

Majorca Daily Bulletin

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Welcome to wild Majorca



See Inside

Spain 2018 economic growth forecast at risk due to Catalonia, says deputy PM

THE Spanish economy could grow less than initially expected in 2018 due to uncertainty over Catalonia, deputy prime minister Soraya Sainz de Santamaría said yesterday.

The wealthy region's intention to break away after a referendum has plunged Spain into its worst politi-

cal crisis since an attempted military coup in 1981.

"The events that we are experiencing in Catalonia make us more prudent," Sainz de Santamaría said after the weekly cabinet meeting.

"In fact, if there were no quick solution to this issue we should be forced to lower expectations of economic growth for the year

2018," she said. The government expects Spain's economy to grow 2.6 percent in 2018.

The deputy prime minister also said that hotel reservations in Catalonia were currently falling 20 percent to 30 percent.

Allies press Catalan leader to declare full independence, ignore Madrid deadlines: See Inside.



Spanish and Catalan flags are hung from the balconies of an apartment building in Madrid.

Hammond's silence on Brexit vote

London.—British finance minister Philip Hammond declined to tell reporters yesterday whether he would vote for Brexit if there were a second referendum on Britain's European Union membership.

Hammond, who campaigned for Britain to remain part of the EU in the June 2016 referendum, has faced criticism from Brexit supporters that he is too downbeat about Britain's prospects after it is scheduled to leave the bloc in March 2019.

"I am committed to delivering a Brexit deal that works for Britain," he said in a BBC interview in Washington, where he is attending a meeting of the International Monetary Fund.

Echoing prime minister Theresa May's own reticence on the issue, Hammond declined to say how he would vote if another referendum were held now. "We've had the referendum," he said. "You know how I voted in it."

Earlier this week May declined to answer a similar question, stoking concerns among Brexit supporters that she is not fully committed to taking Britain out of the EU.

On Thursday May's spokeswoman said the prime minister had full confidence in Hammond, following criticism from one of his Conservative predecessors, Nigel Lawson, a strong supporter of Brexit who served as finance minister in the 1980s

under Margaret Thatcher. Lawson said Hammond appeared overly reluctant to allocate government money to prepare for Brexit. Earlier this week Hammond said it was too soon to start spending significant money on such preparations.

Yesterday the *Financial Times* quoted Hammond as saying "the Treasury and other departments are planning for a full range of scenarios and will make sure there are resources for all scenarios".

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our spotlight
on the north of
the island

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