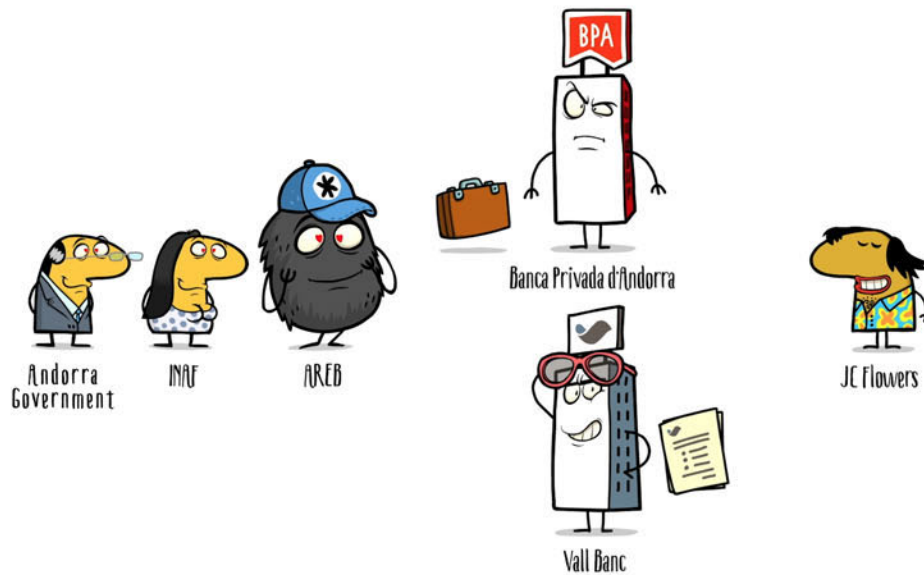
Director, Andorran Institute for Human Rights



ALFONS CLAVERA

Human Rights Attorney, Andorra
Andorra vs. Spain

JAUME REIXACH
Journalist: *El Triangle, La Valira*



MIGUEL SEBASTIA
Fmr. Exec. Dir. and Mem. of the Board
Spain-USA Chamber of Commerce, New York City





XAVIER ESPOT
President/Prime Minister
Andorra (2019–)



MARIANO RAJOY
President/Prime Minister of Spain
2010-2018



STREETCRASH 
CNBC

**J. CHRISTOPHER
FLOWERS**

**J.C. Flowers & Co.
CEO**

**35 year career in
financial services
as an advisor and
investor**

CNBC 12:38p LONDON

UK FTSE **+0.25%**





JORDI SEGURA COBO
Attorney
Representing BPA clients, Andorra

(BILLINGCODE: 4810-02)

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY



**Notice of Finding That Banca Privada d'Andorra Is
a Financial Institution of Primary Money Laundering Concern**

AGENCY: Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (“FinCEN”), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of Finding.

SUMMARY: This document provides notice that, pursuant to the authority contained in the USA PATRIOT Act, the Director of FinCEN found on March 10, 2015 that reasonable

grounds exist to believe that Banca Privada d'Andorra is a financial institution operating outside of the United States of primary money laundering concern.

ARES ROSSELLÓ
Santi Rosselló's daughter

